ICEC News and Updates November 2022

Iowa Conservation Education Coalition <exec@iowaee.org> Wed, Nov 2, 2022 at 6:30 AM
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Member Newsletter November 2022

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Vote Now for ICEC ExCom

As an ICEC, it is time to vote for new executive committee members for the 2023-2025 term. But first, we need to thank Barb Gigar for serving two three-year terms on ICEC ExCom! Her dedication to conservation education in Iowa has been a tremendous asset to ICEC. Our thanks also to Louis Beck for completing his first term on ExCom.

ExCom members work together and help ICEC provide ways for Iowa's conservation and environmental

educators to learn, build relationships, and creatively collaborate. Voting will be open until November 30, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Click here for voting form!

Click here to vote!

Below are snippets of the candidate statements for the nominees for the 2023-2025 term on ICEC's ExCom. **Please visit the ICEC website for each nominee's complete statement (and photo).**

Louis Beck

From an early age, I developed an active interest in our natural resources and the outdoors. Growing up in rural Iowa on a diversified crop and livestock farm, and vacationing like many rural families at our park systems, I developed a deep appreciation of our soils, climate, and recreational opportunities. My interest was encouraged by teachers. When I began my teaching career in Agricultural Education, the majority of my recertification credits were in the area of natural resources. I developed and taught Natural Resources classes which led to involving my FFA members in Iowa Envirothon competitions. Besides being an educator, I continue to be involved in a farming operation. I believe my experiences both as an educator and farmer along with my interest in conservation bring a unique perspective to the Executive Committee of the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition. **Read more…**

Heather Gamm

Hi! My name is Heather Gamm. I have been in the environmental education field for 23 years. I worked in Boone County for 2.5 years as a naturalist/park ranger and I have been in Bremer County for over 21 years as the Environmental Education Coordinator/Naturalist. I was on the Midwest Environmental Education Conference (MEEC) planning committee for Decorah in 2021. I completely enjoyed working with other members of ICEC on that committee and that is what propelled me to apply for ICEC ExCom. I feel like I would be a good candidate because I am willing to do a variety of things and I would love to work more closely with teachers and other naturalists. I am also very organized. Thanks for your consideration! **Read more…**

Clark Porter

I currently work on water quality projects as an Environmental Specialist for the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. I also manage my family's farm, where we employ multiple conservation methods from no-till to cover crops. However, I spent a good part of my adult life as an educator. I earned a Ph.D. In Social Foundations of Education at the University of Iowa. I have worked as a school psychologist, classroom teacher, and adjunct university instructor. As a conservation professional, practitioner, and former teacher, I believe I can bring multiple perspectives to the table. I am a proponent of experiential education, and conservation education is a natural fit for this instructional philosophy. Education will play a crucial role in reshaping our relationship with the natural world, our resources, and our communities. I would enjoy sharing this message and being a part of what your organization offers. **Read more…**

Samuel Taylor

I am a Master's candidate in the Earth & Environmental Sciences department at the University of Iowa. My research combines fluvial geomorphology, hyperspectral remote sensing, lidar, and radar precipitation data. My work has a second essential focus, communicating scientific information to the public through storytelling. There is a divide between the general public and science. The best way to bridge it is not through more graphs, data, and scientific committees but through effective communication, education, and community building. Research is necessary, but I believe that research, for its own sake, is a lost opportunity and must be communicated to the public. I wish for more chances to connect with the general population, to develop opportunities to create community, and, most importantly, to develop effective long-term change. I believe I can effectively serve the

ICEC and improve under the tutelage of experienced board members. **Read more…**

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Renew Membership

It's membership renewal time! ICEC is the professional membership organization for conservation and environmental educators in Iowa. Please continue to be part of our community.

Basic annual membership begins at the $30 level / $20 for current students. Payments made now through December 31st will be valid for membership through the end of 2022. Please renew by the end of January 2022. Members can also contribute additional funds to help support ICEC's various projects. All memberships and donations are truly appreciated!

Please visit our **membership page to fill out the individual membership form**. We ask folks to do this each year so we capture correct contact information!

On that form, you indicate how you will be paying… and if by PayPal, that link is on the website page below the membership form. An invoice from PayPal can be emailed, if needed.

