

## **2002 EPA Community Intern Projects**

### **Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment (Hogansburg, NY)**

ATFE is a community based, grassroots organization formed in 1987 to address the environmental problems facing the Mohawk Nation community of Akwesasne. The ATFE Sustainable Agriculture Project was designed to inform interested community members on the cultural and nutritional practices that made Haudenosaunee people healthy before colonization and industrialization of area surrounding the Akwesasne Mohawk Community. The intern will work with the ATFE Sustainable Agriculture Project in researching funding opportunities for sustainable agriculture, maintain a long and or photo journal of all activities i.e. which planting methods worked, what did not work, etc, and will train, with the help of ATFE staff, the families in organic gardening techniques.

### **Asian American Health Coalition of Greater Houston (Houston, TX)**

The Asian American Health Coalition is proposing to establish a non-profit, community-based, culturally and linguistically competent health center to address the unmet health needs of the Asian American community in Houston, TX. The intern will assist with developing policies and procedures for the coordination of a community health clinic. The intern will also assist with the coordination of volunteers at the community health center and work with other staff to collect data regarding the use of health services, health outcomes, number of referrals made, rates of insurance reimbursement, and demographics of clientele. The intern will gain knowledge about public policy as it regards to health and the environment. The intern will also gain experience in primary health center development, community outreach, and community networking.

### **Battle Mountain Band Council (Battle Mountain, NV)**

The Battle Mountain Band Council is a Western Shoshone tribal government. Our project is to organize a recycling program for our rural community. The Intern will help with outreach, surveys, documenting the amount of solid waste household products used by families in the community, and also assist in meetings with the community to ensure maximum participation from tribal members.. From this information we will chronicle and determine exactly what kind of recycling project will work best. At the end of the project we hope to have a plan and the initial start of a tribal community recycling program.

### **Boulder Energy Conservation Center (Boulder, CO)**

The intern will work on determining a system that will measure the amount of building material diverted from the landfill as part of the ReSource 2000 program. The mission of the ReSource 2000 is to keep valuable used building materials out of the landfill and provide them for reuse at reasonable prices at sales yard. The data collected by the intern would be used by the Boulder Energy Conservation Center to raise awareness of the amount of useful materials that typically are land filled, hereby emphasizing the need for such a landfill diversion program. In addition, the intern will work within the existing structure so that landfill diversion data can continue to be collected after the intern has completed their internship.

### **Center for Environmental Health (Oakland, CA)**

The Center for Environmental Health (CEH) is a non-profit organization that works to protect the public from environmental and consumer health hazards. CEH is committed to environmental justice, reducing the use of toxic chemicals, supporting communities in their quest for a safer environment, and corporate accountability. CEH changes corporate behavior directly through education, litigation and advocacy. The intern will take the lead in researching two specific cases of public exposure to toxic chemicals. This work includes researching chemical formulations, commercial uses of the chemicals in question, environmental health effects associated with the chemicals in question, and market research to identify the extent of a chemical's use within a given industry.

### **Citizens for Accountability & Responsibility (Dolores, CO)**

CFAR, Citizens for Accountability and Responsibility, is an incorporated organization of 50 plus citizens owning property primarily in the Dolores River Valley in Montezuma County, Colorado. Increased mining and development along the river, prompted the coalescence of the group. The intern will be asked to identify, catalogue, and map through field observation, chemical analyses, and biological analyses, potential and real point source environmental hazards in the upper Dolores River watershed. This project will insure that there will be a thorough cataloging and mapping of environmental hazards and conditions in the Dolores River watershed which will serve as a guide for developing future initiatives for preserving the health and beauty of the Dolores River Valley.

### **Community Organization for Rights and Empowerment (Holly Hill, SC)**

C.O.R.E has a need for research to be conducted on neighboring communities' health that might have been contaminated by excessive hazardous emissions, which have been emitted through its nearby county facilities. This information will be used to properly assess the needs of the community. The intern will gain experience in the development of environmental surveying and community relations. The intern will be dealing with a variety of research methods, such as health history surveys and documented us health and disease reports. And will become adept at these methods to effectively communicate scientific environmental data.

### **Community Against Pollution (Anniston, AL)**

Anniston is on the most contaminated cities in the country. The contamination has affected the environment and created some serious health problems on the citizens. Communities Against Pollution (CAP) will be in partnership with local and state health officials along with EPA, ATSDR and Emory University to carry out a study that looks at the affect of education problems and pollution problems of the county's at-risk children.

