



Will instructs Green Jobs Corps students on the fine art of compost making.

## Green Jobs Project

Since April 2010, the Norman Lindsay Gallery (NLG) has hosted a federally funded National Green Jobs Corps program involving teams of 12-15 TAFE students doing Certificate II in Horticulture, Conservation and Land Management.

The students, whose average age is 19-20 years, spend two days each week in the classroom and two days in practical training at the gallery, undertaking bush

regeneration, maintenance and restoration work.

Will Smith from the NLG, who has been overseeing the project, was inspired to get involved in education projects by one of his University of Western Sydney lecturers, Judith Macleod.

"Essentially we're taking environmental sustainability and gardening to these kids and trying to impress upon them some of the basic fundamentals," says Will.

"Hopefully they get a job out of it at the end."

The participants learn practical aspects of horticulture including tree work, composting, weeding, mulching, top-dressing lawns and hard landscaping skills, including constructing vegetable beds and working with sandstone.

Josh Corne from Max Employment, who co-administers the program, says he appreciates Will's hands-on approach.

"Whatever these guys end

up doing, a skill like knowing how to build a good compost system is something they can take through to their employment or into their home gardens," says Josh.

"We're breeding a troupe of composting warriors," Will laughs, but he's not joking.

Since the first course finished in December 2010, numerous participants have gained horticulture work, and the National Trust is looking to expand this project to other heritage properties and involve indigenous youth.