



**In partnership with the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Food, Agriculture,  
Nutrition and Innovation Center...**

**THE JACKIE JOYNER-KERSEE NORTHERN  
CAMPUS EXPANSION**

**Presented by Ava Gillery, Aiden Martinez, Eriel Johnson, and Nikyra Wheaton**

# What is CODES, who are we, and what did we do?

**CODES**  
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
EDWARDSVILLE



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Civil Engineering



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Geography



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Psychology  
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Presented by Aiden Martinez

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Presented by Ava Gillery

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Site located in the Southern American Bottom, a distinct geographic area found within Southwestern Illinois near the Mississippi River

Former industrial site having many invasive species, such as Honeysuckle, Kudzu, burning bush, and other woody plants

Reinvestment in the site should strive to replace said invasive species with native plants, in particular nitrogen fixers and plants which practice phytoremediation



Aiden Martinez: Plant research and flora ethnographic review

### **Current Invasive Plant Species within the Site**

- Kudzu vine- Vine species which originates from Japan. Practices parasitism on larger plants, such as trees.
- Honeysuckle- Bush species which produces white, atomic flowers. Found commonly in reclaimed areas and forests.
- Burning bush- Bush species native to the Asian continent.

### **Reintroduced Native Plant Species**

- Rattlesnake Master- Phytoremediator which adds nutrients into soil. Supports an array of pollinators
- Leadplant- Semi-shrub which supports native Dog Faced Sulphur moth larvae.
- Indian grass- Wildgrass which provides food for native herbivores, such as deer.

Aiden Martinez: Plant research and flora ethnographic review

# What's happening now?

## Phytoremediation

The process some plants go through in order to remove contaminants (such as lead) from their surrounding soil

## Iron and Phosphorus Rich Compost

Encourages biodiversity and strengthens and maintains the health of the soil as the contaminants are removed

## Developmental Stages

As the soil begins to remediate, more developments on the northern campus will be able to be completed



For my first-semester animal research project, I explored a variety of species native to Southern Illinois. I studied their habitats, diets, native or invasive status, and the advantages and challenges associated with each.

Continuing the project this semester, the animals I researched included salamanders, dragonflies, opossums, white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, black bears, ground squirrels, raccoons, groundhogs, coyotes, cardinals, hummingbirds, tree frogs, blue jays, red-tailed hawks, and striped skunks. After comparing findings with my team, I chose to focus on three threatened amphibians: the Eastern Narrow-Mouth Toad, the Bird-Voiced Treefrog, and the Illinois Chorus Frog.

By presenting this information to JJKFAN, the project can move forward with a Northern campus design that supports and safely integrates the native species already living there.

Eriel Johnson:  
Animal research

# What makes people interested in conservation?

- Research shows that several key factors increase someone's interest in conservation. People are usually drawn to conservation when they:
  - Connect conservation to their personal values
  - Feel an emotional connection to conservation
  - Have good knowledge about conservation
  - Gain social influence through participating in conservation
- If we really want people to care about the environment, we have to make conservation something they can see, touch and feel in their own lives. Hands-on activities like joining a neighborhood cleanup, planting a tree, or helping restore a local park let people experience the difference they're making, not just hear about it.

# What Keeps People Interested In Conservation?

Staying interested in conservation is where most conservation efforts fail.

Conservation can feel abstract and slow but the goal in staying interested in it is to make it feel personal and visible.

People stay engaged when they can see that their actions matter, through cleaner parks, protected species recovering, or reduced pollution. Success stories (like conservation efforts helping bring back species from near extinction) reinforce that their effort isn't pointless.

When people have direct experiences like seeing wildlife, or even just spending time outdoors, they form a bond. That connection makes them care more about protecting it. Even learning about animals like African elephants, or ecosystems like coral reefs, can spark that attachment.

# Conclusion & For the Future

## What comes next?

With the development of the Northern campus approaching, using all this research and data will be helpful when beginning the construction process



## Who does this benefit?

The northern campus will mainly be focused on educating the students of JJKFAN's academy. However, the general community will benefit from the campus and will have the opportunity to learn more about their environment.

Additionally, through the processes used while remediating and increasing the biodiversity in the area, people will learn more about how to do something similar in their own gardens/greenspaces