The main benefits of the course accrue to you as an individual activist, by improving your knowledge about current, critical issues influencing the quality of life in urban neighborhoods.

Your organization and other neighborhoods will benefit as you interact with and help to build a corps of neighborhood activists, leading academics, government officials, and knowledgeable citizens who share insights and skills.

Participants in the initial, fall 2003 session will collaborate with faculty to test and revise teaching materials, approaches, and case studies that will be used in the second, spring 2004 session, and will be invited to nominate participants for that second session.

Finally, all participants in the pilot year will help to form the agenda and be invited to a working conference on Environmental Citizenship. The conference will disseminate the lessons of the Academy’s pilot year, as well as other experiences in environmental citizenship from around New England.

Initial classes will be limited in size to 20-25 participants to permit intensive, interactive classes and field trips. To accept this invitation, please complete and return the enclosed form by February 13, 2004. We will call or email you in February to follow-up and make sure you have received all necessary information and answer any questions you may have. Feel free to make additional copies of this to share with other interested people.

Program inquiries may be made to:

Nancy Wong, Project Coordinator
Environmental Citizenship Academy
c/o Urban Harbors Institute
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125
(617) 287.5570 (T) environcitizen@umb.edu
(617) 287.5575 (F) www.eca.umb.edu

Who Should Attend?
Citizens wishing to become more informed and better prepared to improve the natural and built environments of their neighborhoods and community.
Thirty years of environmental activism and litigation may already have achieved most of what they can achieve. Further environmental progress requires inventing new tools, or putting old tools to new uses.

Environmental regulation has always been about preventing the worst. Almost by definition, ecological or historic preservation efforts focused on “special places” treats “unspecial places,” where the vast majority of people live and work, as disposable...

In contrast, [environmental citizenship] is about engaging people to achieve the best—about making all places special for the people who live and work there.


The Environmental Citizenship Academy will train a corps of “citizen environmental generalists,” not only to identify and tackle environmental problems, but to restore, sustain, and even enhance the natural systems critical to creating a high quality of life in urban neighborhoods. The skills and resources needed to meet these challenges are just as much social or political as they are technical or scientific. They include access to and influence over the entire range of organizations and agencies making decisions that affect local communities. Academy graduates will be equipped to participate actively in the current shift of environmental policies at all levels.

WHERE AND HOW WILL CLASSES BE TAUGHT?

Registered participants will receive a mailing 1-2 weeks before the first class, containing directions, room numbers, class times, initial readings or assignments, and the online address of the course website. Classroom sessions will be taught at the University of Massachusetts Boston. These presentations will use and be supported by:

- An Environmental Citizenship website, which will allow participants to access assignments, reference materials, and resources from outside the classroom, through neighborhood libraries, community centers, or home computers.
- Two half-day Saturday field trips to local sites, to explore projects and to gain practical experience in identifying, analyzing, and resolving problems by influencing public policies.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

There is no cost for participation. Tuition for this pilot project is supported by private foundations and the University of Massachusetts Boston. The University will provide classroom space and an Environmental Citizenship website accessible to program participants. However, we do ask you to commit in writing to attend all classes and field trips for the course.

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WHAT IS THE ACADEMY?

The Environmental Citizenship Academy is an educational program consisting of six 2.5-hour evening seminars and two 4-hour field trips designed to help participants become more effective advocates for the environments in which they live, work, and play. The Academy will bring together urban residents, healthcare advocates, staff and members from non-profit and community development organizations. Working with environmental researchers and educators, participants will explore how an environmental perspective on urban issues can help them achieve their goals for their community.

The program will include:

- The City’s natural life support systems: urban ecology
- The City’s built life support systems: urban infrastructure
- From working the system to changing the system: environmental citizenship in action

The Environmental Citizenship Academy is a tribute to the vision and lifetime commitment to the urban environment of Dr. Bette Woody, in whose memory the Academy is dedicated.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

The goal of the 2003-04 pilot sessions of the Environmental Citizenship Academy are to graduate our first two classes of “environmental generalists,” one in the fall of 2003 and one in the spring of 2004. The spring 2004 course will consist of:

Six Tuesday evening seminars (6:30 - 9pm):
March 2nd, 9th, 23rd, 30th, April 13th, and 27th
Two Saturday field trips (3-4 hours each):
February 28th and May 1st

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