

Community Based Learning Opportunities: *Engaging heads, hands and hearts*



Leadership in Sustainability Education

**Graduate School of Education
Educational Leadership and Policy
Portland State University**

The following is a list of organizations and programs that may be of interest to LSE students for fulfilling CBL hours. Within the list provided, each organization or program is hyperlinked to its main page and its volunteer page, as available.

Community Based Learning Opportunities:

To make your search easier, this list is organized according to interest area. Keep in mind that the field of sustainability education is highly interdisciplinary, and many organizations are multi-faceted and may have volunteer opportunities outside of the interest area under which they are listed. Some are cross-listed for this reason. The interest areas are as follows:

- Governmental and Public Policy-based Programs
- Garden-based, Outdoor/Naturalist, Science and Other Sustainability Education Programs
- Social Service and Community Oriented Programs

**Please note: this list is not prescriptive—it is intended to be a resource to you for ideas and possibilities. In other words, you are not required to choose a venue for serving CBL hours from one of the places listed here.*

There are *many* additional, unlisted places to volunteer in the Portland Metro area that may better suit your interests. At the end of the document, you will find a list of useful volunteer resources and links for exploring additional volunteer and internship opportunities

Governmental and Public Policy-based Programs

City of Portland Bureau of Sustainability and Planning promotes integrated land use planning and development based on sustainability principles and practices. BPS also develops and implements policies and programs that provide environmental, economic and social benefits to residents, businesses and government, which strengthen Portland's position as an international model of sustainable practices and commerce. Opportunities for volunteering are highly competitive and require specific project requests; visit the website for more information.

Ecotrust's mission is to inspire fresh thinking that creates economic opportunity, social equity and environmental well-being. Ecotrust works locally in ways that promise hope abroad, and it takes inspiration from the wisdom of Native and First Nations. Ecotrust's role is to serve as "A "think tank" and a "do tank" designed to identify and test deep innovation , a vehicle for access to capital to invest in promising innovations as proof of concept and scalability, and to be a growing constellation of public, private, for-profit and nonprofit organizations designed to inspire people around the world. Internships are posted on the site, and specific proposals for programming and projects are accepted. Visit their site for more information.

Friends of Family Farmers Friends of Family Farmers is building a strong and united voice for Oregon's independent family farmers, food advocates, and concerned citizens who are working to foster an approach to agriculture that respects the land, treats animals humanely, sustains local communities, and provides a viable livelihood for family farmers. There are various opportunities for [volunteering](#).

Metro, Portland's elected regional government is helping to make our metropolitan area an extraordinary place to live, work and play. Metro has volunteer opportunities in a wide array of areas: parks and wildlife, sustainable living, regional planning, recycling, conservation and more. Volunteer Opportunities are available in many programs; please see the site for more details.

Oregon Food Bank works to eliminate hunger and its root causes ... because no one should be hungry. Oregon Food Bank recovers food from farmers, manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, individuals and government sources. It then distributes that food to 20 regional food banks across Oregon. OFB also works to eliminate the root causes of hunger through advocacy, nutrition education, learning gardens and public education. To learn more about Volunteering at OFB, click [here](#).

Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Land Trust OSALT, located southeast of Portland, holds urban and rural agricultural lands in trust, keeping them in agricultural use by successive generations of growers and stewards, and serves to restore an appreciation of agriculture and to actively participate in developing sustainable agricultural practices and systems through research and education.

ReCode Oregon Recode is a community-based group examining how city and state regulations can support rather than inhibit creative, sustainable living, while simultaneously educating and engaging grassroots communities in changing these regulations. A project of sustainability education center Tryon Life Community Farm in Portland Oregon, Recode gathers information to support grassroots movements in

transforming codes and regulations to encourage and incentivize innovative, citizen-based sustainability in Oregon and beyond.

[Sustainable Northwest](#) brings people, ideas, and innovation together so that nature, local economies, and rural communities can thrive. We're headquartered in Portland, Oregon. Through collaboration, we bridge rural and urban interests, encourage entrepreneurship, and build trust in sustainable natural resource management and utilization in the western U.S.

[The Oregon Environmental Council](#) advances innovative, collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations. At the Oregon Environmental Council we find common ground by bringing diverse interest groups together, building common understanding, and developing creative strategies that help everyone be part of the solution to Oregon's environmental challenges. [Information about volunteering and internships.](#)

Garden-based, Outdoor/Naturalist, Science & Other Sustainability Education Programs

GARDEN-BASED

[The Learning Gardens Laboratory](#) *(LGL), a PSU project, is a 12-acre garden education site located in Southeast Portland that provides K-12, university students and community members hands-on and place-based education in sustainable gardening, healthy nutrition, and permaculture. Education at LGL supports improved academic achievement, leadership development, and the development of sustainable local food systems. Established in 2005, LGL exists as a unique partnership between Portland State University, Portland Public Schools, Portland Parks and Recreation, and Oregon State University Extension Service.

