



Summit Program

May 6, 2023



Schedule

Click on the workshop titles to learn more.

Learning Tracks:



Growing Environmental Stewards



Growing Your Gardening Knowledge



Growing Health and Wellness



Growing Your Community and Capacity



Growing Your Care for Farmed Animals

8:00 am - 8:45 am
Registration & Breakfast

8:30 am - 9:00 am
Opening Remarks

9:00 am - 9:30 am
Keynote

SESSION 1 9:45 am - 10:45 am

The Natural World Through Inquiry
Room 125



Soil and Soul
Room 211



Fruit Trees in Small Spaces
Room 124



Food Education, Movement, and a Sustainable Approach to Student Wellness
Room 128
Food Lab



Symbiotic Relationship: Community Pod Mapping,
Room 210



Quail and Chicken Chat
Room 214



Tour
Student-Led Tour of Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences (Sign up at the registration table)

SESSION 2 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Green Writing: Nature's Writers Workshop
Room 125



A Recipe for a Happy Garden
Room 211



Outdoor Learning for Happy Teachers and Strong Kids
Room 128, then move Outdoors



Activate Your Outdoor Space
Room 210



The Future of Neighborhood Markets
Room 124



Intro to Bee Keeping
Room 214



Tour
Student-Led Tour of Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences (Sign up at the registration table)

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm LUNCH

Optional Tour

12:45 pm - 1:15 pm

SESSION 3 1:45 pm - 2:45 pm

Pollination Party!
Room 182, then move Outdoors



It's Easier than You Might Think! Setting Up Your Seed Starting and Irrigation Systems
Room 211



Yummy, Easy, and Tasty After School Snacks
Room 128, then move to Room 126 for recipe demonstration



School and Community Gardens Reimagined!
Room 210



Teaching Toward Bee Phobia: How to Build a Shared Language Around Student Fears
Room 214



Intro to Aquaponics Education: Why Every School Needs an Aquaponics System
Room 179



Tour
Student-Led Tour of Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences (Sign up at the registration table)

9:45am - 3:30pm RESOURCE FAIR



Keynote

Speaker: Selma Sims

Selma Sims is the chief executive officer (CEO) and Head Grower at [Gardeneers](#), Chicago's only custom full-service school gardens program, which builds and maintains school gardens in 17 Chicago Public Schools and involves more than 1,700 middle school student participants from Chicago's South and West Sides.

As CEO, Selma envisions and shapes how Gardeneers grows and distributes food, engages and educates youth, and partners with the community. She also stewards donor relationships and champions staff empowerment opportunities.

Selma, who was named CEO in February of 2021, is passionate about creating leadership opportunities for all staff and embracing the "human" side of human resources and nonprofit leadership. Selma was instrumental in the organization's strategic shift to address the food and health inequities amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic through the launch of the Growing + Giving Initiative.

Before becoming CEO, Selma served as Gardeneers' Farm Manager, where she pioneered new food safety policies and protocols for the organization's school gardens. Selma has also worked at Urban Growers Collective (formerly Growing Power Chicago) as a Youth Farm Instructor, and earned her degree in agronomy and agroecology at Iowa State University.

Selma currently calls Chicago's South Side home and serves on the board of Advocates of Urban Agriculture. She is also a member of Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton's Agricultural Equity and Food Insecurity Council, the Illinois Specialty Growers Association, the Local Farmer Food Caucus with Illinois Stewardship Alliance, and MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture Natural Resources and Related Sciences).



Summit Artist

Sarita Hernández, Marimacha Monarca Press

Sarita Hernández is an arts educator, oral historian, and print/zinemaker from salvadoréxican Califas based in Chicago. Sarita is co-founder of marimacha monarca press, a queer and trans people of color artist familia based in Chicago's South Side since 2017. They are the piemaker and creamdreamer of @pleasurepies, a DIY pie shop-artist project. They are interested in artistic interventions with the historical archive and imagining rasquache/alternative forms of social documentation, preservation, and activation of everyday histories, survivals, and resistances.



