

MINI GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY

Please complete the project summary and return the completed form to April Snyder, Associate Administrator for the Institute on the Environment at aprilsnyder@umn.edu. Paper copies will not be accepted. Please also attach any photos, publications, brochures, event agendas or other materials that were a result of the mini grant summary.

Date of Report Submission:	7/25/14
Project PI & Dept/School	Kate Knuth, IonE, UMN
Project Title:	Interstate Sustainability Leadership Symposium
Grant Amount \$:	\$3000

Project Context & Purpose

Please include the original project purpose statement and revise for any changes that occurred in the project after the start date with a short explanation of the changes.

A three-day weekend conference in early January 2014 held at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, attracting approximately 30 undergraduate environmental leaders from Midwestern states. This project addresses goals one and three of the mini grants program; building interdisciplinary capacity and new partnerships across boundaries.

The project changes in that it served about 15 people. We had drop off in attendance in part due to bad weather. There was a snow storm/ice storm the Friday of the conference in the area. Additionally, part of the budget was used to record and edit videos for participants.

Work Completed

Please provide a summary of the work that was completed for the mini grant project.

The ISLS event was held in January 2014 at Northwestern University with students from several Midwestern universities, including two University of Minnesota campuses (Morris and Twin Cities). At the conference the students learned with each other, developed pitches for their sustainability ideas and recorded videos of their pitches. The videos produced at the summit can be found on the ISLS You Tube channel.

http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnA_b4lvRL2VRQxtW_4dT5A

The Northwestern office for sustainability wrote a blog post about the event.

<http://www.northwestern.edu/sustainability/news/2014/articles/students-converge-at-nu-to-pitch-ideas-for-sustainability.html>

The Institute on the Environment also posted a blog post about ISLS.

<http://environment.umn.edu/event/youtube-activism-interstate-sustainability-leaders-summit/>

Partnerships & Collaborations

Please provide a summary of the project personnel, partnerships and collaborations that worked directly on the project or were started as a direct result of the mini grant project.

The project involved a close partnership with Eric Sannerud (UMTC) and Allison Turner (Purdue University) in developing the symposium, with Kate Knuth consulting and supporting along the way. One significant collaboration this is continuing after the conference is between Knuth and Katie Ledermann. Katie Ledermann and Natalie Hoidal (both UMN-Morris students) pitched the idea of youth collaborating with the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board. A couple few weeks after the summit, Kate Knuth helped facilitate both of these young leaders in speaking in front of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board when the Board visited the University of Minnesota Saint Paul campus. This work is ongoing (and grows out of previous mini-grant supported work), and the ISLS helped develop useful relationships.

Project Outcomes & Impacts

Please provide a summary of the outcomes and /or impacts of the mini grant project including future plans for the project.

The mini grant deepened relationships amongst Midwest young environmental leaders and gave them experience in developing and pitching ideas. Some of the relationships amongst the Minnesota leaders are continuing to develop and grow, particularly related to the MN Environmental Quality Board. Should the students continue to work on the ideas they pitched, they will have the online videos to use.

There are not currently plans to do another ISLS program because of lack on institutional capacity and the challenges of recruiting and staffing the program that we learned about while running this first ISLS.