** LECL students are encouraged to volunteer at LGL as it is a PSU site.*

[Garden Partners](#) Our mission is to enhance the health and well-being of individuals through participation in community-based therapeutic gardening programs. Garden Partners provides a new model for engaging individuals in therapeutic gardening activities, horticultural therapy. The hands-on process of caring for a garden — no matter how small — helps them reclaim their joy of life. Visit their [volunteer page](#).

[Growing Gardens](#) offers several programs to assist in the creation of gardens at home, at school and in the community. Their website contains a wealth of resources on School Gardens, including links with information on how to start and

maintain a school garden as well as garden-based curriculum ideas. They also provide examples of local school garden projects and area farm programs. Based in Portland, Oregon, Growing Gardens is trying to get at the root of hunger.

[Portland Parks and Recreation](#) Community Gardens: The Community Garden program has provided gardening opportunities for the physical and social benefit of the people and neighborhoods of Portland since 1975. There are 32 community gardens located throughout the city, developed and operated by volunteers and PP&R staff, offering a variety of activities. For information on Community Garden volunteer descriptions and opportunities, [click here](#).

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[Oregon Tilth](#) @ Luscher Farm. Oregon Tilth is a nonprofit research and education organization of people dedicated to biologically sound and socially equitable agriculture. Oregon Tilth is a membership organization of organic farmers, gardeners, processors, advocates and consumers, and we offer educational events throughout Oregon, the Pacific Northwest and nationally. [Information on volunteering for their Garden Crew](#).

[Zenger Farm](#) Incorporated in 1999, Friends of Zenger Farm is a non-profit farm and wetland in outer southeast Portland dedicated to promoting sustainable food systems, environmental stewardship and local economic development through a working urban farm. Friends of Zenger Farm utilize the combination of a 10-acre wetland adjacent to the 6-acre organic farming operation to provide unique experiential learning opportunities for youth, farmers and families in subjects such as sustainable agriculture, wetland ecology, food security, healthy eating and local economic development. For more information on volunteering, [click here](#).

[Portland Fruit Tree Project](#) is a grass-roots non-profit organization that provides a community-based solution to a critical and growing need in Portland and beyond: Access to healthy food. By empowering neighbors to share in the harvest and care of urban fruit trees, we are preventing waste, building community knowledge and resources, and creating sustainable, cost-free ways to obtain healthy, locally-grown food. We organize people to gather fruit before it falls, and make it available to those who need it most. We register fruit and nut trees throughout the city, bring people

together to harvest and distribute thousands of pounds of fresh fruit each year, and teach tree care and food preservation in hands-on workshops. More about [volunteering at PFTP](#).

OUTDOOR/NATURALIST

Friends of Tryon Creek Park, in collaboration with Oregon State Parks, strive to provide world-class interpretive and educational experiences to visitors of the park; act as a natural history resource to families, teachers and students throughout the Portland Metro-region; enrich the health of visitors of all ages by maintaining trails for walkers, bikers, and horseback-riders; and are a leader and partner in the protection, restoration and conservation of this park and the watershed it resides within. Learn more about [volunteer opportunities here](#).

Playworks is a nonprofit organization that supports learning by providing safe, healthy and inclusive play and physical activity to schools at recess and throughout the entire school day. The organization provides trained, full-time coaches, who work on-site to teach games and encourage students to participate in a healthy and engaging recess and in playground and classroom activities at each of our partner schools. The coach becomes a trusted member of the learning community and works closely with students and staff at the school to transform recess and play into positive opportunities to learn new social skills, gain confidence and develop leadership abilities. The result is a school where there are fewer conflicts, more positive relationships among students and better focus in classes. See how you can be a part of this nationwide movement in support of play, click here for volunteer opportunities. [Volunteer information](#).

Sauvie Island Center The Sauvie Island Center serves elementary school youth of Portland by providing hands-on educational field trips at our Sauvie Island location in Howell Territorial Park, managed by Metro. Through our education programs, the Center seeks to increase the food, farm and environmental literacy of the next generation. [Volunteer information](#).

Metro, Portland's elected regional government is helping to make our metropolitan area an extraordinary place to live, work and play. Metro has volunteer opportunities in a wide array of areas: parks and wildlife, sustainable living, regional planning, recycling, conservation and more.

