



A Path To Sustainability

Middletown looks to silver-level certification in Sustainable CT

Though only in its second year, Sustainable CT has reached many impressive milestones, including signing up a full 50% of the municipalities in Connecticut. It's proof that our towns and cities remain dedicated to a green future. But there are many paths to sustainability, making those individual achievements unique to each municipality. One such journey that has been getting a lot of attention is Middletown's path to earning silver-level certification after making the bronze-level cut in 2018.

The face of this achievement is Ingrid Eck, the sustainability coordinator for Middletown through both the bronze and silver level certifications. Her accomplishments and goals were written up in both the *Middletown Press* and the Wesleyan University blog, where she is a recent graduate.

On the Wesleyan blog, she says that "much of [her] work involved research what laws, programs, events, or municipal entities had already been established that related to sustainability." Fortunately, there were many programs and events already in place that showed Middletown's initiative to become a more sustainable municipality, but there was room for more work to be done.

"Luckily," she says, "I was simultaneously able to work on a handful of projects that were started during the summer from the ground up. It was exciting to see innovative projects come to life because we recognized, through the application process, that there was a need for them in Middletown. I really appreciate how thorough

Sustainable CT was in crafting their different 'actions' and that they interpreted sustainability in the broadest sense, so as to include themes from equity to art."

Because of this, there are events being held to promote a more inclusive and greener future that will help Middletown in their application for silver-level certification. Some events include an anti-racism workshop that was held on August 7 at Middlesex Community college and the Solar-For-All campaign. Eck is also looking forward to an Urban Farming symposium that will take place on October 12 and 13 at Wesleyan.

Middletown is one of the initial 22 communities that received certification in the first year of Sustainable CT, which was created in partnership between CCM and the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University. Recently, the Connecticut Tree Protective Association (CTPA) donated trees to those first 22 communities along with a small plaque, planted in conjunction with Arbor Day.

As the CTPA says on their website, "what better way to symbolize sustainability than a tree planted in each sustainable community?" Those trees are just one of a number of sustainable symbols, like the certification levels that each of the Sustainable CT communities receive. Each municipality has made a commitment to sustainability in the years to come, forging their own path to a greener future.