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Students take part in the Solano County Biomonitoring Program in 2017. (Courtesy photo)

Hundreds of high school students finishing Biomonitoring Program

By Daily Republic Staff

FAIRFIELD — Nearly 600 Solano County high school students, by the end of the school year, will have participated in the Solano County Biomonitoring Program.

“Students have learned about their local watershed, observed the hands-on methods used to monitor the creeks in their neighborhoods, and joined in the

assessment of the health of these creeks," according to a statement released by the Solano Resource Conservation District.

The Solano County Biomonitoring Program teaches students how to evaluate watershed health through physical, chemical and biological assessments, according to the statement. Students learn the relationship between stream ecology and water quality; the extent of local water quality issues and ways to improve surface water quality; and the value of community science.

"For over a decade, high school students from the county have participated in this community science project and provided valuable data for scientific study," the district statement said.

This year's program delivered lessons and field trips virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The program aims to inspire students to explore career paths in the sciences like a former Will C. Wood High School student who is now studying environmental science.

"Because of the experience she had sampling along the creek with the Biomonitoring Program, she decided to choose aquatic biology as her emphasis," Kevin English, a science teacher at Will C. Wood, said in the district statement. He added the student's field experience "made her realize how important it is to protect our watersheds and she hopes it will lead to a career where she can make a positive difference."

The program is paid for by the Solano County Water Agency, Solano County, Benicia and the Vallejo Flood and Wastewater District. Participating schools include Armijo, Benicia, Fairfield, Rodriguez, Vacaville, Vallejo, Vanden and Will C. Wood high schools, as well as the MIT Academy.

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