

Ohio Environmental Education Fund Statewide Partnership in SFY 2017

Environmental Education Council of Ohio, \$89,275

In 1995, Ohio EPA's Office of Environmental Education initiated a long-term partnership with EECO to build statewide capacity for environmental education in ways that could not be accomplished within the confines of a short-term general grant. Through this 22 year partnership, Ohio EPA and EECO are able to provide professional development opportunities and regional resource fairs for teachers and non-formal environmental educators, as well as quality curriculum resources aligned with the Ohio Department of Education's Learning Standards and Model Curriculum.

Environmental Career Ambassadors

For K-12 education, the partnership continues to focus on the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). In 2013 Ohio EPA and EECO joined forces with The Ohio State University School of Environment and Natural Resources to launch a new statewide network of volunteer **career ambassadors in environmental science and engineering**. More than 400 professionals in 68 Ohio counties have volunteered, indicating their willingness to:

- *Make classroom presentations
- *Participate in school career fairs
- *Host field trips
- *Offer internships
- *Offer job shadowing opportunities
- *Mentor young professionals, and
- *Recruit additional career ambassadors



This year EECO members, Ohio EPA staff members and volunteer career ambassadors spoke with **21,795 middle school, high school and college students and 4,467 teachers through career fairs and classroom presentations**. For example, students learned about careers in drinking water treatment at the City of Dayton Water Department's High School Water Career Conference, and about safely managing nuclear waste at the "Science Alliance" Career Exploration Day at the Fluor-BWXT Gaseous Diffusion facility near Portsmouth. **The partners and volunteer ambassadors also mentored 16 high school students, offered 143 high school and college internships and two shadowing opportunities to allow students to observe environmental professionals at work.** Recruitment presentations and exhibits were offered at events reaching 823 environmental professionals.

Part-time **regional directors** work closely with educators at the local level to offer workshops and share teaching resources. This year the partners offered 38 regional professional development workshops to 902 educators, offering teachers certification in nationally recognized curricula such as the [Leopold Education Project](#); [Project Learning Tree](#); [Project WET](#) (Water Education for Teachers) and Healthy Water, Healthy People; [Project WILD](#), Project WILD Aquatic, Flying WILD, and WILD School Sites; [Windows on Waste](#), and [the Wonders of Wetlands](#). The partners also exhibited or presented at 11 special events, festivals and conferences with more than 8,000 participants.

