



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Three D.C. Area Schools Awarded Grants for Water Education, Conservation Projects

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Three schools in the metropolitan Washington area received grants this week to spark water saving and environmental education projects.

The elementary schools, located in Arlington, Hyattsville and Washington, D.C. each received \$1,000 grants from HSBC Bank USA to fund projects that will create school gardens, irrigation systems and allow for the purchase of water-efficient fixtures.

The National Environmental Education Foundation identified the winning schools as part of its National Environmental Education Week program, which took place April 11-17, 2010. It encouraged schools to focus on educating students about water and energy conservation as part of its annual theme, "Be Water and Energy Wise."

"These exciting projects not only help students learn about water conservation, they will also make a lasting difference at their schools," said Diane Wood, president of the National Environmental Education Foundation. "We're grateful to our partners as HSBC for funding the grant program."

This is the second round of HSBC grants. Schools receiving awards were invited to participate and teachers responsible for leading the grant projects will receive continuing support from NEEF and National Environmental Education Week.

"Water conservation matters to everyone and especially our children. It is critical to equip them with knowledge and understanding about water and water conservation," said Thomas Higgins, senior relationship manager for HSBC Bank USA. "Through these grants, they will have the chance for hands-on education that benefits their schools and their communities as they become water wise."

"Cesar Chavez Elementary School is very proud of this award. Our motto is willing instructional leaders directing children above the standard," said Teresa Nicholson, a teacher at Cesar Chavez Elementary School in Hyattsville. "The schoolyard garden has motivated us to continue above the standards. We can make a difference and be water wise to make our planet a better place to live for future generations."

Participating schools and projects:

Barcroft Elementary School, Arlington, Va.

A group of fourth and fifth graders will create the Barcroft Low Flow Team. They will check water fixtures for leaks, measure daily water use and study billing information. Using posters and morning announcements, they'll share their findings with the rest of the school.

Grant money will be used to purchase water-efficient fixtures for both indoor and outdoor use. After fixtures are in place, a second round of data collection will compare water use before and after and will be presented to the school.

Cesar Chavez Elementary School, Hyattsville, Md.

The school will install a water-efficient irrigation system for the school garden employing rain barrels, soaker hoses and water timers. Rain gauges will also be installed, allowing students in grades 3rd-6th to track rainfall and use the rain barrels efficiently.

Data on water consumption from the outdoor faucet will be collected before and after the rain barrels are installed.

Students at the bilingual school will educate the school community about the garden using signs in both English and Spanish. Staff will also participate in a Project WET educator training workshop.

Leckie Elementary School, Washington, D.C.

With help from a local 4-H chapter, students and teachers from the Garden Club will install a vegetable garden with water conservation measures that include native and drought-tolerant plants and rain barrels for water collection.

Students will determine the flow rate of outdoor hoses and will calculate what they will need for the garden. They will then calculate water and money savings from the use of rain barrels. Signs in Spanish and English will explain the benefits of the plants.

For more information about projects or to contact representatives from the schools, please contact Dan Seligson, dseligson@neefusa.org.

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