



Environmental Justice Quarterly

New Grant Program for Community Organizations

OEJ has launched a new grant program to provide financial assistance to community-based organizations to work on projects to address local environmental and/or public health concerns.

The Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (EJ CPS) Grant Program will provide \$100,000 (over 3 years) to each of the 15 grant awardees. Grant proposals must be submitted by September 30, 2003. For further details, please read the Request for Applications, available at <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/recent/ej.html>.

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Environmental Justice Swings into Action

EPA's regional and headquarters offices have begun to implement environmental justice action plans, which lay the groundwork for integrating environmental justice into the Agency's policies, programs, and activities. In conjunction with a small group of senior managers, the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) developed a template to help the regions and offices structure and develop their plans and also provided direction and feedback on implementation strategies and results.

"Environmental justice needs to be considered in every aspect of the Agency's functions," said Marla Hendriksson, OEJ's national program manager for outreach and communications. "These action plans will help OEJ track and guide the implementation and integration of environmental justice into the Agency's decision-making process and daily operations."

The action plan template developed by OEJ provides a consistent and holistic approach to environmental justice integration by requiring each office and region to include the following key elements:

- Management Accountability
- Internal/External Stakeholder Involvement
- Data Collection/Management
- Training
- Environmental Justice Assessment
- Evaluation

The Environmental Justice Action Plan consists of two parts. The first provides a narrative of the Environmental Justice Program for each EPA headquarters and

regional office and describes that office's proactive efforts to integrate environmental justice using the elements listed above. The other is a matrix which provides a strategy for implementing the action plan activities. The action plan also allows each program office or region to integrate unique strategies into its plans. For example, as part of its action plan, EPA Region 1 (covering Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and 10 tribal nations) plans to develop and issue an Environmental Justice Programmatic Guidance Manual covering eight function-specific areas: program authorization and delegation; grants; contracts; inspection, enforcement and assistance; permitting; performance partnership agreements; waste site cleanup, emergency response, and brownfields; and public involvement. Training on the guidance will take place in conjunction with the manual's release in fall 2003.

The Environmental Justice Executive Steering Committee directed EPA regional and headquarters offices to submit their action plans by September 30, 2002. The Executive Steering Committee is comprised of the Agency's Deputy Assistant Administrators, the Deputy Regional Administrators, and the Director of OEJ. To date, all regional offices and most headquarters offices have completed their action plan for fiscal year 2003. The action plans are available at www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/reports/actionplans/ej/index.html.

For more information on Environmental Justice Action Plans, contact Marla Hendriksson of OEJ at 202 564-1897 or hendriksson.marla@epa.gov.

IWG Selects Revitalization Projects

In March 2003, the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG) announced the selection of 15 new IWG Revitalization Projects to showcase collaborative partnerships for addressing environmental and public health concerns and devising solutions that will contribute to community revitalization.

"These projects are living examples of how communities, government, and the private sector are working together to secure environmental justice and revitalize communities. Local partnerships are essential to addressing community concerns through constructive and collaborative problem-solving," said Assistant Administrator for the Office of Enforcement Compliance J.P. Suarez.

Chosen through a competitive application process, the projects will build on the successes of the first round of 15 demonstration projects selected by the IWG in 2000. Since their inception, the initial demonstration projects have resulted in:

- Partnerships among more than 150 organizations and 11 federal agencies.
- Commitments of more than \$5 million in public and private funding.
- Support for brownfields redevelopment.
- Utilization of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and consensus-building techniques to address contentious issues.



- Identification of the key elements of successful collaborative problem-solving partnerships.

The IWG solicited proposals for the second round of demonstration projects in fall 2002 and received 40 responses. All of the selected projects, which span 14 states and one territory, involve two or more federal agencies working in cooperation with state, local, or tribal governments; community-based organizations; academia; business and industry; and/or non-governmental organizations. By highlighting successful examples of multi-stakeholder cooperation in environmental justice, the IWG hopes to develop a collaborative problem-solving model that ensures sustainable solutions to a range of environmental, public health, and social and economic issues associated with environmental justice.

"These Environmental Justice Revitalization projects are excellent opportunities to build the bridge between meaningful community involvement, environmental cleanup, and sustainable reuse. These projects represent community needs being addressed in a holistic and collaborative way and reach the overall end goals of an environmentally healthy community, revitalized to address community needs," said Assistant Administrator for Solid Waste and Emergency Response Marianne Horinko.

