

CAP Reflection – Felipe Sequeira

On Tuesday, September 29, 2015 our pod, District 12^^, completed our Community Action Project – Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup VIU Campus. Our pod of 7 members came up with this idea because of the amount of garbage we had seen on our daily trips onto and off of campus. The first comment to arise was similar to what we heard from inquiring individuals on the day – “We aren’t on a shoreline.” This actually became one of the focus points of our presentation.

Although we are not on the shoreline, we are a part of the watershed that feeds into the ocean. Anything on campus can leech, blow, roll, or be carried by animals into the ocean. This, in turn, affects our food chain (marine life), weather, air and much more.

The process of putting together a GCSC was surprisingly simple. Everything that is needed can be obtained from the GCSC website www.shorelinecleanup.ca . Some info that can be obtained includes PR samples, videos, tracking charts, lesson plans, and more.

For the planning part, John and I were responsible for bringing the VIU Student Union on board as a sponsor for the event. This proved to be a little more difficult than we imagined due to the difficulty in actually meeting the person in charge. In the end we were able to secure the use of a tent and tables as well as printing of posters.

The day of the event was eye opening. I was surprised at the lack of people that showed an interest in our project. With the short lead up in promoting the event, I suppose I shouldn’t have been surprised, but I encountered many people that looked at our table and gave a hmmmph as they walked away.

Another surprising part of the event was that we didn’t even get close to some of the areas we had identified as problems. Equally surprising was that some of the places we thought would be the most affected were pretty clean. Somewhat unsurprisingly, the less trafficked areas during the day like the parking lot were the most littered on campus.

Our cleanup only lasted a few hours but we were able to collect a large amount of trash. The unfortunate part of the day was that we only touched a very small area of the campus.

This would be something that I would definitely like to incorporate into my classroom in the future.