Organization Member Options

A **Partner Organization Discount** is available to organizations who pay for **at least four individual memberships** for staff and can pay with **one payment**, each membership would receive a $5.00 discount off the regular membership rate. Each member of the partner organization would have individual member benefits. Please **email Linette / ICEC directly if this situation applies to your organization**

A **Supporting Organization** membership is also available.

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IAN-ICEC Award Nominations Due Soon

Have you or someone you know done something great for conservation or environmental education (CE / EE) in Iowa? Nominate them (or yourself) for an IAN-ICEC Award for Excellence in Environmental Education. These awards are a great way to recognize the wonderful CE / EE happenings in Iowa.

Nominations must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. CT December 1, 2022.

Learn more and download the form here!

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Winter Workshop 2023, Annual Membership Meeting

Enhancing Education - Naturally

Learn how improving mental health and student achievement are just out the door…
February 11, 2023 - Drake University

Winter Workshop will be in person at Drake University, with an option for virtual attendance. Our ICEC Annual Membership Meeting will kick off the day! Members will want to register for this to receive a complimentary light breakfast.

The last couple years have again reminded us that student-centered experiences in the natural environment are essential. Structured and unstructured experiences in the outdoors help each of us "reset" and recharge, can help us concentrate, increase our creativity, help us become better problem solvers, help us become better students - no matter our age - and improve our mental health.

Interested in sharing your expertise, resources, and / or current work around this topic, **please complete this short form** by December 1, 2022.

Registration will be open after the first of the year. Look for another email with registration details or watch the ICEC website!

Heartland AEA Iowa teacher recertification credit will be available.

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PEEPs

Pisces Foundation

For the past several years, ICEC Executive Committee members have been participating in a regional collaboration called the Plains Environmental Education Partnership (PEEPs) with other statewide environmental education organizations in Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Iowa. The overarching goal has been to expand the capacity of individual state organizations and the region as a whole to provide environmental education by understanding how resources can be shared and maximized across the region.

Phase 1 of the PEEPs project involved long-term organizational assessments and culminated in a leadership clinic held last spring. Phase 2 seeks to create data-driven strategic action plans by conducting a comprehensive regional Landscape Analysis that will provide a baseline of clear data on the scale, scope, successes, and shortcomings of current environmental education programming across individual states and the region. The PEEPs team will be working with Gen:Thrive to facilitate Phase 2. Gen:Thrive is a collaborative initiative to accelerate sustainability and environmental education programs in K–12 schools through a community mapping process that offers a data-driven approach to deploy conservation and environmental education programs focused on environmental literacy, climate justice, green building, outdoor learning, e-STEM, and other related topics to the places that need it most.
Please watch over the next few months for further information on this project and how you can help ICEC gather the necessary information for creating a deep and meaningful set of data.

This project has been possible thanks to funding from the Pisces Foundation secured on behalf of the region by the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education.

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Game Jam

Look for our Game Jam topic(s) and timeline in early January 2023. Email **Linette** to receive information when it is available! **Review past Game Jam topics here.**

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WILD AmeriCorps

ICEC is supporting two full-time **Green Iowa AmeriCorps** members. **Members will begin their service in December** so please reach out as soon as possible if you are interested, or would like more information. Members may work remotely part of the time, but we prefer they be located near Iowa City or Des Moines so we can provide support and mentor them during their term. Members will begin in December and serve 1700 hours over the next year.

Planned activities include:

- Help promote and coordinate the professional development Winter Workshop at Drake University on February 11, 2023.
- Support the 2023 Game Jam, in which teams of elementary through middle school students work

together to create a game (board, digital, full-body, etc) that explores, teaches about, or proposes solutions to real-life conservation issues facing Iowa.
- Expand adoption of and use by Iowa educators of the numerous environmental education curricula, guides, and resources that ICEC oversees, including Project WILD, KinderNature, Field Investigations, Iowa Authentic Data, and more.
- Explore how ICEC can support increased participation in the statewide high school Envirothon, including through partnering with the Conservation Districts of Iowa to increase diverse student participation.
- Expand statewide awareness of ICEC and increasing general engagement with ICEC programs, events, and resources.

Email **Barb.Gigar@dnr.iowa.gov** for more information.

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ICEC Resources

Check out these resources available on the ICEC website!