### **The Community Movement for Urban Progress (Kansas City, MO)**

The mission of Move UP is to reduce crime, violence and substance abuse, and to promote economic development in the urban core to build safe, drug-free, viable neighborhoods. Under the supervision on the Move UP's Community Epidemiology Work Group (CEWG) that consists of scholar and practitioners the intern will examine basic aspects of individual behavior and social systems to ascertain their functional roles in supporting and or preventing problems themselves. This systems model has much in common with behavioral ecology- the exploration of the individual, social and environmental dynamics that underlie human behavior. The experience gained from the project will enhance the intern's knowledge of research evaluation, especially from the perspective of multi-cultural competency.

### **Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (San Francisco, CA)**

The intern will research and develop a written overview of environmental justice and community issues in California water policy. The objectives of the internship project are to research and develop a community-based version and recommendations for addressing environmental justice issues in California water policy. The Coalition is part of the Latino Issues Forum, Environment and Sustainability Program. For the past two years, the Coalition has worked together to ensure social and environmental justice and promote meaningful community participation and involvement in the development of water policy.

### **The Environmental Justice Action Group (Portland, OR)**

EJAG is an organization founded by Portland residents to address the environmental and health hazards faces by their communities. The Master Home Environmentalist Program (MHE) project seeks to identify harmful indoor pollutants for at-risk citizens and under served communities, and is partnered in cooperation with the American Lung Association of Oregon. The Intern will receive valuable training and education on the role of indoor pollutants and their effect on low-income and minority communities that EJAG represents. Specifically the intern will research concepts and case studies on indoor pollutants, and receive training by professionals in the areas of community outreach services, cultural diversity and indoor pollutants. In addition, the intern will work with three or more communities on MHE by identifying the needs and resources within the community, designing a strategy for MHE implementation, completing five presentations/workshops to neighborhood and community groups and training at least ten volunteers on the MHE project.

### **Great Plains Restoration Council (Denver, CO)**

Great Plains Restoration Council is working on a project called the Million Acre Project (MAP). The MAP is a project connecting and restoring a one million acre contiguous prairie ecosystem, as the core of the coming Buffalo Commons. The Buffalo Commons is a new movement for health and sustainability and wild, free ranging native animals on the Great Plains from Mexico to Canada. The intern will experience environmental protection through helping GPRC staff design the research and applications necessary fro GPRC to make final site selections of MAP in the Northern Plains.

**Greenbelt Alliance (San Francisco, CA)**

Greenbelt Alliance's Livable Communities program promotes development of Bay Area communities to provide affordable housing and jobs in a compact, pedestrian-friendly setting, close to transit. Livable communities programs are seen as part of a larger national effort known as new urbanism or "smart growth." Greenbelt Alliance, through its Livable Communities Marketing Research Project, seeks to understand the public's understanding and possible misconceptions of Livable Communities issues. The Intern will have the opportunity to learn market research skills, basic strategic planning, and be exposed to environmental, social justice and conservation issues. They will learn about infill development, sustainability and smart growth planning. The project will create guidelines for crafting Greenbelt Alliance's message about smart growth, and will generate new material that connects smarter growth with environmental stewardship.

**Heal the Bay (Santa Monica, CA)**

Heal the Bay is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to making Santa Monica Bay and Southern California water clean and healthy through research, public outreach and policy programs. Heal the Bay's Stream Team program identifies problems that may be affecting water quality and the ecological health of the Malibu Creek Watershed. The intern will work on the Malibu Creek Stream Health Index project. The intern will learn a great deal about Malibu Creek and the many challenging water quality and stream restoration issues in this watershed. She/he will contribute to an ongoing project that will have major impacts on policy making and restoration effects in the watershed.

**Highland Economy Community Health Organization (Denver, CO)**

HECHO is committed to building relationships to achieve a healthy economy and stable community and environment, while celebrating Northwest Denver's (Highland) diversity and strengths. HECHO's Asset Mapping for Economic Development in Highland project will identify community resources and begin to build a sense of community, bridging socio-economic and language barriers. The Intern will assist in the collection and inputting of data from asset-surveys, set up a bilingual database, and provide training for residents. Additionally the Intern will work with neighborhood youth on a project to add a "Green Map" component to the database, which will help the community identify important landmarks, resources and environmental concerns in the community. Also, the intern will work with to identify brownfields and abandoned lots ripe for redevelopment. It is our hope that this project will touch the lives of community members and continue to grow and nourish the environment for years to come.