New Training Workshops Offer Targeted Perspective

To keep Agency employees up-to-date on environmental justice issues that affect their daily work activities, OEJ provides access to a wide range of training courses. Many of these workshops build off of the Fundamentals of Environmental Justice Workshop, which provides an overview of the perceptions and definitions of environmental justice, as well as an introduction to available analytical tools, such as geographical information systems. Recent and new training workshops include:

- **Basic Inspectors' Training.** This workshop is designed to equip inspectors with the necessary information for ensuring that facilities comply with EPA's compliance and enforcement standards.
- **Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) Workshop.** OSWER recently held a workshop that related key information in the Fundamentals of Environmental Justice training to brownfields cleanup and other OSWER-specific activities. Senior managers attended the workshop to determine if it could be a useful tool for staff training.
- **Environmental Laws.** Workshops are being developed that will demonstrate how environmental justice issues relate to the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit program, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and Title V operating permits.
- **Tribal Module.** A tribal module has been piloted twice at EPA headquarters and has received positive reviews. The module, which covers the history of tribal issues from early American treaties to present day interactions with governmental agencies, could be integrated into environmental justice training workshops. The module also identifies opportunities to address environmental injustices faced by tribes.
- **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Techniques.** OEJ sponsored a pilot training session on ADR in El Monte, California, for representatives of the affected communities. The pilot demonstrated collaborative problem-solving methods that communities can use as an alternative to litigation.

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IWG Environmental Justice Revitalization Projects

Chelsea Creek Restoration Project
Chelsea and East Boston, MA

Revitalization of the Magic Marker Brownfields Site
Trenton, NJ

Empowering Communities to Secure Drinking Water in Rural Puerto Rico
Puerto Rico

Utilizing Compliance Assistance to Achieve Community Revitalization in Park Heights
Baltimore, MD

Vision 2020: For the Children of Anniston—Children's Health Environmental Justice Project
Anniston, AL

Glades Area Environmental Justice Training Collaborative
Belle, FL

The Sustainable Redevelopment and Revitalization of Princeville
Princeville, NC

The Arcade-Westside Area Revitalization Project: A Community-Based Collaboration
Rock Hill, SC

Waukegan Cleanup and Revitalization Plan
Waukegan, IL

Project ReGeneration: Building Partnerships for Livability and Sustainability in the Greater Kelly Area
San Antonio, TX

Development of a Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Park: A Tribal Lands Conservation Partnership
Eagle Butte, SD

Northeast Denver Environmental Initiative
Denver, CO

Tribal Wind Power – A Viable Strategy for Community Revitalization and Capacity
Rosebud Indian Reservation, SD

Effective Solid Waste Management for the Native Village of Selawik
Selawik, AK

Enhancing Tribal Consultation to Protect Cultural and Historic Resources
CO, LA, NM

Summer ECO Interns Gaining Grassroots Experience

This summer, 36 college students will work with community organizations around the country on projects designed to address environmental and public health concerns. The number of interns participating in the Environmental Careers Organization's (ECO's) Community Intern Program is nearly four times the number placed in 2000, the program's inaugural year.

The program is a recent and flourishing addition to the EPA/ECO partnership, now in its 18th year, which strives to protect and enhance the environment through the development of diverse leaders.

These 36 interns (undergraduate, graduate, and doctorate students) are participating in a variety of innovative and complex environmental projects, including:

- **Sustainable South Bronx (Bronx, NY)** - Partner with the community and the New York City Tree Trust to create a community forestry plan to expand green spaces in Hunt's Point and surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Faith and the City at the ITC (Atlanta, GA)** - Research and report environmental issues to local clergy and church and community members via education and outreach.
- **Washington Toxics Coalition (Seattle, WA)** - Compile and share stories of local people of color and those in low-income situations suffering health problems from pesticides and toxic chemicals.

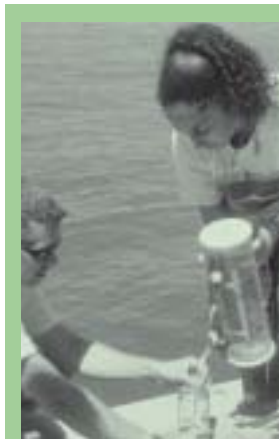
During the 12 to 26 weeks spent in an ECO Intern Program, students face several challenges, both personal and professional. Aside from adjusting to new environments and organizational policies and procedures, many interns are encountering their first professional experience and its accompanying hurdles. Linda Smith, associate director of OEJ, maintains, however, that "the positive experiences gained as an ECO Intern far outweigh the challenges."

Robert Doore, one of ECO's first Native American interns and a recent recipient

Upcoming ECO Events

- July 22 - Region 5 (Chicago) celebration commemorating 10 years with ECO.
- July 25 - ECO's Environmental Career Conference in Washington, DC.

of the ECO Distinguished Alumni Award, voiced his overwhelming enthusiasm regarding his experiences in ECO's *Connections Newsletter*. "It is safe to say that the ECO opportunity helped me to build a solid professional foundation and provided skills that contribute to my current success. Looking back, it is clearly one of the best decisions I made."