- **Calendar of events** and courses from ICEC, co-sponsored by ICEC, our partner organizations, and others.
- **Equity and Inclusion in Environmental Education** - Visit this page for links to the on-demand videos from Winter Workshop 2021
- **WILD Resources**
    - **Monthly email** to support Project WILD and Aquatic WILD (**sign up here**)
    - **Book search** for PK-12 and parents / educators
    - **Project WILD and Aquatic WILD Workshops and Courses**
- **KinderNature** includes on the homepage weekly tips in "Max's Corner" and highlighted activity from the activity bank in KinderNature
    - **Monthly email** to support Growing Up WILD (**sign up here**)
    - **Book search** for PK-2 and parents / educators
    - **Growing Up WILD Workshops and Courses**
- **Authentic Iowa Data Resources**

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Professional Development

Check out these Iowa Project WILD Online Training Modules, available with or without re-certification credit to receive the new Project WILD and Aquatic WILD guides! The goal of Project WILD is to develop awareness, knowledge, skills, and commitment resulting in informed decisions, responsible behavior, and constructive actions concerning wildlife and the environment. Each online module includes an overview of the guide and resources for **Aquatic WILD** and **Project WILD**; you may order a copy of the guide upon completion of the activities included in the "modules" on this site. **Click here to learn about re-certification credit** through Iowa AEAs for Project WILD / Aquatic WILD. **Email the state coordinator for more info on the credit option.**

Apply now for 2023 courses through **Miami University's Project Dragonfly** for graduate courses and master's degrees that offer extraordinary experiences through zoos and botanical gardens. Click here to learn about their **Advanced Inquiry Program**, **Global Field Program**, and **Earth Expeditions**. Graduate tuition for all programs is greatly reduced because of support from Miami University. **Sign up for their webinar to learn more!**

Webinar: **Beyond Doom & Gloom: How to Teach Climate Change Towards Empowerment**, November 8, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. CT (45 minutes) - Teaching about climate change is filled with distressing information about

the current and future impacts on our world, and naturally can have detrimental effects on youth's mental health. Educators will hear from youth about how they are handling this challenge and will walk away with a variety of strategies and activities to integrate into their curriculum as they engage with today's youth. **Register here.**

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Resources from NAAEE

Outside for 5

Let's go Outside for 5! You can discover a new perspective when you step outside. Whether it's a forest, a city park, or just outside a school building, there are simple ways to learn something new in nature's classroom.

Join the North American Association for Environmental Education Affiliate Network and sign the Outside for 5 pledge to: Incorporate an outdoor lesson or activity at least 5 minutes a day, 5 days a week, or any meaningful amount of time. Use the current school curriculum and apply it to outdoor activities. Connect with other educators and professionals who engage in outdoor learning experiences.

Visit **OutsideFor5.com** to take the pledge and explore ways to support the social-emotional wellness of your students and school community.

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Resources and Links

High School Teacher Pollinator grant from the Sand County Foundation. Due November 18.
This competitive grant program gives students hands-on experience growing native forbs indoors and establishing pollinator habitat. Successful applicants will receive prairie seeds and seedlings, an orientation and consultation, and $1,000 to support project expenses. **The deadline for proposals is November 18th, 2022.** To be eligible you must be a high school teacher, have access to a suitable indoor growing area, identify a site (working/agricultural lands preferred), and be located in Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, or Wisconsin. Visit **www.sandcountyfoundation.org/schoolgrants** for details. Please feel free to contact Haley Diem at hdiem@sandcountyfoundation.org for more information!

Children and Nature Network - Check these links from a recent newsletter!

- **Ecological grief and hope in a changing world** by Donald A. Rakow
- **Our kids are facing a mental health crisis, nature can help** - Outdoor Alliance for Kids
- **Nature can affect human well-being in many more ways than you think** - The Washington Post
- Read more children and nature news in the **Round Up Archives**

New Funding to Address Youth Climate-Mental Health in US K-12 Schools
The **Climate Mental Health Network (CMHN)** and National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) announced today receipt of a $100,000 grant from **The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Global** to create tools and resources that support teachers in helping students process emotions related to climate change in age-appropriate ways. Funding for this joint project will increase access to a range of climate mental health practices and provide teachers with materials that support healthy, safe, and supportive engagement with student mental health needs due to climate change in K-12 schools.

