Charles Town Middle School

Science Club Students Plant a Rain Garden

Science Club students from 6th to 8th grade participated in a rain garden planting. During the spring of 2014 the Science Club installed a 250 gallon cistern at the student entrance. This began addressing the sever water issues in the area. The cistern is now part of a greater project. A 350 square foot rain garden and an additional 275 gallon cistern were installed on October 8th.

Science Club students participated in an hour long education program to discuss the impact their rain garden would be making on the local watershed and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The rain garden and two cisterns capture a significate amount of water that would otherwise runoff the school grounds picking up sediment and carry it to a nearby stream.

Construction began September 29th at the school and took two days to complete. A backhoe was used to dig a trench for the underdrain to be installed. This underdrain will allow water to pool and spread evenly underground then begin to infiltrate deeper soil layers. A vertical pipe was installed to allow students to monitor the water level underground. Once the underdrain tubing was placed highly pervious materials of gravel and sand filled in the trench with top soil as the final layer. Sand was mixed with the remaining top soil over the surface area of the rain garden and tilled. A boarder of landscaping timbers were the final touch on the overall structure of the rain garden.

Twenty-four Science Club students, two parents, and three teachers installed 105 native flowering plants and planted six Black Chokeberries at the student entrance. Students worked efficiently to complete the planting and mulching within the two hours. As a group the students were able to place their hand print on the newly installed cistern as a reminder of their hard work. The entrance was transformed from a blank space that flooded to a visual appealing landscape that is controlling flooding.

For more information contact: Molly Barkman 304.279.9189 mbarkman@cacaponinstitute.org