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Workshops

A Recipe for a Happy Garden

Learn the skills you need to grow a happy garden. This workshop will cover topics such as planting for Chicago's climate zone, soil health, and celebrating your harvests. No green thumbs needed!



Speaker: Karen Fair

Karen Fair is the founder of [Growsumthin](#), an organization that promotes gardening and sustainability education on Chicago's South Side. Over the last twenty years, Karen has grown plants in both northern and southern climates and has experience with annuals, perennials, plant design, house plant care, succulents, and edible gardens. As a garden educator, Karen likes to teach others about what will grow well in Chicago gardens. Growing has allowed Karen to combine two things she loves: gardening and people.

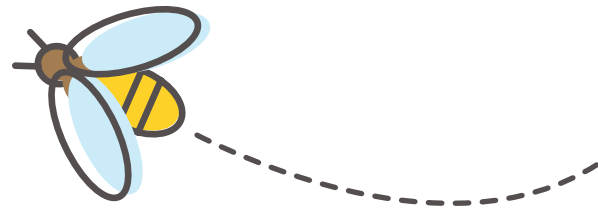
Activate Your Outdoor Space

Discover ways to engage in the green space around you, like a school playground or a backyard. Participants will sketch a blueprint of their space, create a sustainable goal(s), brainstorm appropriate activities, and develop a team of stakeholders. Participants will also learn more about a CPS "Space To Grow" school playground and how the students engage with the space during the academic day and recess.



Speaker: Tiffany Watkins

Tiffany Watkins is a teacher and wellness champion at Westcott Elementary School who led the development and design of Westcott's Space To Grow Green School Yard. In her work, Tiffany creates health and wellness initiatives for the Westcott community, champions the school's Learning Garden, and organizes healthy and fun activities throughout the year (including Bike Out Days, Glow Parties, Eat What You Grow Tasting, Healthy Cooking Classes, and Weekly Fruits and Vegetable Tastings).





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Workshops

Food Education, Movement, and a Sustainable Approach to Student Wellness

Learn about the benefits of including daily movement in students' academic routines alongside regular nutrition lessons to support their growth and well-being. Participants can expect to participate in 5-10 minutes of fun movement activities, a simple cooking demonstration lesson, and explore K-8 food literacy curricula. Make sure to wear comfortable shoes, bring a water bottle, and come ready to jam!

Speakers:



Paul Floyd

Over the past fourteen years, Paul has worked as a passionate educator serving as an assistant principal and award-winning physical education teacher. Outside the classroom, he owns a company that provides in-house wellness programs to businesses. Paul's experience working with clients that include both professional athletes and people stepping into the gym for the very first time has solidified his belief that high-quality health and physical education programs can create an impact that lasts a lifetime.



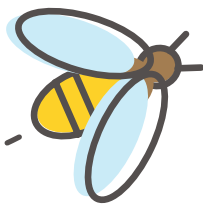
Alejandro Gomez

Alejandro serves students at the Academy for Global Citizenship as a Community Health Worker in collaboration with Esperanza Health Centers. Previously, Alejandro studied integrated health studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Alejandro aims to work with all aspects of a person, instead of looking at them as just a patient.



Bryan G. Soto

Bryan is a grade 3-8 health and wellness teacher at the Academy for Global Citizenship, where he is passionate about the mission of serving the whole child and championing all aspects of wellness. Born in Mexico City and raised in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood, Bryan is an alumnus of both CPS and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where he studied community health and urban planning.





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Workshops

Fruit Trees in Small Spaces

Learn about the joys and challenges of fruit production in small spaces, with a special focus on dwarfing fruit trees, pruning techniques, and espalier tree training. Participants will explore the possibilities of adding fruit trees to their own backyard, school, or community garden.

Speakers:



Allen Cosnow

Born and raised in Chicago, Allen has been a charter member of [Midwest Fruit Explorers](#) since the early 1980s. Allen has lived in the same home on a half-acre residential lot in Glencoe since 1975, where he has learned how to grow a lot of fruit in a limited space, while still keeping the grounds acceptably neat-looking for his neighbors.



