



American Forest Foundation

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Press Release

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American Forest Foundation Receives Grant to Develop Model GreenSchools

Washington, D.C. - The American Forest Foundation (AFF) received a \$611,353 grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service as part of its Learn and Serve America 2008 Grants program. The grant was awarded to the American Forest Foundation's *GreenSchools!* program to infuse service-learning into Project Learning Tree, its well-respected, widely-used environmental education curriculum.

Monies from the three-year grant will be used to provide training and funding for 6th through 12th grade students and teachers to investigate environmental issues at their school and engage their community in service-learning projects that create green and healthy learning environments. Every year, 20 middle/high schools in four regions of the country will be selected to become model *GreenSchools*—bringing the total number of schools involved to 60 and engaging an estimated 60,000 students.

“What makes this program unique,” said Kathy McGlaufflin, Senior Vice President of Education at AFF, “is that teams of kids and teachers across the country focus their learning experience on making a real difference in their world—creating a healthy and green environment at school.” Another hallmark of the program, said McGlaufflin, is that “Many schools will actually see some real dollar savings through energy efficiency and green alternatives. That’s a win-win for everybody in this economic climate.”

Students and teachers will use their knowledge and skills from science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) courses to address challenges at their school. “Math and science are more important than ever in our global economy, but United States’ students are falling behind,” said David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. “Service-learning is a powerful way to help students learn these crucial subjects and spark their interest in technical fields.”

For the first year of the three-year grant, AFF is seeking schools with a strong emphasis on diverse and underserved communities in Baltimore, Houston, Kansas City, and one other region to be announced later. Four additional regions will be selected in both the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years.

“*GreenSchools!* connects students and their classroom curriculum to challenging environmental issues inside their school buildings, on their school grounds, and within their communities,” said Al Stenstrup, Director of Education Programs at the American Forest Foundation. “The grant will raise awareness of each individual’s role and responsibility to protect and improve the environment, and provide hands-on, leadership opportunities for students.”

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The *GreenSchools!* program provides environmental education training for teachers and grade 6-12 students, resources, and equipment to conduct environmental school audits and grants for implementing service-learning projects.

Through professional development workshops, at least three teachers from each school will learn how to integrate environmental education into their curriculum and receive Project Learning Tree's guidebook of lesson plans correlated to state academic standards. Secondly, teacher and student teams will learn how to assess current environmental conditions in and around their school grounds using a set of audits focusing on energy, waste and recycling, water, the schoolyard, transportation, and more. Students will recommend and develop an action plan for projects that would have a positive environmental impact at their school site. Finally, grants will be made available to schools for *GreenWorks!* service-learning projects that get educators, students, families, and community organizations working together to improve their neighborhood's environment.

"The goal of Learn and Serve America is to engage students, educators, community partners, and other volunteers of all ages and backgrounds in service and service-learning to meet community needs and enhance education and civic participation. We look forward to *GreenSchools!* helping make service-learning a common experience for all young people," said Amy Cohen, Director of Learn and Serve America. "The overall quality of applications received was outstanding, so your accomplishment is significant."

The American Forest Foundation is a nonprofit conservation organization with experience in training environmental educators and helping private landowners manage their forests for multiple benefits. Each year the Foundation trains 25,000+ educators on how to integrate high quality environmental education into their classes.

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