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A Seed of Inspiration

Storyline Studio

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Two of our junior members,

Allison Zhang

and

Christy Zheng

, spent the summer designing a plant categorization system for AYLUS Pearland's year-round plant sale. Driven by a passion for nature and an enthusiasm for research and arts,

Allison

and

Christy

initiated this project, hoping it would help AYLUS's fundraising efforts and goals. The plant catalog from this project can be accessed [here](#).

Allison's

journey involved not only independent research but also leadership and effective collaboration. It all began when

Allison

was assigned to complete a GT research project on plants and help maintain the community garden at school. Her teacher asked the students to learn about plants and create labels for each one. She also learned how to cultivate seedlings and nurture young plants. At the time, she was volunteering with the AYLUS Pearland Branch, participating in events such as seed exchanges and plant sales. Plants sold at those events are raised by volunteers, so they often don't have standardized labels. Each plant is unique and has its own requirements for sunlight, water, soil, and fertilizer.

Allison

noticed that customers often had many questions about plants' needs; however, not all the sales volunteers were trained to answer these questions. So,

Allison

came up with the idea to create a catalog and an inventory checklist to help sales volunteers identify the plants with the correct names and quantities and provide basic planting and care tips to customers. This system could also help identify the most popular plants for each season, enabling volunteers to prioritize nurturing those in the highest demand.

Allison

began by diving into books, encyclopedias, and online resources on plants, and categorized them based on their main characteristics and popularity with the community in different seasons. She organized her research findings in an Excel spreadsheet, updating her notes and adding new entries each week.

Allison's

work at AYLUS events – whether assisting in the seed exchange fair, nurturing seedlings, or assisting customers at plant sales – helped her see the project's real-world applications.

Knowing the project's complexity,

Allison

asked her friend

Christy

, a fellow volunteer, for help. They divided the responsibilities, with

Allison

focusing on organizing research notes and categorization while

Christy

managed the illustration and presentation with her artistic talents. The two young volunteers had regular check-ins and discussions on how to structure the final product and finally completed the project in July. The plant catalog not only helped AYLUS plant sales provide more information and better service to the customers, but it also brought them closer to understanding the importance of teamwork and community involvement.

Allison's

story is a testament to the potential of young minds when given the right encouragement and opportunities. Through her project, she learned from other youth leaders in the organization and demonstrated that age is no barrier to making a positive impact. The hands-on experience inspired both

Allison

and

Christy

to continue their work. Allison would like to learn how to design a database with a search function that can also easily create index cards; while

Christy

hopes to explore ways to promote native plant species.

Plant Catalog

Christy Zheng

watering plants

Christy Zheng

conducting plant research

Allison Zhang

conducting plant research

Allison Zhang

volunteering at seed exchange event

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Tealine: Youth-Driven Social Enterprise for Community Impact and Inclusion

Embracing Community Spirit and Making a Difference

The Start of AYLUS Tealine

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