Tim Hamilton

A former president of [Midwest Fruit Explorers](#), Tim is now retired and pursuing his hobbies of hardening and managing a honey business. On his three-quarter acre property in Gurnee, Tim has around 50 fruit trees, including pears, apples, apricots, cherries, peaches, plums, and currants.



Ben Balskus

Ben has been the [Midwest Fruit Explorers](#) president since 2021 and a member since 2018. In his backyard orchard in Beverly, Ben and his family tend over a dozen dwarf fruit trees including apples, peaches, pears, and cherries, alongside their backyard chicken flock. When not puttering around the yard, Ben works as an ecological project manager with a focus on vegetation development for utility scale solar facilities.





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Workshops

Green Writing: Nature's Writers Workshop

Learn strategies for including more nature writing in the classroom. These teaching strategies are designed to help students foster a deeper understanding of nature, develop critical thinking skills, and learn to articulate their critical stance on the climate crisis.



Speaker: Jen Cullerton Johnson

Jen Cullerton Johnson is a CPS teacher who helped create the Karma Garden and is the author of the children's book *Seeds of Change*.

Intro to Aquaponics Education: Why Every School Needs an Aquaponics System

This workshop will cover the basics of Aquaponics, the challenges and rewards of successfully maintaining these systems, and why schools should provide students the opportunity to learn about closed loop systems. Attendees will also learn about [Plant Chicago](#) and its mission to cultivate local circular economies.



Speaker: Tom Knapp

Tom Knapp is the Education Manager at Plant Chicago. Tom has also worked for the fungi forward start-up Mycocyte Inc. and Loyola University Chicago's Urban Agriculture program. Tom earned a master's degree in environmental science and sustainability from Loyola and a bachelor's degree in environmental science and a minor in sustainability community development from Stephen F. Austin State University.





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Workshops

Intro to Bee Keeping

Learn about honeybees, how to get them and put them into your hive, and take care of them so that they thrive. Participants will also learn about the unique challenges of beekeeping in an urban environment and Chicago-area ordinances.



Speaker: Naaman Gambill

Naaman Gambill has been a beekeeper in Chicago for over a decade. In 2016, Naaman founded [The Hive Supply Company](#) to provide quality equipment, education, and management services to over 350 hives throughout the Chicagoland area. Naaman is deeply committed to educating Chicago's youth and the general public on the importance of bees and pollinators.

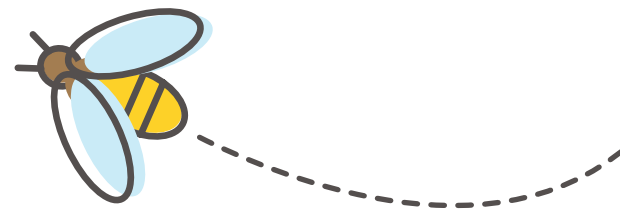
It's Easier Than You Might Think! Setting Up Your Seed Starting and Irrigation Systems

Learn about soil blocking and how to set up a raised-bed irrigation system. This hands-on workshop will cover topics such as crop planning, hardening off, transplanting, and irrigation set-up. Walk away with the resources for purchasing the supplies you'll need for keeping your plants healthy and strong all summer long...even when you go away for a few days. Come prepared to get your hands dirty!



Speaker: Monica Romano

Monica took the University of Illinois Extension's Master Urban Farming course in the fall of 2020, and it changed how she gardens. For more than 10 years, she's served as a co-lead on her school's garden team, and she has an indoor seed-starting station and raised beds in her back and front yards in Albany Park. Monica is gradually installing native plants in places where food doesn't grow at home and at school.





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Outdoor Learning for Happy Teachers and Strong Kids

Learn about outdoor play as a simple, low-cost catalyst for social and emotional learning, cognitive development, health, and happiness. Educators, support staff, and family members benefit from outdoor early learning just as much as kids. Just by moving part (or all!) of the school day outdoors, early childhood classrooms can become engines of family and community well-being.

