

The Wangari Maathai Natural Garden at the Al Raby School For Community & Environment



CNT Green Infrastructure Initiatives

Our goal is to make Green Infrastructure the preferred stormwater management option for municipalities, developers, communities, and individuals.

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) and a new addition to the Chicago Public School system, Al Raby High School, are transforming the school's physical environment into the optimal environmental leadership learning environment. The installation of a native woodland garden, named after the 2004 Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai, will help to beautify the main entrance of the school, and help connect the students to a living ecology by providing a hands-on experience in landscape design, creation, and maintenance. In order to maximize the transformative affect of the garden, approximately 2,000 square feet of concrete sidewalk and underlying aggregate will be removed and recycled.

Located in East Garfield Park, the heart of what might become Chicago's "greenest" neighborhood, Al Raby is confronted with a striking lack of open space in which the students can gain first hand experience in cultivating and managing a landscape. The front yard of the Al Raby School currently consists of cracked and degraded cement paving. The school community, from teachers and students to local neighbors, is creating a garden that will improve the school's appearance while simultaneously increasing its capacity to accomplish its educational mission.

CNT is the founding civic partner of the Al Raby School for Community and Environment. Founded in 2004 by CNT Senior Vice President Stephen Perkins, this small student-centered high school envisions a student body inspired to intellectual excellence and personal responsibility through community and environmental activism.

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Before: Al Raby High School for Community and Environment, Main Entrance, June 2006



After: Students take part in planting the garden, Main Entrance, May 2007

Concrete Removal 5/18/07

Soil Delivered 5/21/07

Garden Installed 5/23 & 24/07

Garden Dedication TBA