



Six Winners of National Award for Campus Climate Innovation Announced ***2011 Winners of Annual Chill Out Competition Build Climate Awareness and Take Action on Campus***

WASHINGTON, DC (April 12) – Five colleges and universities and one high school from across the United States have been awarded national recognition as winners of National Wildlife Federation’s annual *Chill Out: Climate Action on Campus* competition. This award program is America’s leading competition to honor schools that design and implement creative approaches to advance sustainability on campus. Representing about 2 percent of the nation’s carbon footprint (as large as an average state) and educating 19 million future world leaders each year, the nation’s colleges and universities are ideal places for innovation to spark a clean energy revolution and produce green jobs for the U.S.

The innovative environmental thinking and leadership of the six winning teams will be celebrated this Wednesday, April 13, in NWF’s fifth annual awards webcast, an inspiring half hour video event that can be viewed at <http://www.campuschillout.org>. In addition to recognizing the winners, the webcast serves as an organizing tool for students, faculty and staff as the hundreds of participating institutions tune in and host screenings for their campuses.

“National Wildlife Federation applauds the efforts of these young innovators who are so energized to protect their future and the future of our planet’s natural resources,” says Jeremy Symons, Senior Vice President of Conservation and Education for National Wildlife Federation. “The educators and students have proved it is possible to significantly reduce the pollution that is fueling global warming, and they are creating a clean energy workforce that is prepared to help decrease our country’s dependence on oil.”

“America’s institutions of higher learning are vital in fostering leadership and innovation in new technologies and management systems for lowering greenhouse gas emissions on campuses and in their surrounding communities across the nation,” adds Kevin Coyle, Vice President for Education and Training for National Wildlife Federation. “As our society’s youth will face the harsh realities of climate change over their lifetimes, they must have a voice in tackling the challenges of their future.”

Chill Out participants are inspirational examples of effective and innovative ways to substantially decrease campus carbon footprints, conserve resources and save money. The winning initiatives address the broad spectrum of sustainability challenges, including creating viable solar powered homes, improving school and community energy efficiency, coordinating university-wide curricula and programs and increasing recycling among fans at sporting events.

Chill Out 2011 competition winners:

High School Actions Category: **Manhattan Comprehensive Night and Day High School (New York, NY)** is implementing a multi-phase effort to improve energy efficiency in the school and the local community, beginning with educating students on energy auditing. After learning the fundamentals, students are engaging with the community to inform them about their energy options and designing efficiency measures for their school building that will save on both funds and energy emissions.

Green Sporting Events & Programs Category: **Baylor University (Waco, TX)** students are working to improve the footprint of their sports program by educating fans on the benefits of recycling. Through student and community volunteer participation, one-on-one communication and strategic advertising, this program has tripled the amount of plastic and aluminum recycled at home games and diverted 6.5 tons of trash from the waste stream.

Green Jobs and Education Category: Central Carolina Community College's (Pittsboro, NC) Green Building and Renewable Energy Program is dedicated to training instructors for sustainable industries and the new green workforce to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and create new jobs. Students and faculty host an eco-business trade show and tours of farms and green homes, showcasing the growing green industries in the region.

Innovative Research and Design Technology Category: Missouri University of Science and Technology's (Rolla, MO) student-run Solar Team creates attractive and energy-efficient solar powered homes to compete in the international Solar Decathlon competition on the National Mall in Washington, DC. The team also displays its designs closer to home, at the Solar Village in Rolla, MO.

Students in Action Category: Montreat College's (Montreat, NC) student leadership team, SEEDS, engages with the student body, administration and local community in a variety of visionary initiatives, such as the Residence Energy Challenge and the Garden of Eatin'. By encouraging students to reduce their energy consumption and providing both gardening skills and fresh produce to the campus and community, SEEDS serves as an ongoing sustainability resource.

Campus Actions Category: Eastern Mennonite University's (Harrisonburg, VA) student, faculty, and staff-run Creation Care Council provides a forum to coordinate campus-wide sustainability efforts. The Council's initiatives integrate a theology of caring for the Earth with activities aimed at improving education, community gardening, recycling and composting, and energy efficiency in transportation, infrastructure, and grounds and buildings.

The winning institutions will receive a monetary award from the National Wildlife Federation to continue exploring innovative clean energy and climate action initiatives. The webcast, which will be co-hosted by Tara Platt (voice and live-action actress) and Yuri Lowenthal (voice of Superman on CW's *Legion of Superheroes*), is an excellent organizing tool and will be available for viewing on-demand after April 13. We encourage campuses to pick the day and time that works best for them through the spring and also use the webcast as a great welcome back-to-school event in the fall.

"The passion that comes from these students, faculty and staff to take climate action invigorates the rest of society to continue the fight for a clean energy economy," says Mark Harrison, Campaign Coordinator at partner organization climatecounts.org. "*Chill Out* is an incredible opportunity for campus leaders not only to learn what others are doing to initiate climate action but also to apply those lessons to their own communities."

Campus leaders across the country are encouraged to host events on their campuses and in their wider communities to watch the webcast. The program will be part of a series of events scheduled on hundreds of campuses across the country building excitement in the week leading up to Earth Day 2011. Visit www.campuschillout.org for details on hosting a live screening party and to view the webcast.

Chill Out: Climate Action on Campus is proudly supported by The Kendeda Fund, and other partners including Climate Counts, AASHE, Energy Action Coalition, Jobs for the Future, Campus Conservation Nationals, Earth Day Network and more.

National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology Program has been an integral leader in the campus greening movement since 1989. In the last two decades the program has built a library of campus-tailored resources to help thousands of students, faculty and staff at more than one-third of all colleges and universities in crafting programs, incentives, curricula and best practices for improving sustainability efforts. As the climate crisis in our country grows, Campus Ecology has also evolved to help campuses tackle the challenges of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. NWF is committed to partnering with the nation's academic institutions and fostering some of our nation's most important hotbeds of innovation in confronting the climate crisis.

National Wildlife Federation's mission is to inspire Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future. Visit www.nwf.org.

www.campuschillout.org

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