Speakers:



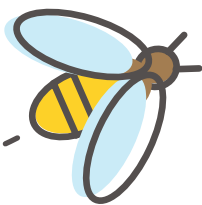
Olessor Anthony

Olessor has served families across Chicago with the CPS Office of Early Childhood Education for 24 years. Currently, Olessor is a Family Engagement Coordinator for Network 11 where she assists with building welcoming school environments, enhancing two-way communication, leveraging community partnerships, assisting with enrollment, and supporting the ongoing educational well-being of families and their children on the South Side of Chicago. She is certified as a Family Specialist with Gateways to Opportunity through the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA).



Teresa Weed

Teresa ran a completely outdoor preschool on public lands on Chicago's Northwest Side for five years, and she is the founder and Policy and Advocacy Coordinator of [Forest Schools for Illinois](#), a volunteer organization committed to removing systemic barriers to outdoor play and early learning for Illinois kids. Teresa is currently enjoying student teaching in a first grade CPS classroom.





Workshops

Pollination Party!

Learn about the importance of place-based learning through an exploration of the fascinating relationship between plants and pollinators. Participants will take part in hands-on pollinator experiences designed to be easily replicable and modifiable for K–12 students. The workshop will conclude with a student-led tour of the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences pollinator gardens.

Speakers:



Michael (Chris) Hershier

Chris has been a teacher at Prairie Crossing Charter School for almost 20 years. In 2013, Chris was honored by the Center for Green Schools as a Trailblazing Teacher for bringing environmental concepts to the classroom. In addition to his years of classroom teaching, Chris has also worked for four years as a naturalist. Chris earned a master of education degree in integrated learning from Antioch University New England and a bachelor's degree in ecological assessment and mathematics from the University of Findlay.



Cynthia McGovern

Cynthia has worked in the education field since 1983 in diverse class settings, including urban, suburban, and rural areas. She recently completed Montessori Secondary training and currently teaches an adolescent program at Nature Walk Montessori in Round Lake, Illinois. At her current school, Cynthia has engaged students through the installation of two pollinator gardens, a vegetable garden, and a rain garden.



Carolyne Banks

Carolyne is a University of Illinois Extension agriculture and environmental educator located at the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences. By making research-based information accessible and engaging for all learners through educational best practices, Carolyne hopes to increase environmental awareness and systems thinking in the community.



Naomi Dietzel Hershier

Naomi is the Dean of Sustainability at Prairie Crossing Charter School, where she works with students and teachers to incorporate environmental and sustainability learning into the daily school experience. Naomi manages the learning garden spaces on the school's five-acre campus, which includes over 50 food-growing gardens, six outdoor classrooms, and numerous native plant gardens. In 2022, Naomi was awarded the Trailblazer Award by the Green Schools National Network.



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Workshops

Quail and Chicken Chat

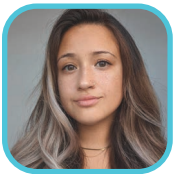
Have you ever wondered about keeping chickens or quails at your school? It might be easier than you think! Between the two, you've got options to raise and keep them in apartments, balconies, backyards, schoolyards, and more. Join this session to learn the basics about bird keeping and how they could enrich your classroom and your life overall. All are welcome!

Speakers:



Amanda Anderson

Amanda is the Urban Agricultural Program Manager at the [Gary Comer Youth Center](#), which specializes in youth development and workplace readiness on the South Side of Chicago. She has over 10 years of experience working with youth and their families in agriculture and environmental education programs. Amanda also loves gardening, raising quail for eggs, and working with teenagers to help them discover their own strengths and passions.



Stef Funk

Stef is a multi-racial Chicagoan who has worked with various institutions and nonprofits to support Chicago's local food system. She is passionate about educating all Chicagoans about the importance of community control over local food systems and advocating for justice and equity for our growers, producers, and consumers. Stef leads the Chicago Food Justice Rhizome Network, Productive Landscapes Task Force, Annual Chicago Food Justice Summit, and cares for 13 backyard chickens on the Southwest Side of Chicago.



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Workshops

School and Community Gardens Reimagined!

Learn how to create a practice garden design that stretches your imagination, incorporates native plants and flowers with vegetables and herbs to bring pollinators right to your crops, and encourages a diverse garden ecosystem. This type of garden creates learning opportunities around topics like the climate, nature and environmental stewardship, and food production, and helps address several other common garden challenges like funding and maintenance.