**Improving Kids' Environment (Indianapolis, IN)**

105 communities in Indiana have combined sewer overflows. These communities are required to submit Long-Term Control Plans to describe how they will reduce these overflows. In effort to ensure that the plan effectively include public participation and conform to guidelines, seven leading environmental organization in Indian developed a formal scoring system for the plans. Improving Kid's Environment was the coordinator of the project. The intern would review the plans most of which will be submitted by July 2002, score the plans, summarize the results of the scoring, and work with the communities and environment organizations to publicize the results.

The intern will learn how to analyze and compare the performance of different communities,, and learn the various methods to communicate to the public to bring about improvements to the process.

### **Indianapolis Urban League Environmental Coalition (Indianapolis, IN)**

In the past few years, the organization has been working towards building databases that pool contaminant emissions and monitoring data. Both databases will be used for environmental assessments, both risk assessment and evaluation of environmental justice. The intern will initiate this project and in doing so will expand his network of contacts (NGO, regulatory) to this home community and to broader cross-section of people in Indiana working on developing environmental contaminant data into forms that can be used in GIS databases. The intern will also learn more about how contaminants act within sediments an water (surface, ground).

### **Lead Safe Omaha Coalition (Omaha, NE)**

In the fall of 2001, student from the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) performed door to door research evaluating the public's level of knowledge and awareness of lead and lead hazards within the home and community. Research found that the majority of citizens had received very little information or felt that very little information regarding lead poisoning was made available to them. Additionally, the respondents felt the best ways to receive information was through door-to-door personal contact, flyers, brochures or mailers. The intern in collaboration with the Boy Scouts of America, Girls Inc and Quality of living organization will work to disseminate the information about lead hazards.

### **Leadville Institute of Science and Technology (Leadville, CO)**

LIST is a non profit with the mission of forming a "Research Center" in Leadville, Colorado, for the purpose of economic redevelopment. Leadville is a historic mining town, that has been an ongoing Superfund Site for the last twenty years. The intern will involved in doing the continued monitoring on a biosolids project, and or doing further research in the field of high altitude re-vegetation. The intern will be working with business and environmental professionals, educational professionals, doing research on his projects as well as being on the ground floor of establishing a "Research Center."

### **Neuse River Foundation (New Bern, NC)**

The Neuse River Foundation is interested in raising public awareness about the impacts and the conditions of he Neuse River by creating an interactive website that utilizes GIS mapping of the watersheds. The site would allow citizen groups such as CreekKeepers and StreamKeeper to share information. These citizen watch groups are critical to the improving water quality in the Neuse. The citizen groups conduct water tests, identifying threats to the river, educate their communities, and pursue opportunities to improve water quality. The intern will combine GIS and web base experience to compile the information for the website.

### **Northwest Communities Education Center (Granger, WA)**

The NCEC's project will enable them to develop educational materials and programs for farm workers that are culturally relevant in Spanish, through NCEC's Radio KDNA. The Intern will collect and analyze as many studies as have been conducted in the past thirty years in the Lowe

Yakima Valley pertaining to animal feeding operations and manure application practices, as they are the principal sources of fecal coliform pollution and nitrate concentration affecting water quality in the area. The Intern will increase their knowledge of the environmental concerns affecting low income Hispanic farm worker, and gain an understanding of the importance of developing educational programs in Spanish to reach a culturally different Hispanic farm worker and immigrant population. It is anticipated that the results will greatly assist in the formulation of a public awareness campaign regarding the issue of water pollution due to fecal coliform and nitrates.

### **Operation Safestreet (St. Louis, MO)**

Team Sweep Environmental Education (TSEE) is a component of Operation Safestreet's Team Sweep Model Citizens Program. As part of Team Sweep's commitment to develop model citizens, TSEE was created to encourage youth volunteers to become involved in environmentally positive actions for the betterment of their community. The intern will be primarily responsible for conducting internet and library research on local environmental issues (especially those affecting youth), participating in on-site tours of Team Sweep neighborhoods, meeting with Team Sweep youth and adult volunteers to discuss and evaluate their local environment concerns, and attending meetings presented by other local environmental organizations to advocate for St. Louis City youth. The intern will have the chance to help develop partnerships, and experience their importance in providing people with the tools to improve their own local environment.

