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NCNow News

Clarkson gets \$35,000 to teach Canton students about using food waste

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POTSDAM -- Clarkson University is receiving \$35,000 grant to educate Canton Central School District students about making waste.

The grant comes from the E2 Energy to Educate program of Constellation NewEnergy, Inc. and its parent company Exelon as of grants "giving back to the communities where they work and live and fostering greater interest in STEM programs," according company's announcement.

Food waste is a valuable resource, yet Americans discard 40 million tons in landfills annually, according to Constellation. Anaerobic digesters easily treat food waste to recover energy and produce effluent that can be used as fertilizer, as long as the food waste is free of contamination. Diverting it from the solid waste stream requires a cultural change so that organic waste streams of high quality can be generated.

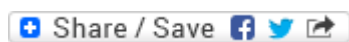


Through a partnership between Clarkson University and Canton schools, the program "will train more than 60 college students more than 375 K-12 students the benefits of resource recovery and the need to reliably generate a 'contaminant free' organic food resource recovery, the announcement said.

The plan is for Clarkson students to develop and deliver the classroom activities and mentor K-12 students in a new resource recovery program at the school. Post-consumer food waste will be collected at the school cafeteria and delivered regularly to Clarkson's anaerobic digester at the nearby farm operated by Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County (CCE).

E2 Energy to Educate aims for the workshops for teachers to generate school-wide expertise so that the program will be sustainable years to come and will become a model for other school districts. Clarkson students will simultaneously create and implement a program on the Clarkson campus to supplement the feed stream to the anaerobic food digester on campus.

These grant awards aim to support projects that are team oriented, hands-on projects with specific results. E2 Energy to Educate will enhance student understanding of the science and technology needed to address energy issues, and reach and inspire students differently about energy.

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