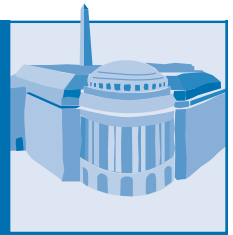
ECO/EPA Community Intern Maria Rosa and Doug Christel, head of interns, conduct water sampling at Pier 26 in Manhattan's Hudson River Park as part of The River Project's Marine Biology Internship Program.

In 1992, OEJ assumed total responsibility for the EPA/ECO Intern Program. Since then, EPA has allocated approximately \$19 million in grants, allowing more than 2,000 students from varied ethnic backgrounds and academic levels to receive hands-on experience learning about environmental issues. Over the course of this year, EPA expects to award more than 200 internships.

For more information about the EPA/ECO Internship Program, visit <www.eco.org>. You can also contact Linda Smith of OEJ at 202 564-2602 or <smith.linda@epa.gov>; Renee Goins, EPA/ECO Intern Program Manager, at 202 564-2598 or <goins.renee@epa.gov>; or Jing Yang, ECO manager for EPA interns, at 617 426-4782, Ext. 129 or <jiang@eco.org>.



Headquarters Update Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response



OSWER Blazes a Trail in 2003

The strategic plan for EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) sets ambitious goals in 2003 for this trailblazer in environmental justice. The office's overall goal is to better integrate environmental justice within OSWER programs and among its stakeholder partners by educating, rewarding, and promoting the application of environmental justice principles in EPA's waste programs.

OSWER will also partner with OEJ to support the IWG Revitalization Projects (see page 2) and will initiate several new projects to enhance the influence and integration of environmental justice in its programs, such as:

- Environmental justice training throughout OSWER.
- An OSWER environmental justice incentive awards program.

- An environmental justice grants program.

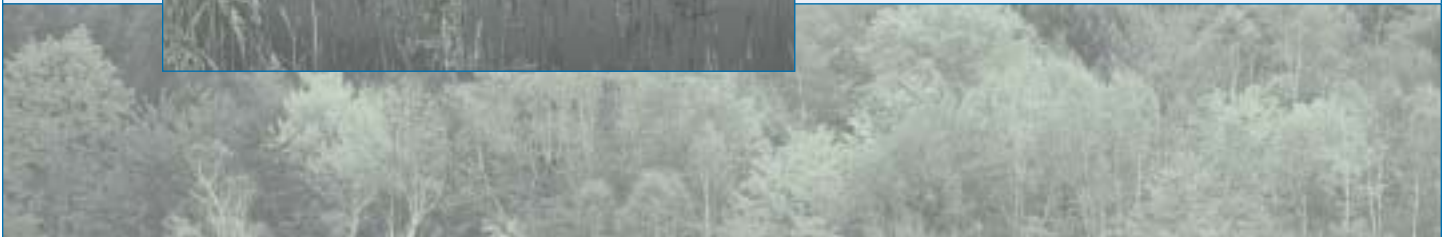
OSWER will continue to partner with a broad range of stakeholders across its programs and solicit feedback and recommendations from groups such as the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC). OSWER's environmental justice team also is looking for opportunities to work with state hazardous waste permitting programs to promote consistent application of the principles of public participation.

"In an effort to continue and maintain OSWER's commitment to environmental justice, it is our responsibility to build the capacity of OSWER personnel; foster and grow existing initiatives; ensure coordination between OSWER's headquarters office and the EPA

regions to identify and address issues of environmental justice; and evaluate programmatic subject matters, as well as our new initiatives, for the possibility of disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority populations and/or low income populations," said Marianne Lamont Horinko, assistant administrator at OSWER.

OSWER holds a 10-year tradition as an EPA leader in environmental justice. In 1994, the office issued its internal guidance (*Integration of Environmental Justice into OSWER Policy, Guidance, and Regulatory Development*) mandating the consideration of environmental justice in all of its programs and activities. From that foundation have come many key initiatives that reflect an understanding of and respect for meaningful community involvement, including activities related to brownfields, waste management facility siting, and residential relocation away from certain Superfund sites. OSWER also has allocated millions of dollars in grants towards a variety of environmental justice activities.

For more information, contact Kent Benjamin of OSWER at 202 566-0185 or benjamin.kent@epa.gov.





Regional Corner Region 1



Institutionalizing Environmental Justice in New England

This column explores exciting environmental initiatives underway in EPA regional offices. Each quarter, we will focus on a different regional program. EPA Region 1 covers Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and 10 tribal nations.

