



# National Environmental Education Week

A National Environmental Education Foundation Program

August 2011

[www.EEWeek.org](http://www.EEWeek.org)



## Greetings!

Summer may be winding down and the return to school around the corner, but the weather promises to stay warm and there is still time for outdoor activities. There's no better way to get your students outside than by participating in [National Public Lands Day](#) on September 24. Visit the website to find a volunteer site near you and read below to learn how 2011 Bartlett Merit Award winner Alan Fiero engages his students in the stewardship of their local Pine Bush ecosystem.

Take a moment to read through this month's e-newsletter offerings and make sure to visit us [online](#) for more resources and opportunities for the end of summer and beginning of the school year.

Sincerely,

Jessica Culverhouse  
Program Manager

Sarah Kozicki  
Program Associate

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### Our Program

National Environmental Education (EE) Week is the largest organized environmental education event in the United States.

EE Week connects educators with environmental resources to promote K-12 students' understanding of the environment.

### Quick Links

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## Get to Know...

Alan Fiero, 2011 Bartlett Merit Award Winner

*"The innovative nature of my approach to environmental education lies in its simplicity. It is based on just one main tenet: environmental education should be authentic and meaningful," says Fiero. "Authentic because it is linked directly to the environment in which the child lives. Meaningful because students are empowered to make a difference." -- Alan Fiero*

Alan Fiero is a 7th grade science teacher at Farnsworth Middle School in Guilderland, N.Y. The keystone of Fiero's environmental education efforts is his collaboration with the Albany Pine Bush Commission and an innovative place-based learning initiative that involves his students in the long-term restoration of the unique local Pine Bush ecosystem. The comprehensive Pine Bush project involves interdisciplinary and experiential learning, field trips, service learning and community projects.



In addition to the Pine Bush Project, Fiero engages his students in the conservation of the local endangered Karner Blue Butterfly. This year over 300 students will participate in the Karner Blue Butterfly rearing program. Participating students employ technology to enhance environmental learning, including using a webcam to monitor the project, and work directly with scientists to improve butterfly rearing techniques. Now in its thirteenth year, Fiero's summer butterfly program involves over 60 student volunteers who each dedicate three weeks during summer vacation to act as docents in the school's butterfly house which is open to the public. Annually, Fiero's students give lessons about ecology and ecological restoration to over 3,000 visitors.

Alan Fiero is one of this year's Richard C. Bartlett Environmental Education Award merit winners. The Bartlett Award is given annually to an outstanding middle or high school teacher who successfully integrates environmental education into their curriculum and engages students in interdisciplinary solutions to environmental challenges. [Learn more](#) about the Bartlett Award and this year's winners.

Fiero's work to engage his students in the stewardship of local habitat demonstrates a great way to connect young people with the outdoors and provide them the opportunity to take part in solutions to environmental issues in their community.

## Get Ready for National Public Lands Day

September 24, 2011



Join Our  
Mailing List

### Call for Stories!

Don't forget to submit your stories of successful environmental education projects and programs to help inspire your peers and share ideas! Contact [EEWeek@neefusa.org](mailto:EEWeek@neefusa.org) to get started.

### Contact Us

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Looking for ways to engage your students in the outdoors this fall? National Public Lands Day (NPLD) is a great opportunity for both outdoor activity and service-learning. NPLD is the nation's largest, single-day volunteer event for public lands. NPLD educates a diverse audience of adult and youth volunteers about critical environmental and natural resources issues and the need for shared stewardship of our public lands. Whether at a national park, nature center or school garden, opportunities for engagement with and service to nature abound.



Register or find a site near you [online](#), or visit the NPLD educational [resources page](#) to learn about ways to connect service on National Public Lands Day to activities in the classroom.

## Grants and Awards

### Green Thumb Challenge - Application deadline September 30

The Green Thumb Challenge from the Green Education Foundation (GEF) aims to connect children with nature and the healthy benefits of gardening. GEF provides schools and youth groups with beginner-friendly resources to plant gardens of any size, in addition to fun activities and standards-based lessons linking the classroom to the garden. All participants have the opportunity to be awarded a \$5,000 grant in recognition of their garden project. [Learn more](#)

### Toshiba America Foundation Grants for Grades K-5 - Application deadline October 1

Toshiba America Foundation offers grants of up to \$1,000 to support innovative projects designed by math and science teachers to make their classrooms more exciting and successful for students. Any K-5 teacher in a public or private school is eligible. Proposed projects must advance the teacher's science and math teaching units. [Learn more](#)

### America's Home Energy Challenge - Submission deadline December 31

America's Home Energy Challenge is designed to teach students in grades 3-8 about energy, its use and the link between saving money and energy. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy and administered by the National Science Teachers Association, the Challenge aims to enhance and extend existing energy-focused programs, provide specific home energy-saving tips and make materials that support the learning of science and energy available to schools. Participating schools compete for more than \$200,000 in prizes distributed at the regional and national levels of the competition. [Learn more](#)

For more grants and awards, visit us [online](#).