SCIENCE-BASED

Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, or OMSI, is a scientific, educational, and cultural resource center dedicated to improving the public's understanding of science and technology. OMSI makes science exciting and relevant through exhibits, programs, and experiences that are presented in an entertaining and participatory fashion. Learn how you can get involved as a volunteer.

Intel Northwest Science Exposition Systems The Northwest Science Exposition System (NWSES) is a consortium of student science, math, and engineering project competitions formed in the summer of 2003. The mission of the NWSES is to develop scientific talent and promote science literacy in Oregon and Clark County Washington students by providing a structure and a venue for presenting high quality student research. The NWSES encourages students to learn science, engineering and math by engaging in the activities that characterize these endeavors. Encouraging girls, economically disadvantaged youth, and underrepresented minorities in the careers of science, technology, engineering or math is important to NWSES. Listings of volunteer activities and how to register listed here.

OTHER SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

***Please note:** Many LECL students serve their CBL hours at area schools or after-school/school-related programs. In the interest of space, they are not listed here, but these links are a good place to start:

Portland Public Schools	http://www.pps.k12.or.us/
Beaverton School District	www.beavton.k12.or.us/
Tigard-Tualatin School District	http://www.ttsd.k12.or.us/
Gresham School District	www.gresham.k12.or.us
Hillsboro School District	http://www.hsd.k12.or.us/
Vancouver School District	http://www.vansd.org/
SUN Community Schools	http://www.sunschools.org
Great Schools Oregon	http://www.greatschools.org/oregon/portland/private/schools
Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative	http://sustainable-schools.org/index.html
Boys and Girls Club, PDX metro	http://www.bgcportland.org/
YMCA of Columbia-Willamette	http://www.bgcportland.org/

Adelante Mujeres We are a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization and our mission is the holistic education and empowerment of low-income Latina women and their families. Adelante Mujeres has four specific program goals: to increase opportunities for family and community self-determination through holistic education, workforce and entrepreneurial training, and family literacy, to build community through leadership development and the search for solutions to common concerns, and to preserve, foster and share participants' cultural heritage with the wider community and facilitate intercultural exchange, and to advocate ecological awareness and action for a sustainable economy and healthy communities.

PSU's Sustainability Office: Through new ideas, innovative partnerships and academic rigor, Portland State University students, faculty, and campus leaders are meeting the environmental, economic, and social challenges of our time. There are emerging opportunities for volunteering and involvement in many departments and disciplines, click [here](#) for more information.

Northwest Earth Institute The Northwest Earth Institute is recognized as a national leader in the development of innovative programs that empower individuals and organizations to transform culture toward a sustainable and enriching future. Today, NWEI offers eight study guides for small groups. These self-guided discussion courses are offered in workplaces, universities, homes, faith centers, neighborhoods, and community centers throughout North America. Each program encourages participants to explore values, attitudes, and actions through discussion with other people. Visit NWEI's [volunteer page](#).

Doernbecher Children's Hospital at OHSU: At Doernbecher, more than 1,000 doctors and staff are dedicated to diagnosing and treating common illnesses and complex diseases in children. We are dedicated to kids, which is why you will find more children's specialists here than anywhere else in Oregon. We know that children are different from adults in every way. That is why everything about Doernbecher is designed just for kids. We know that making our hospital kid-friendly is vital to the well-being and healing process of our littlest patients. There are many volunteer opportunities ranging from art to tutoring kids. Please visit [here for opportunities and requirements](#).

Sustainable Oregon Schools Initiative, or SOSI (pronounced "so see"), provides a focal point for sustainability information and resources for all K-12 schools. It provides the means for interested school districts and schools to integrate sustainable practices into their operations, classrooms and guiding principles. Using such practices will allow them to successfully meet current needs while ensuring a thriving future, thereby preparing the future for our children. Such schools will enable their

students to learn these values and skills in the classroom, and through interactions with the school's operations and the community, thereby preparing our children for the future, and to be tomorrow's leaders.

Social Service and Community Oriented Programs

Impact Northwest's mission is to help people achieve and maintain self-sufficiency and to prevent and alleviate the effects of poverty. We are a unique non-profit human service organization, serving over 60000 children, families, seniors and adults with disabilities annually, throughout Multnomah, Clark, Washington and Clackamas Counties. Our services are designed to help people improve their quality of life and live independently. Impact Northwest has many diverse programs in a host of interest areas. Visit their volunteer page [here](#).