### **The River Project (New York, NY)**

The River Project is a private marine biology field station for the protection and restoration of wildlife through research, education and hands-on programs in urban ecology. The River Project has a water quality research project to establish baseline data to assess the advisability of swimming in the area off Manhattan's lower side. Since the inauguration of the Clean Water Act, and other programs there has been significant improvement in New York Harbor water quality. Although there is no data on near-shore water quality, people are kayaking, swimming and diving in Hudson River Park. The Intern would collect and analyze water samples and work with TRP mentors, as well as two city and one state environmental agencies with jurisdiction over swimming in this area. The work done previously has helped establish baseline data for the relevant bacterial indicators, and indicate that it is safe to swim if one waits at least three days after a rain event to swim. We request the funding to continue and enlarge the project this summer.

### **Silver Valley People's Action Coalition (Kellogg, ID)**

Numerous behavioral, neuropsychological, and biological studies suggest that sufficient exposure to lead, a metallic neurotoxin, can promote brain dysfunction called the neurotoxicity hypothesis, this position states that lead exposure alters neurotransmitter and hormonal systems and may induce aggression and violent behavior. The study will examine the relationship between lead exposure and criminal behavior. Presently there are three times the state average of children in special ed classes within the school district of the Superfund site indicating learning and behavior problems. As a result of work on this study the intern will become more aware of the

effects of toxic metals in the environment and human behavior and its impact on the socio-economics of the community.

### **Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville (Louisville, KY)**

The intern will carry out community based research on the issue of contamination of local soils from past waste disposal practices at the local predominantly African American West End neighborhood as well as the degree to which contaminant levels might effect the viability of community gardens.

### **Urban Watershed Project**

The Urban Watershed Project is a community based non-profit organization located in the Presidio of San Francisco. Currently, UWOP is a partnership with UC Berkeley and Galileo Academy of Science and Technology (High School) with the mission of performing environmental restoration at the Tennessee Hollow Watershed in the Presidio National Park. By interacting with educators/scientists from UWP, and urban high school teacher, and a professor for UC Berkeley, the intern will gain valuable experience in connecting urban youth to environmental science through curriculum development and action. The intern will be heavily involved in 1) developing and organizing curriculum accessible to a linguistically and ethnically diverse student populations, 2) developing appropriate hands-on projects and activities in habitat restoration.

### **Utah Federation for Youth (Salt Lake City, UT)**

The Utah Federation for Youth's PeaceTrees project brings together youth from different cultures, ethnicities, religions and socio-economic status to work together on an environmental service project. The community in which the project takes place is ethnically diverse and has a low socio-economic status. Participants in the program strive to include the community in the service project and also disseminate information about household hazardous waste disposal, non-point source pollution, water quality, alternative energy sources and recycling. The Intern would work to assess attitudes and community standards regarding the environmental impact of greater and lesser informed communities through the development, delivery and compilation of a survey that measures these attitudes and community standards. The expected results are that the community involved in environmental service and receiving information will be more inclined to take action.

### **Vietnamese Culture & Science Association (Houston, TX)**

The purpose of the project is to study the environmental impacts of people who are currently working at the Nail Salons in the Greater Houston Area. The project will conduct a research study on the statistic of how many Vietnamese-American Nail Salon owners currently operating in the Greater Houston Area then it will establish the needs assessment for and educational project to create more awareness of Nail Salon workers on the toxic and hazardous impacts of some of the chemical involved in this occupation. The intern will be asked to conduct survey on the Nail Salons in the Vietnamese American community in Houston and Vicinity and helped to analyze the results and prepare the needs assessments documentation for the project.

**Women of Courage, Support Organization (Roxbury, MA)**

The intern will develop a health survey to determine the number of women of African decent that reside in the Boston neighborhoods of Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan that have Lupus. Currently there is no state registry of Lupus patients. Our organization believes there is a very high prevalence of lupus in those communities because of the approximate 220 toxic waste sites. The intern will benefit by developing a very helpful tool and be able to contribute to the beginning of a local Lupus registry which will effectively identify women and families needing health care, essential services and support.

**Women's Voices for the Earth (Missoula, MT)**

Since it was founded Women's Voices for the Earth (WVE) has focused its attention on environmental justice issues that directly impact women and children. The intern would be brought on to research the most current scientific literature on the effects of pervasive toxic chemical on wildlife and wilderness, and create both a slide show and presentation based on the information gathered. The interns will benefit in numerous way. The inter would bolster research skills and learn the art of translating technical scientific studies into understandable information for the general public. The project also involves creativity in developing a multimedia educational tool, and would give the intern an opportunity to hone their public speaking skills.