



March 5, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Social Networking Site Links Green Teens across the Country

New Web site launched; grants awarded for community environmental projects

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Environmentally minded teens looking for a place to interact, share ideas and learn about careers and university programs now have their own social networking site, www.planet-connect.org.

Designed by teens – the best advisors on social networking – Planet Connect was launched this week by the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) in partnership with The Weather Channel. Students who want to learn more about environmental topics will find a wealth of teen-friendly information as well as information about environmental clubs and activities around the country.

In addition to allowing teens to share their concerns for the planet, Planet Connect also allows teens to take positive action through a grant program. Winners who submitted ideas to solve problems or raise awareness for environmental issues in their schools and communities are announced today on the Planet Connect site.

“Students want to be part of solutions to environmental problems. Planet Connect gives them a place to find answers, to share successes and to join a community making a positive difference in a way that they are used to – through social networking,” said Diane Wood, president of the National Environmental Education Foundation. “The site and the Planet Connect grants will give teens a chance to identify, publicize and tackle the problems they see every day. The grant winners have incredible energy and fantastic projects that will be assets to their schools and communities.”

The networking capabilities of the site allow students across the country to share exciting environmental news tidbits and strategies for having an impact in their schools and communities.

“In many ways students are leaders in the climate change discussion, and The Weather Channel is proud to partner with Planet Connect in this exciting environmental exchange,” said Lynn Brindell, executive vice president of strategic marketing, The Weather Channel.

The 29 high school students chosen to receive Planet Connect grants devised plans and created budgets for environmental projects. Most will participate in summer environmental internships in their communities. The grants were made possible with funding from the NBC Universal Foundation.

Philippe Cousteau, founder of EarthEcho and NEEF board member, said the Planet Connect site gives teens a chance to interact with others while making a difference in their communities.

“More than five million American teens are already using social networking sites,” Cousteau said. “This gives them a place to interact constructively while working toward real solutions to environmental problems and getting ideas for school and careers.”

Planet Connect grant winners are listed below. For more information on each winner and their project, [click here](#) or contact Dan Seligson, communications director, at 202.261-6481.

PLANET CONNECT GRANT WINNERS

Alma Reyna, East Side Memorial High School, **Austin, Texas**

Andrea Sluke, West Fargo High School, **West Fargo, N.D.**

Anna Borrell, Ward Melville High School, **Setauket, N.Y.**

Anthony Simpson, Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School, **Washington, D.C.**

Athman Adishesan, Ramana Academy, **Charlottesville, Va.**

Bridgette Amezcuita, Animo Leadership Charter High School, **Inglewood, Calif.**

Caroline Blauser, Allegheny-Clarion Valley High School, **Parker, Pa.**

Chelsie Bishop, Orrville High School, **Orville, Ohio**

Cody Batholomew, Kent Meridian High School, **Kent, Wash.**

Diana Rosas, La Mirada High School, **La Mirada, Calif.**

Elena Marroquin, Cesar E. Chavez High School, **Houston, Texas**

Erikamarie Gil, Felix Varela Senior High School, **Miami, Fla.**

Genesis Godoy, Environmental Charter High School, **Carson, Calif.**

Georgiy Lomsadze, Riverwood International Charter School, **Atlanta, Ga.**

Imani Williams, ASA Academy and Community Science Center, **Oakland, Calif.**

James Lancaster, Alpharetta High School, **Alpharetta, Ga.**

Jason Robertson, Mt. Juliet High School, **Mt. Juliet, Tenn.**

Jonesha Sowell, Butler Traditional High School, **Louisville, Ky.**

Katie Snyder, Mayville High School, **Mayville, Wis.**

Katie Vaglivielo, Virginia City High School, **Reno, Nev.**

Kellyn Conant, Carnegie Vanguard, **Houston, Texas**

Laura Villafranco, Jarrell High School, **Jarrell, Texas**

Linda Spires, Happy Valley High School, **Elizabethton, Tenn.**

Matthew Evans, Discover Academy, **Pflugerville, Texas**

Natalie Lucas, Sinagua High School, **Flagstaff, Ariz.**

Noah Tankin, Pennsbury High School, **Yardley, Pa.**

Rachel Nakanishi, Redmond High School, **Sammamish, Wash.**

Sarah Yu, West Windsor - Plainsboro High School South, **Cranbury, N.J.**

Sean O'Neil, Bosque School, **Albuquerque, N.M.**

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THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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® and Health & Environment -- we offer Americans knowledge to live by. To learn more, visit www.neefusa.org.

THE WEATHER CHANNEL

After covering climate for more than 25 years, The Weather Channel is a leader in the area of climate change and the environment. The Weather Channel has a corporate initiative called Forecast Earth and an accompanying Web site where climate news meets green living. The on-air segments and Web site enables users to become even more knowledgeable about environmental issues and what they can do to make a difference. For more information, visit www.weather.com/forecastearth.

The Weather Channel, a 24-hour weather network is seen in more than 98 million U.S. households. The Weather Channel reaches more than 38 million unique users online per month through weather.com and products including The Weather Channel Desktop, making it the most popular source of online weather, news and information according to Nielsen Net Ratings. The Weather Channel also operates The Weather Channel HD; Weatherscan, a 24-hour, all-local weather network; The Weather Channel Radio Network; The Weather Channel Newspaper Services; and is the leading weather information provider for emerging technologies. This includes broadband and interactive television applications and wireless weather products including the most popular content site on the Mobile Web. In September 2008, The Weather Channel Companies were purchased by a consortium made up of NBC Universal and the private equity firms The Blackstone Group and Bain Capital. For more information, visit www.weather.com/press.