

## Buzzworthy: CSM Celebrates National Pollinator Week, Earns Recertification as a Bee Campus

Posted by [TBN\(Staff\)](#) On 06/23/2020

*Photo: CSM Art Professor Bonnie Castlebury and her art students joined in on the bee love by creating a 'bee-utiful mural on a SMO gas tank at the La Plata Campus to proudly show off CSM's designation as a bee campus.*

Bee City USA® renewed the College of Southern Maryland's (CSM) Bee Campus USA certification following a rigorous application process, and just in time for National Pollinator Week June 22-28. The college was recognized for collective efforts at its four campuses to conduct pollinator education and outreach, and sustain pollinator health and habitat with a least-toxic integrated pest management plan.

Through a variety of cooperative efforts and shared goals, Bee Campus USA allies with beekeepers, gardeners, municipalities, organizations, farmers, and businesses dedicated to [reversing the decline of native plants and pollinators](#). According to Bee City USA®, native pollinators are responsible for one in three bites we eat and the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species.

Among the many pollinator-friendly projects conducted at CSM's campuses throughout 2019, students and staff planted and maintained 10 new native plant gardens. Bee hotels were also constructed and installed in cooperation with local Boy and Girl Scout projects.

*Photo: This bee hotel built by Southern Maryland's Girl and Boy Scouts at the Prince Frederick Campus help keep CSM pollinator-friendly.*

Following COVID restrictions, dedicated volunteer gardeners planted an additional 600 native plants on CSM campuses this spring.

"Our Bee Campus projects and education efforts would not be possible without the assistance of campus and community volunteers and generous financial grants from [The Chaney Foundation](#) who remain this effort's primary benefactor," said CSM Biology Professor Paul Billeter. Billeter and Biology Professor Dr. Tracey Stuller serve on CSM's Environmental Sustainability Committee and work to keep CSM Bee Campus USA certified.

According to Billeter, in 2019 several Biology and Environmental Science courses added lectures on pollinator-related topics and CSM's Continuing Education and Workforce Development staff arranged to offer classes on planting native plants, supporting monarch butterflies, bee-keeping and pollinator-related workshops.

"We are also encouraged that our classes are taking root and expanding to the community," Billeter said of La Plata's ongoing efforts to restore native pollinators. He explained that the town's partnership with the Southern Maryland Audubon Society to become Maryland's first "Bird City USA" will likely result in La Plata becoming one of Maryland's Bee Cities too.

"We did not invent this idea," said Billeter. "University of Maryland Extension Service and Maryland DNR are actively involved in this effort while home gardeners and local farmers are perhaps making the most impact. We praise nurseries with sections dedicated to native plants, gardeners who plant native flowers, and every farmer who sows clover on a fallow field."

[About Bee City USA®](#): The Bee City USA program endorses a set of commitments, defined in a resolution, for creating sustainable habitats for native pollinators, which are vital to feeding the planet.

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