## Student Opportunities

### Earth Science Week Contests 2011 - Entry deadline October 14

The Earth Science Week 2011 contests include a photography contest, a visual arts contest and an essay contest. Learn more at the Earth Science Week website about each of these contests, featuring the themes "A World of Change in My Community," "Picturing Our Ever Changing Earth" and "How Change Shapes Our Planet." The winners of each contest will receive \$300 and a copy of the American Geological Institute's *Faces of the Earth* DVD. [Learn more](#)

### Lexus Eco Challenge - October 31

The Lexus Eco Challenge offers an opportunity for students in grades 6-12 to address environmental issues in three challenges: Land/Water, Air/Climate, and a Final Challenge. Teams have the opportunity to win \$10,000 in each of the first two challenges and up to \$30,000 in the final challenge. For each challenge, teams must choose a topic and use PowerPoint to illustrate an action plan. Participants are required to show how their ideas were implemented and also evaluate the results of their plan. [Learn more](#)



### Youth in the Great Outdoors

Youth in the Great Outdoors is an initiative of the U.S. Department of the Interior designed to employ, educate and engage young people from all backgrounds in exploring, connecting with and preserving America's natural and cultural heritage. The YouthGO website connects young people with natural places to visit, educational resources, current job openings and employment programs. [Learn more](#)



For more student contests and awards, visit us [online](#).

## Professional Development

### University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Fall Online Courses

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point has announced its Fall 2011 environmental education online courses. These courses include Environmental Education Theory & Practice, Making Environmental Education Relevant for Culturally Diverse Audiences, Needs Assessment in Environmental Education & Interpretation and Strategic Planning & Implementation. The first online course starts September 8. [Learn more](#)

### OneNOAA Science Seminars

OneNOAA Science Seminars represent an effort to share science and management information across NOAA. The seminars each deal with

different ocean and climate topics, including ocean acidification and the climate and water connection. Seminar can be accessed remotely online and are currently available from August through September. [Learn more](#)

### **Watersheds: Connecting Weather to the Environment**

This free, two-hour online course from COMET® provides an understanding of watersheds as the local environment in which people's actions and decisions play against the backdrop of daily and seasonal weather to affect the quality and health of the area in which they live, as well as the larger system of watersheds of which their watershed is one part. The accompanying Watersheds PowerPoint presentation is also available for download. Notes are included and the presentation can be customized. Registration is required for access, but there is no charge for the course. [Learn more](#)

For more opportunities, visit us [online](#).

## **EE Resources**

### **National Fossil Day Activities**

National Fossil Day is a celebration of the United States' rich paleontological resources. The cooperative efforts of over 150 partner organizations, including the National Park Service, the American Geological Institute and the Bureau of Land Management, led to the inaugural event last year. Activities are hosted by partners at locations across the country. Classroom activities are also available online across subject areas and for all grade levels. [Learn more](#)

### **Interactive Earth Science Animations**

The Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology (IRIS) is a consortium of universities dedicated to the operation of science facilities for the acquisition, management and distribution of seismological data. IRIS offers resources for educators, including a series of interactive graphics, animations and videos on Earth Science fundamentals. Topics include hazards, plate tectonics, earth structure, earthquakes and volcanoes. [Learn more](#)

### **GLOBE Student Climate Research Campaign**

The GLOBE Student Climate Research Campaign aims to engage students in measuring, investigating and understanding the climate system in their local community and around the world. As part of the program, students take climate-related measurements and investigate research questions about climate. Resources and a teacher guide are provided online for participating schools and classrooms. [Learn more](#)

### **Green Teacher Summer 2011**

Green Teacher is a magazine that helps youth educators enhance environmental and global education inside and outside of schools. The Summer 2011 issue is now available. "The Road to Sustainable Happiness" includes articles on a variety of topics, including the importance of native bees and web projects for teens, as well as reviews of educational resources. [Learn more](#)



For more resources and classroom materials, visit us [online](#).



National Environmental  
Education Foundation

Knowledge to live by

The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) provides knowledge to trusted professionals who, with their credibility, amplify messages to national audiences to solve everyday environmental problems. Together, we generate lasting positive change.

NEEF partners with professionals in health, education, media, business and public land management to promote daily actions for helping people protect and enjoy the environment. Through our primary programs - Classroom Earth, National Public Lands Day, National Environmental Education Week, Business and Environment, Earth Gauge<sup>®</sup> and Health & Environment - we offer Americans knowledge to live by. To learn more, call (202) 833-2933 or visit <http://www.neefusa.org>.