

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
8 February, 2016

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Children’s Environmental Health Network awarded grant for training and educating child care professionals at the U.S.-Mexico border in environmental health best practices.

CEC funds will help to address North American environmental problems locally

Washington, DC—The Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) today announced the winners of C\$1.3 million of grants under the CEC’s North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA) program.

As part of the effort to address environmental problems locally and support communities across North America, the Children’s Environmental Health Network (CEHN), was awarded with funding for an education and training project on eco-healthy best practices for child care professionals at the U.S.-Mexico border.

CEHN’s Executive Director, Nsedu Obot Witherspoon states, “We at CEHN are thrilled to have this opportunity to expand our work in child care to a border state and to have the collaboration of Dr. Lesliam Quirós-Alcalá from the University of Maryland’s School of Public Health to assist in the Spanish delivery of our Eco-Healthy Child Care® (EHCC) training program.”

CEHN is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the developing child from environmental hazards and promoting a healthier environment. The organization works towards this mission by promoting preventive scientific research, by promoting child-protective policy informed by that research, and by educating and training various lay and professional audiences on children’s environmental health issues and best practices.

EHCC is CEHN’s training and endorsement program for child care educators and facilities across the nation. This award-winning program is framed around 30 best practices in environmentally healthy child care. It offers a comprehensive and proven framework for child care efforts to protect children from a range of environmental health hazards.

“Congratulations to all NAPECA grant recipients. Your innovative environmental initiatives were chosen from among more than 500 project proposals,” said CEC Executive Director César Rafael Chávez. “These are vital grass-roots projects that reflect the commitment of Canada, Mexico and the United States to support proposals from small, nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations across North America that are working closely with communities to improve their local environment.”

CEC Council members—the environment ministers of the three NAFTA countries: Canada’s Environment Minister Catherine McKenna, Mexico’s Secretary of the Environment and Natural Resources Rafael Pacchiano Alamán and US Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy— support the grant program to encourage innovative and model environmental initiatives at the community level.

Find out more about the NAPECA program and details on how CEHN will improve our shared environment at <http://bit.ly/1RjfJpS>. An interactive map is available at this website so visitors will be able know what each of the rest of the grantees' projects is doing and where they're working.

Also, make sure to follow the progress of these new and innovative projects on Facebook and on Twitter @CECweb using #NAPECA.

CEHN's website: www.cehn.org

University of Maryland's School of Public Health website: www.sph.umd.edu

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IMPORTANT INFO

About NAPECA

The North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA) was created by the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) to support North American-wide environmental efforts through partnerships with a broad base of hands-on groups and organizations in communities throughout Canada, Mexico and the United States. The projects will play an important role in achieving the CEC's priorities by supporting healthy communities and ecosystems, encouraging activities that address climate change through the transition to a low-carbon economy, and advancing innovative projects that could assist in greening the economies of the three countries.

About the CEC

*The **Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)** is an intergovernmental organization that supports the cooperative environmental agenda of Canada, Mexico and the United States to green North America's economy, address climate change by promoting a low-carbon economy, and protect its environment and the health of its citizens. The CEC is composed of three bodies: a Council, representing the governments of the three member countries, a Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC) that advises the Council and serves as a liaison with the public, and a Secretariat that supports the Council and JPAC and prepares independent reports. The CEC brings together governments, civil society, and businesses to develop innovative North American solutions to global environmental challenges. Find out more at: www.cec.org.*

CEC initiatives are undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the federal Department of Environment, the Government of the United States of America through the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Government of the United States of Mexico, through the Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales.