



Oakland Turfgrass Education Initiative

January 2005 Update

The school year is well underway, with some significant changes and activities. We want to keep you informed regarding these issues and remind you of the important work going on in Oakland schools. Those serving on the OTEI board which meets monthly in support of the programs are: Kelli Anderson, CourseCo; Gary Carls, CGCS, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America; Raymond Chester, Oakland Golf; Peter Crabtree, Peralta College; Ray Davies, CGCS, CourseCo; Eric Edgerly, Castlemont High; Gary Ingram, CGCS, Metropolitan Golf; Alton Jelks, Peralta College; and Katie Koelle, Peralta College.

- ❖ **New Classes Approved**
- ❖ **\$10,625 FAA Grant Obtained**
- ❖ **20 Students in Turf Seminar**
- ❖ **120 Enrolled at Castlemont**
- ❖ **EPA weather Station Saved**
- ❖ **Teaching Assistant Hired**
- ❖ **Goal of Six Summer Interns**

CASTLEMONT H. S.

New Classes

The new "small school" concept has been implemented at Castlemont High School. Our program is now part of the Arts School, under principal Matin Abdel-Qawi. OTEI support has expanded from two classes to six. These classes have more than 120 students enrolled. To meet the requirements of the state, the classes created for the science requirement are called Agricultural Chemistry and Plant Biology.

These two new classes were approved by University of California (meeting "A to G" requirements), Oakland Unified School District, and the state of California. This was accomplished following a number of months of very hard work by Peter Crabtree, Gary Ingram, CGCS, and Katie Koelle, in developing and obtaining approval of the classes.

Teaching Assistant

Peralta College has funded a part-time staff person (8-16 hours per week) to support six classes and instructor Eric Edgerly. This person will assist in coordinating the laboratory portions of the curriculum, lesson plans, and other activities of the Oakland Chapter of the Future Farmers of America.

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

All the classes are affiliated with the Future Farmers of America. A grant of \$10,625 was obtained from the FFA. The submittal was prepared by Gary Ingram, CGCS, Peter Crabtree, and Kelli Anderson. These funds are used to support classes and assist the student leaders in attending the annual FFA leadership conference in Fresno, CA in June.

Guest Speakers

Speakers from industry are scheduled frequently on Wednesdays now through the end of the year.

EPA Weather Station

Some years ago, the EPA provided a weather station to Castlemont High School. This agreement for the use of the weather station was in jeopardy. Gary Ingram and others stepped in to retain the weather station for the use of OTEI-supported classes. Efforts are currently underway to have the weather station included in the California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS), which is a network of weather stations used by Agriculture throughout the state to measure irrigation demand to optimize irrigation.

MERRITT H.S.

New Relationship

Through the efforts of Gary Ingram, CGCS, superintendent at Metropolitan Golf Links, students at Merritt High School are participating in OTEI activities. More than 20 of the students are attending the OTEI Turf Seminar offered through Merritt College. Gary Ingram is scheduling speakers and setting up internship opportunities for these students.

PERALTA COLLEGE

Turf Seminar – Merritt College

The turf seminar this winter has 34 students from Merritt High and Castlemont High. The seminar is 18-hours of study on three Saturdays. The first two Saturday events have recently taken place at Merritt College and Metropolitan Golf Links, where basic turfgrass management principles have been taught by Gary Carls, CGCS, and Ray Davies, CGCS. We have been supported by other OTEI supporters from industry at Metropolitan Golf Links and at University of California, Berkeley. The final day is this Saturday at the University of California, Berkeley, where the students will tour all sports facilities on the campus that utilize turfgrass to reinforce the use of the principles they have been taught.

Goals

Summer Internships

Summer is fast approaching. Last year we had three students employed as interns. Our goal this year is to have six students employed as interns on golf courses, and in other green industry businesses. We are working with Delores Lemon-Thomas, director of “School to Careers” department of Oakland Unified School District to implement our internship program.

Middle School Involvement

We are hopeful to reach and influence middle school students. Elmhurst Middle School students have introduced to green industry businesses through educational field trips at Metropolitan Golf Links, and a golf team has also been established. Madison Middle School is in the development stages. Presentations have been held at the middle school to increase awareness of the OTEI programs available

at Castlemont and Merritt High Schools and Merritt College.

Elementary School Involvement

Gary Ingram, GCCS, and the California Agricultural Pest Control Association presented the “Plant Doctor” program last fall. The goal of this presentation is to educate the youth on the benefits of agriculture and eating right.

Summary

We appreciate the support we receive in our efforts to show high school students the value of higher education, and the opportunities available for management positions in California’s green industry. Thank you.

The OTEI program introduces inner-city youth to potential career paths in golf and sports turf management and the entire green industry.

*OTEI is a cooperative project of:
CourseCo, Inc
Castlemont High School
Peralta Community College District
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
Future Farmers of America
The Green Industry
The City of Oakland*

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