Iowa Environmental Council Pro H2O Awards
IEC's **Pro H2O awards are open for nominations**, nominations need to be submitted before April 15, 2023.

Midwest Climate Collaborative - Save the Date!
The Midwest Climate Summit, February 21-23, 2023 expands climate knowledge, accelerates climate action, and catalyzes new partnerships that deepen expertise and develop a Midwestern response to the climate crisis.The 2023 summit is scheduled to be an in-person event in St. Louis with a virtual option. The goal of the summit is to share knowledge, strengthen relationships within and across sectors, and accelerate climate action. Our vision of a carbon neutral, climate resilient, interconnected Midwest region cannot be achieved without centering equity and justice in our planning and implementation. We are seeking **workshop proposals** that further these goals in a variety of topic areas.

Project Learning Tree

- Seven benefits of using nature and the outdoors to teach math - **check out this resource!**
- November is Native American Heritage Month - **Check out these year-round resources for educators.**

Climate Literacy & Energy Awareness Network (CLEAN)

- **Browse the CLEAN Collection by NGSS Topic** - CLEAN supports teaching and learning about climate and energy with 850+ free peer-reviewed, scientifically accurate, and classroom-ready resources.
- **Explore the CLEAN Collection of climate and energy learning** - Accurate education about climate and energy topics has never been more important, and it can be challenging to locate reliable, vetted educational materials to use in your classroom.

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Other News

From Minnesota Public Radio - **New program connects English language classes with Minnesota's green spaces**

Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults - Drawing from her experiences as an Indigenous scientist, botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer demonstrated how all living things—from strawberries and witch hazel to water lilies and lichen—provide us with gifts and lessons every day in her best-selling book Braiding Sweetgrass. Adapted for young adults by Monique Gray Smith, this new edition reinforces how wider ecological understanding stems from listening to the earth's oldest teachers: the plants around us. With informative sidebars, reflection questions, and art from illustrator Nicole Neidhardt, Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults brings Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the lessons of plant life to a new generation. **Check out the publishers website that has a link to a free virtual event with Robin and those that worked on this adaptation!**

Biden-Harris Administration advances commitment to create more equitable access to parks and nature in communities
The President and Vice President of the United States recently celebrated the signing of a **new interagency memorandum to promote equitable access to nature in nature-deprived communities**. The memorandum will form the Nature in Communities Committee, an interagency group with representatives from 10 Federal departments and agencies.

Living Schoolyards Act Introduced in the US Senate
U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) introduced, at the end of September 2022, the Living Schoolyards Act that will enable schools to completely re-envision their outdoor school grounds with the goal of providing more hands-on learning opportunities, strengthening local ecological systems, and giving every single child a place

where they can learn and play outside. **Please see this congress bill tracker for S.4993.**

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The Iowa Conservation Education Coalition (ICEC) is a 501(c)3 Iowa non-profit first organized in 1958! We have a long-standing tradition of providing professional development to formal and non-formal educators in conservation and environmental education. ICEC is the unifying voice for conservation and environmental education in Iowa.

ICEC needs you! **If you need to renew your membership, visit our website**. Memberships expire on December 31 and should be renewed by January 31. Your membership supports excellence in conservation education through networking with formal and non-formal educators and their support services, and conservation professionals!

Remember to visit the **ICEC Facebook page**, like it, and share it! The more you comment on a page's post, the more that page will show in your news feed!

Sincerely,
Linette Bernard, Project Coordinator
Iowa Conservation Education Coalition
exec@iowaee.org

Executive Committee Members

Lilly Jensen, Co-Chair
Winneshiek County Conservation Board

Louis Beck, Co-Chair
Retired, FFA / Agriculture Education

Tiffany Morgan, Secretary
Iowa PBS

Barb Gigar, Treasurer
Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Kyla Burns
Johnston High School

Dave Conrads
U of Iowa College of Education

Ted Neal
U of Iowa, Science Education

Kean Roberts
Ames Comm. School District / Drake University

Peg Steffen
Retired science teacher, STEM Consultant

Anthony Vorwald
Jackson County Conservation Board

Jerry Neppel, Ex-Officio
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

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