EPA Region 1 employees are getting the opportunity to see environmental justice-related challenges firsthand and to listen directly to concerns from community residents. Site tours of nearby environmentally burdened communities are an integral part of the region's mandatory environmental justice training course, which is helping to ensure that employees understand environmental justice principles. More than half of the region's 700-plus staff have already taken the course.

The region's commitment to training is part of Regional Administrator Robert W. Varney's revised regional environmental justice policy and a 2-year action plan to institutionalize environmental justice principles throughout all of Region 1's pro-

grams and activities (see related article on Action Plans on page 1).

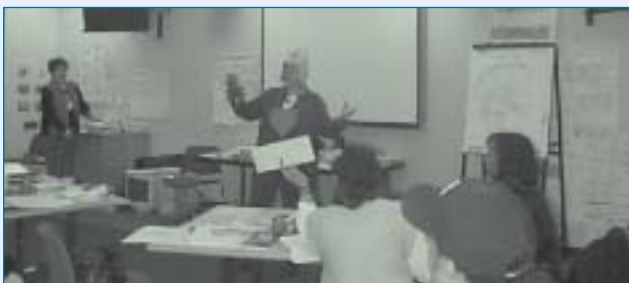
Region 1 also plans to release a guidance manual to help employees incorporate environmental justice considerations into daily work activities. The manual will include direction on how to incorporate Performance Partnership Agreements (PPAs) between states and EPA. This will help strengthen the coordination and effectiveness of state and EPA environmental justice efforts. The manual also will feature instructions on how to use the region's revised environmental justice mapping methodology for identifying potential areas of concern.

In addition, Region 1 is involved with hosting two important environmental justice events. The first was a community listening session, which was held this spring in Holyoke, Massachusetts, a rural town with a substantial low-income, Spanish-speaking population. The second is the Science of Environmental Justice in Urban, Suburban, Rural, and Tribal Communities conference, spon-

sored by EPA's Office of Research and Development. The conference will be held in the fall of 2003.

Last year, the Urban Environmental Initiative (UEI)—the first coordinated effort at Region 1 to respond to urban environmental problems in a holistic way—was converted into a permanent program. Working with the Smart Growth and Children's Health programs, the UEI jointly issued a Request for Proposals for the first round of the Healthy Urban Communities Grants, successfully leveraging more funds to address environmental justice issues.

To learn more about EPA Region 1's environmental justice program and events, contact the regional environmental justice coordinator, Kathleen Castagna, at 617 919-1429 or castagna.kathleen@epa.gov.



Strategies Help OEJ Reach Out to Communities

OEJ is challenged with the task of promoting and encouraging environmental justice not only throughout the Agency, but also within communities around the country. Part of this challenge lies in determining how to effectively reach a variety of groups, including minorities and low-income populations. OEJ seeks to engage these community groups and organizations to promote collaborative problem-solving in addressing environmental justice issues.

OEJ implements a variety of strategies to reach out to communities, including strengthening relationships with community groups and organizations; empowering communities to be involved in decisions affecting the community; providing pertinent environmental and health information to community groups and organizations; and promoting communities' use of tools and programmatic resources developed by EPA and others.

OEJ uses these general strategies as a basis for crafting more targeted

outreach plans with specific groups, such as African Americans, Asian American and Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, Native Americans, and low-income communities.

For example, under the African American and low-income strategies, OEJ plans include increasing outreach to African American community organizations and grassroots groups with the ECO Community Intern program (see related article, page 3) and helping community groups distribute a citizens' guide video on environmental justice. The Hispanic outreach strategy features a plan to develop a network database to assist in disseminating information via a Spanish/English list server, teleconferencing, newsletters, and brown bag luncheons. For all communities, OEJ plans to raise awareness of the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Grant Program and to promote the availability of the Environmental Justice Assessment Tool, a geographic information systems tool that helps communities learn more

about their local environment.

For more information on environmental justice outreach strategies, contact Marla Hendriksson, national program manager, communications and outreach for OEJ, at 202 564-1897 or hendriksson.marla@epa.gov.

Training Workshops

(Continued from page 2)

Thanks to the success of the pilot session, a similar ADR training session is being planned in Region 4. Region 4's ADR training will be held in Memphis, Tennessee, in September 2003.

For more information on environmental justice training courses, visit the EPA National Enforcement Training Institute's (NETI's) Web site at www.netionline.com. The site features a catalog and schedule of courses on environmental justice. You can also contact Mustafa Ali of OEJ at 202 564-2606 or at ali.mustafa@epa.gov.