Speakers:



Connie Kollmeyer

Connie is an Environmental Educator and Garden Coordinator for The Conservation Foundation (TCF), where she enjoys spending time with kids and families in nature and the TCF's McDonald Farm gardens in Naperville, Illinois. She also teaches sustainable urban agriculture and study abroad at College of DuPage (CoD) and DuPage County Corrections through a partnership with CoD. Connie is an organic gardener, urban farmer, forager, permaculture instructor, animal lover, nature lover, foodie, traveler, mushroom grower, and herbalist!



Kyla Muhammad

Kyla is a Community Engagement Coordinator at The Conservation Foundation. Kyla's curiosity about living systems and the ecosystem led her to become a Master Naturalist, through which she participates in community science, community education, rain monitoring, seed collecting, and native plant projects. She is also passionate about promoting sustainable and regenerative landscapes that nourish people, wildlife, and the soil.

Soil and Soul

We don't just grow plants – we grow soil. Learn about what your garden soil needs to be healthy and thrive and explore questions like: what's the difference between soil and dirt? What does fertile soil look like? How do you "grow" it? And what about the soil inside of you – your soul? What does your soul need to grow and thrive? This is an interactive workshop with microscopes, drawing activities, and fun mindfulness activities.



Speaker: Kenneth Strickland

Kenneth Strickland is the Employment and Farm Education Specialist at [Growing Home](#), Englewood's organic urban farm. He is committed to enriching the community through economic, ecological, and social justice. Kenneth recently moved to Chicago from Durham, North Carolina where he completed his mental health internship through Duke University's Counseling and Psychological Services. Kenneth has a love for gardening and the life lessons gleaned from the fields.





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Symbiotic Relationship: Community Pod Mapping

Explore the symbiotic relationships in nature as a metaphor for how educators and youth workers can work together to be co-conspirators for environmental and climate justice. We will draw on Indigenous wisdom from Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*, using the metaphor of companion planting the three sisters and the naturally occurring symbiotic relationship of lichen, to deepen our connections and sense of interdependence in a pod mapping activity.

Speakers:



Gaby Garay

Gaby is a Salvadoran-Mexican youth worker, educator, crafter/maker, and land steward. They have seven years of experience in youth programming and curriculum writing, with a focus on storytelling, relationship with the land, creativity, and art as crucial tools that bring transformative change. Her making practice includes crochet, hand/machine sewing, quilting, and natural dyeing using primarily thrifted fibers.



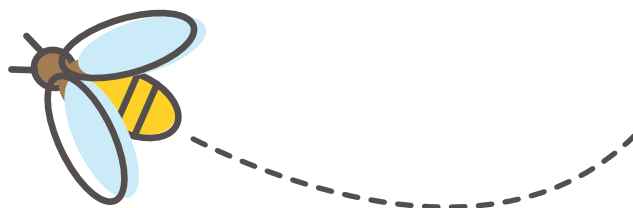
Sarai Redmond

Sarai is a Black and queer Chicago-born multidisciplinary artist, musician, educator, and restorative justice practitioner. Over their past ten years as an educator, Sarai has facilitated learning with people ages 2-87 across various subjects including bike mechanics, urban agriculture, and how to hold a talking circle. Their current visual work explores concepts around the body as terrain, Earth as ancestor, and ancestor as self. Learn more about their work at saraibernice.com.



Irina Zadov

Irina is an artist, educator, and cultural organizer. They are a queer, post-Soviet Jewish immigrant and settler on the unceded territories of the Three Fires Confederacy, also known as Chicago, Illinois. Their practice explores the liminal space between the individual and the collective, diasporic community and chosen family, and the home and the state. Irina aims to co-create joyful, healing, and liberatory spaces by, for, and with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, immigrants, young people, and LGBTQIA+ communities.





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Workshops

The Future of Neighborhood Markets

Learn about resilient means of providing food to Chicago communities. This workshop is designed within a vision of environmental justice where the Chicago communities that are most affected by food apartheid are changing the narrative, building high-capacity gardens, and creating structures of vitality and health.

