

2024 EMC Environmental Excellence Award Winners

The [Erie County Environmental Management Council](#) (EMC), an advisory board to the County on environmental issues, recognized the following 2024 Environmental Excellence Award Winners:

The Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, a local project organized by the Monarch of Infinite Possibilities LLC, the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor, and the NAACP Buffalo Branch, focuses on improving the environment. Over the past 4 years these organizations have grown the event from a handful of volunteers to hundreds of volunteers. They have also increased partnerships, as well as expanded the number of sites and types of projects. Not only has this project improved the environment, it has also brought together the environmental organizations and groups on the East Side of Buffalo, strengthening relationships and building community.

The Frontier High School Ecology Club Tree Project has been an annual program delivered for seventeen years by the school's Ecology Club to teach the importance of trees through classroom-based presentations and a tree seedling distribution. The project is sustained by fundraisers and with coaching by Master Gardener volunteers from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County. The Club's students prepare an education plan for teaching all classroom levels of elementary students about the benefits of trees and tree-planting and care, including hands-on experience by using skits, props, activity booklets, a seedling planting demonstration, and a coloring contest. Annually, Ecology Club students seek feedback to improve the program and to incorporate current environmental issues.

The Omega Mentoring Programs' "Climate Connections for Buffalo's East Side Youth" project builds relationships with organizations so that the students, as well as the mentors, can actively learn about opportunities to take climate action - both preparing for and working to reduce the impact of climate change. In turn, the mentors and Just Buffalo Literary Center work with the students to synthesize this information and share it with the broader community. Sessions are held every other Monday evening during the school year to engage in programming, volunteer opportunities, writing projects, and tours that correlate to Erie County's Community Climate Action Plan.