

## Chamber Leadership class busy as bees

By Ronni Hannaman

Now in its fourth month of learning about what makes this city tick, the 2019 Carson City Chamber Leadership Institute class has experienced a day at Carson High, toured the jail and experienced a ridealong with a deputy, toured the water treatment plant and met with those who run various city departments.

As with every Leadership Institute Class, learning how to work together as a team through choosing a class project to complete prior to their June graduation is an integral part of the program.

This class has chosen the unlikely challenge of establishing a bee habitat – certainly an out-of-the-box project – and are now in the early stages of learning about bees, their habits, and how to maintain them. With the dwindling of bee colonies, this is an important environmental project, for 90 percent of the world's flowering plants depend on pollination.

Since Carson City was recently named the 78th Bee City USA by the Xerces

Society – the only city with this designation in Nevada – the class is even more committed to this project. There is a bee hotel in Reno near the Galena Creek Visitor Center and the class wishes to construct a bee hotel near the Greenhouse Project behind Carson-Tahoe Hospital.

Class Project Chair Angela Holt writes, “Our class was looking for an ‘out of the box’ project that would promote education while also benefiting the community. We also were looking for a project that could be sustainable, and with support from local bee groups and the Greenhouse Project, the bee habitat should thrive for years to come.”

There are approximately 4,000 species of bees in North America and about a 1,000 native species in Nevada. Of those 1,000 species, the class chose the gentle leaf cutter bee (genus *Megachile*) to inhabit the projected bee hotel since these bees are important pollinators – more so than the honeybee – and are not aggressive. If provoked, their sting is mild. These solitary bees prefer to build their nests in small holes.



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