

## Ohio Environmental Education Fund Mini Grant Awards September 2019

*During the fall 2019 cycle, Ohio EPA awarded the following seven mini grants for a total of \$26,263.*

**Miami Township/Centerville – Miami Valley School**, “Let’s Get Vertical – Hydroponics,” F-20M-003, \$2,200, Montgomery County, Audience: Pre-School - University (Junior High), Contact: Linda L. Hallinan, [linda.hallinan@mvschool.com](mailto:linda.hallinan@mvschool.com), 937-901-9112.

Students will investigate community needs for fresh produce and understand the current demographic of food deserts in the Dayton, Ohio East End community. With this knowledge and research of different hydroponic vertical farming techniques, students will work with the Dayton Food Bank as well as Mission of Mary Farm to implement the best vertical farming practices. Students will design and build their own vertical hydroponics structures and take data on what are the best practices in growing micro-greens and other fresh vegetables. Their crops will be provided to the Dayton Food bank as well as duplicates of the best structures for use at the Food Bank. Project will reach 62 Jr. High students. **Budget includes PVC piping, saw blade, clay pots, seeds, tools, water pump, various monitoring probes and sensors. Collaborators are Dayton Food Bank, Mission of Mary Cooperative, Cox Arboretum, and the Emmanuel Food Pantry.**

**Tinker’s Creek Watershed Partners**, “Bug BioBlitz,” F-20M-004, \$4,941, Cuyahoga, Portage and Summit Counties, Audience: Pre-School – University (Grades 6-12), Contact: Jennie Brancho, [jennie@tinkerscreekwatershed.org](mailto:jennie@tinkerscreekwatershed.org), 330-963-6243.

Tinker's Creek Watershed Partners is looking for new ways to engage school-age children in watershed stewardship and outreach programs in both classroom and informal settings, like our Watershed Festival. The Bug BioBlitz program will provide students with an introduction to biomonitoring using local aquatic macroinvertebrate populations, identified to order or family level depending on student backgrounds, as indicators of long-term water quality. Potential program implementations include: comparison of water quality in restored vs. impaired stream reaches, comparison of macroinvertebrate populations in natural vs. constructed landscapes, biodiversity and species richness studies, and more. The overarching goal of this program is to get students outdoors and exposed to different aspects of watershed science while providing a holistic understanding of how our actions affect the biology of our surrounding landscapes. **Budget includes biological collection supplies and equipment. Hudson, Twinsburg High Schools, Seton Catholic, City of Hudson, Cuyahoga, Summit and Portage SWCD’s are all collaborating.**

**Worthington City Schools – Colonial Hills Elementary**, “Colonial Hills Elementary School Outdoor Learning Space,” F-20M-005, \$5,000, Franklin County, Audience: Pre-School – University (Elementary Grades K-5), Contact: Heather Anne Doherty, [heatherannedohewrty@gmail.com](mailto:heatherannedohewrty@gmail.com), 614-282-0817.

The CHES PTA seeks to create an Outdoor Learning Space that facilitates immersive, outdoor environmental education focusing on food webs, ecosystem change, weather, erosion and human impacts. Students will investigate how invasive species impact ecosystems, and through service learning, how native plants create habitat. The academic and health benefits of outdoor learning will be enjoyed by 450 students annually, or 1,000 students over 12 years. **Budget includes plants, bushes, equipment and contractual. ODNR, Division of Wildlife and Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed are collaborating.**

**Hilliard City Schools – Weaver, Heritage, Memorial and the HUB Middle Schools**, “Water Quality Testing at Latham Park,” F-20M-006, \$3,800, Franklin County, Audience: Pre-School - University (Junior High), Contact: Roseanne S. Hetterscheidt, [roseanne\\_hetterscheidt@hboe.org](mailto:roseanne_hetterscheidt@hboe.org), 614-439-5821.

While on a field trip to Latham Park, 7th grade science students from 4 different Hilliard schools will rotate through activities that explore water quality and its impact on aquatic organisms. Students will test the levels of nitrates, dissolved oxygen, phosphates, and pH at the pond and creek at the park. They will also participate in Project WET activities that teach about watersheds and the impact of pollution on aquatic organisms. **Budget includes substitute teachers, testing kits, collection tubs/buckets and Project WET activity supplies/curriculum guides. Collaboration wasn't mentioned in proposal.**

**Ohio University – Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs**, “Rural K-12 OHIO Museum Complex Environmental Education,” F-20M-012, \$5,000, Athens and Meigs Counties, Audience: Pre-School – University, Contact: Faith Knutsen, [knutsenf@ohio.edu](mailto:knutsenf@ohio.edu), 740-593-0830.

Ohio University's Museum Complex ([www.ohio.edu/museum-complex](http://www.ohio.edu/museum-complex)) offers exciting, educational learning opportunities in a region without a major science museum. This proposal requests funding for hands-on, engaged environmental experiences from qualified instructors for K-12 (potentially 6,700 students) students in five regional, rural, underserved communities. Covered are 5 full-day in-school classroom outreach visits (one for each school district) and 10 half-day student fields trips. Participants will experience small-group, interdisciplinary exploration of regional geology, geomorphology, biology, and the significance of historical land use on the landscape. Take-aways include curated education kits. The \$5,000 budget curricular materials, interpretive signage for the extensive outdoor trail system, and bussing and teacher stipends from the rural districts. Match funding at 51% covers faculty and staff time and experienced university student guides. **Budget includes substitutes, classroom supplies, science kits, sign costs and bussing. Collaborators are Rural Action,**

**Alexander, Athens, Federal Hocking, Nelsonville-York and Trimble School Districts.**

**Portage Park District**, "Rain Garden Demonstration and Tour," F-20M-014, \$2,796, Portage County, Audience: General Public, Contact: Jennifer White, [icwhite@portageparkdistrict.org](mailto:icwhite@portageparkdistrict.org), 330-297-7728.

The purpose of this project is to demonstrate a practical storm water quality practice that residents, local government officials, and businesses can duplicate on their property. Program participants and volunteers will construct the rain garden at a Park District property to capture the storm water runoff from the roof of a recently installed double vault toilet building. Educational workshops will be held in a series of interactive sessions to immerse participants in the entire planning and construction process, culminating in a driving tour of existing local rain gardens on private residential properties. The project will include permanent interpretive signage at the Park District rain garden site. **Budget includes gardening supplies, signs, gravel, piping, printing and sign layout. Collaborators include Portage SWCD and OSU Master Gardeners.**

**Oregon City Schools**, "Watershed Awareness Through Augmented Reality," F-20M-019, \$2,526, Lucas County, Audience: Pre-School - University (K-University), Contact: Meredith Wolfe, [mwolfe@oregoncs.org](mailto:mwolfe@oregoncs.org), 419-377-7284.

Our purpose of the project would be to provide hands on learning experiences covering watersheds, nutrient management, stormwater management, and habitat restoration to students in Lucas County and surrounding areas. Located in the Western Lake Erie epicenter, there is a need for education and understanding related to watershed functions, importance and human impacts. The goal is to encourage best management practices, awareness, appreciation while engaging students and the public. **Budget includes extension cords, sand, computer, projector, camera, wood and hardware to build the box. Collaborators are Toledo Lake Erie Center, Partners for Clean Streams, Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments and Lucas SWCD.**

For more information, contact:



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