Speakers:



Gina Jamison

Ms. Gina Jamison is the president of Garfield Park Advisory Council, (GarfieldPAC), co-chair of the Garfield PAC Health & Wellness Committee, board member of the Best Babies Zone Advisory Council, member of the Garfield Park Garden Network and the Garfield Park Neighborhood Market, a volunteer for the Garfield Park Community Council, member of the Garfield Park Rite to Wellness, and board member of United to Preserve Affordability and Sustainability in Garfield Park. Gina was born and raised in Garfield Park until 1960 and returned in 2016 after retiring from 20 years of service as a tractor-trailer driver with FedEx. She now pours her energy into her true passion: gardening and community organizations.



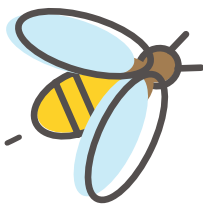
Adonnis Platt

Adonnis serves as the Land and Community Steward for [Grow Greater Englewood](#), where he works with community members to advance food sovereignty by creating access to healthy, nourishing food through backyard and community garden installations. He is currently working with a cohort of young interns to develop skills around growing organic food, carpentry, and community organizing practices.



Nate Haefelin

Nate and a crew of community gardeners started building and maintaining gardens in 2019 on Chicago's South Side. He also helped start Wood St. Collective, alongside co-founders Martell Collins and Peace Coleman, planning Garden Action days and Neighborhood Market days.





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Workshops

The Natural World Through Inquiry

Inquiry-based STEM and sensemaking is a collaborative process that positions students as acting and thinking like scientists and engineers. This process encourages students to raise questions and to explore both phenomena in their world and their interests based on their own life experiences and backgrounds. By empowering students to share their own observations with questions that prompt their natural curiosities, teachers can facilitate better learning and develop a more conceptual understanding of science and STEM.

Speakers:



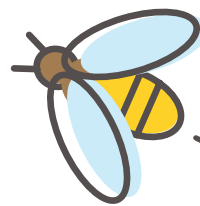
Eleanor Sweeney

Eleanor was a public school teacher for 12 years in San Francisco and Chicago. She currently works as a School Partnerships Educator at the Field Museum, where she brings inquiry-based workshops to CPS classrooms.



Christina Woods

Christina is the Professional Development Educator at the Field Museum, where she creates programming and facilitates educator learning experiences that embody the Field Museum mission of creating connections to the natural world and the human story. Prior to her work at the Field, she worked with pre-service teachers in Loyola University Chicago's School of Education, and was the founder of The Future Perfect consultancy.





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Yummy, Easy, and Tasty After School Snacks

Is your tummy rumbling loud for something yummy and easy to make? The team from Good Food is Good Medicine is here to help with the snack attack! Join to learn how to make yummy and healthy after school snacks. We'll be talking about the health benefits of ingredients while we give hands-on recipe instruction! We'll enjoy our snacks together and you'll go home with a list of ingredients and recipes. Students are welcome.



Speaker: Jeannine Wise

Jeannine is a chef, community herbalist, and veggie gardener currently serving as the director of Good Food is Good Medicine, a nutrition education and food justice program teaching cooking and nutrition to people on the South and West Sides of Chicago. They also recently opened the first Little Free Apothecary in the city, growing and offering medicinal culinary herbs and remedies as a love letter to the community of Little Village.

Teaching Toward Bee Phobia: How to Build a Shared Language Around Student Fears

With many insect populations declining, conservationists and educators have launched efforts highlighting the importance of pollinators and native bees. However, these efforts often ignore the complex feelings of urban children about insects. In the workshop, a veteran Southside teacher will share interviews, art and writing from students illustrating their bee phobias. Audience members will have a chance to draw and write about challenging experiences they have had with insects. How did those moments affect them? What must teachers learn before teaching about bees?



Speaker: Christopher Weber

Christopher Weber is the outdoor learning educator at the Ancona School in Chicago's Kenwood neighborhood. A certified horticulturist and environmental educator, he previously worked as an environmental journalist.

