



ARIZONA ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Letter From AEE President

Greetings! It is already March and many exciting Environmental Education programs sponsored by our partners are underway. I hope everyone was able to enjoy a restful holiday season before your spring programming geared up.

AEE enjoyed a successful 2016 Holiday Fundraiser. Thank you so much to the donors who contributed! The funds raised will help us this year as we build our infrastructure, launch a brand new website design, and provide us with valuable resources to connect to each other and learn more about our field.

We also are seeking volunteers to help us with our committee work. Our profile on [Volunteer Match](#) has been refreshed and includes opportunities for engagement. When our website is ready you will also find links to that information there, include specific details and volunteer job descriptions. Visit our [Committee Page](#) for more information.

Lastly, we'll be hosting another Meet and Greet in Tucson on April 1st. Details about that will follow in an email to our community. I hope you'll considering joining us. In the meantime, enjoy your spring!



JuAnne

Arizona Environmental Literacy Strategy

In previous communications we've shared that AEE is working with a diverse group of stakeholders to develop an Environmental Literacy Plan for Arizona. The Environmental Literacy Committee has taken a few big steps toward making this happen. We've used feedback from our Environmental Literacy Summit that was held in March, 2016 combined with research on the state of environmental education and general education in Arizona to develop some draft recommendations.

Our first recommendation is to focus on a *strategy* rather than a *plan*. Strategies are active, responsive to changing needs and adaptable; exactly what we need for Arizona. We don't need a plan that sits on a shelf, we need a strategy that inspires and rallies.

Components of the strategy include: developing strong networks among formal, non-formal, and informal learning experiences; demonstrating relevancy to all stakeholders in



Arizona; building capacity for environmental literacy through professional development, promoting strategies that prepare children for sustainable jobs; supporting the development of sustainable schools; and building a long-term support network for the strategy along with means to evaluate success.

Our next steps are to refine the strategy's components with clear action steps and share these widely for feedback. If you're interested in participating in these conversations consider joining the Environmental Literacy Committee.

New Online Member Resources Coming Soon!

AAEE has hired April Holle of [Made Better Studio](#) in Mesa to help us enhance the website experience and provide more online resources to our members. Keep an eye out this summer for key upgrades including a membership login area, EE job postings, community forum and more. We look forward to working with April on this very exciting project.

[Visit Made Better Studio's Website >>](#)



ESSTEEM at Arizona State

The ESSTEEM Organization is off to a great start! We are keeping busy engaging with new community members! We have recently collaborated with the Phoenix Zoo in a very exciting curriculum write. Last week we had a trail clean up at A-Mountain on Tempe campus. Check out our Facebook page for pictures of these events! We are excited to be involved in such great projects. Keep an eye out for our upcoming events on our ESSTEEM website and the Facebook page. Looking forward to more community turnouts soon!

[ESSTEEM Facebook Page >>](#)

Field Trip Spotlight

Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West offers a unique perspective on the importance and application of conservation in Arizona. The LEED® Gold-certified museum building functions as an active teaching tool for all ages, and allows visitors to experience how contemporary architecture can minimize waste. At the museum's "weeping wall," students can see first-hand how rainwater and 100 percent of the condensation from the heating and air conditioning system is collected, redistributed via recessed planters, and reused to nourish the museum's desert landscaping. Additionally, students see how the museum's structure mirrors the surrounding desert landscape and self-shades its exterior to reduce energy consumption. Together, each element of the museum's environmentally conscious architecture teaches an important lesson about how design can serve both the community and the planet. To schedule a tour for your student group, please contact Education Manager Wade Weber at wweber@scottsdalemuseumwest.org.



[Western Spirit Museum Website >>](#)



Call for Presentations!

The 2017 NAAEE Conference being held in October in Puerto Rico has opened up the call for presentations! Consider joining your AAE Affiliates Board of Directors at the conference by sharing some of the great work you are doing in the field. We'd love to connect if you are planning on attending. For more information visit the NAAEE Website. Hope to see you there!

[2017 NAAEE Conference >>](#)

Advocate for EE

From our NAAEE Advocacy Committee Chair, Brock Adler:

The Office of Environmental Education is reported to be on the President's list of EPA programs to be eliminated. We have faced being zeroed out on the front end spending plans a number of times before and never failed to save it... we'll just have to work even harder this time to get it back in the final budget. Fortunately, our core advocacy strategy is tested and sound, and you and your work are valued and even beloved in your communities.

To stay informed, join the eePRO Advocacy Committee and participate in monthly calls designed to provide helpful tips on securing our future. Follow the link below and create an account to receive emails and call information.

[NAAEE Advocacy Committee >>](#)

Arizona Association for Environmental Education

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