Garden Partners Our mission is to enhance the health and well-being of individuals through participation in community-based therapeutic gardening programs. Garden Partners provides a new model for engaging individuals in therapeutic gardening activities. The hands-on process of caring for a garden — no matter how small — helps them reclaim their joy of life. Visit their [volunteer page](#).

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Metro, Portland's elected regional government is helping to make our metropolitan area an extraordinary place to live, work and play. Metro has volunteer opportunities in a wide array of areas: parks and wildlife, sustainable living, regional planning, recycling, conservation and more.

Portland Parks and Recreation Portland Parks & Recreation provides care to over 10,000 acres of [parks](#) and [natural areas](#), and offers thousands of programs for all ages at its [community centers](#), [swim pools](#), and other recreation [facilities](#). It is a premier City of Portland bureau that depends on a workforce of 400 permanent

employees, 1,000 part-time employees, and over 6,000 [volunteers](#) who help us extend and enhance our services and programs.

City Repair is an organized group action that educates and inspires communities and individuals to creatively transform the places where they live. City Repair facilitates artistic and ecologically-oriented place-making through projects that honor the interconnection of human communities and the natural world. The many projects of City Repair have been accomplished by a mostly volunteer staff and thousands of volunteer citizen activists. Throughout the year we educate the community with [workshops](#) on all forms of sustainability and offer the invaluable [place-making guidebook](#) and one-on-one consulting for those who want to repair their own neighborhood. If you are interested in helping our efforts please visit our [volunteer page](#).

S.C.R.A.P. or The School and Community Reuse Action Project, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that inspires creative reuse and environmentally sustainable behavior by providing education programs and affordable materials to the community. We collect clean, reusable creative materials from businesses and individuals. The SCRAP Reuse Center combines a retail shop offering an ever-changing variety of materials suitable for art, craft and school use with a public workshop room, inspirational ideas and instruction. In 2009 SCRAP diverted 64 tons of material from the waste stream. SCRAP's Education & Outreach Programs provide inspirational art and environmental activities at community outreaches, schools and other public events. Information on volunteering, membership, and making donations can be found [here](#).

The Northeast Portland Tool Library is a sponsored project of Redeemer Lutheran Church, a 501(c)(3) organization. Northeast Portland Tool Library works towards a future where Portland is vibrant, sustainable and a thriving city for people of all income levels by providing homeowners, renters, and business owners of the Northeast with tools and the knowledge to use them. The tool library operates with no paid staff, and is a 100% volunteer-driven effort. We are currently looking for more wonderful people to help out. Find out about [volunteering here](#).

The Rebuilding Center, a project of [Our United Villages](#), is a vibrant resource working to strengthen the environmental, economic, and social fabric of local communities. Founded by volunteers in 1998, The ReBuilding Center carries the region's largest volume of used building and remodeling materials. It provides resources that make home repairs affordable to everyone, with the goal of promoting the reuse of salvaged and reclaimed materials. Three hundred visitors come to The ReBuilding

Center every day to browse the ever-changing inventory that includes sinks, tubs, tile, lumber, doors, windows, trim and much more. [Volunteer information.](#)

ReCode Oregon Recode is a community-based group examining how city and state regulations can support rather than inhibit creative, sustainable living, while simultaneously educating and engaging grassroots communities in changing these regulations. A project of sustainability education center Tryon Life Community Farm in Portland Oregon, Recode gathers information to support grassroots movements in transforming codes and regulations to encourage and incentivize innovative, citizen-based sustainability in Oregon and beyond.

Janus Youth Programs has operated community-based programs for children, youth and families in Oregon and Washington since 1972. A network of over 20 programs includes: Runaway and homeless youth services, residential services, alternative education programs for youth, a scholarship program, and an Urban Agriculture Program Janus Youth Programs serves over 6,000 children, youth and families each year in addition to completing nearly 30,000 face-to-face contacts with runaway and homeless youth through an all-volunteer street outreach program on the streets every night of the year. Volunteer Information can be found [here.](#)

Useful Volunteer Resources and Links

Hands On Greater Portland:

<http://handsonportland.org/HomePage/index.php/home.html>

United Way of the Columbia-Willamette:

<http://www.unitedway-pdx.org/>

Oregon Volunteers:

<http://www.oregonvolunteers.org/>

Earth Share Oregon:

<http://earthshare-oregon.org/volunteer/>

OSU Extension Community Food Programs:

http://foodfororegon.oregonstate.edu/community_food_programs

PSU Ecowiki Opportunities Page:

<http://ecowiki.pdx.edu/opportunities.html>