Environmental Educators of North Carolina Awards Program

The EENC Awards Program recognizes individuals or organizations that have demonstrated the principles of environmental education and raised the quality of environmental literacy in North Carolina.

Everyone is eligible for the following awards:

**Environmental Educator of the Year** recognizes an educator who stands out among environmental educators as a professional who exemplifies excellence in environmental education and lends credibility to the field. Through valuable contributions and professionalism, the environmental educator is regarded as an ideal example that other EE practitioners should strive to emulate.

2019 Meredith Morgan, NC Museum of Natural Sciences at Whiteville
2018 Patrick Brannon, Highlands Biological Station & Nature Center
2017 Jennifer Browndorf, Middle School Teacher, Hilburn Academy
    Kim Kelleher, Retired School Counselor, New Hope Elementary
2016 Sarah Fuller, Middle School Educator, Randolph County Schools
2015 C C King, Piedmont Outreach Education Specialist, North Carolina Wildlife
2014 Jennifer Brooks,
2013 Lori Davis, Education Coordinator, NC Coastal Reserve / National Estuarine Research Reserve
2012 Ms. Sarah Haggerty, Director of Education, Piedmont Wildlife Center
    Eric McDuffie, Eighth Grade Science Teacher, C. W. Stanford Middle School
2011 Ms. Lisa Rider, Onslow Solid Waste Assistant Director
2010 Elizabeth Baird, Director of Education, NC Museum of Natural Resources
2009 Sarah Palmer
2008 Frank McKay
2007 Stan Cross
2006 Randy Senzig
2005 Anne Radke
2004 Lyle Estill
2003 Donna Rogers
2002 Deborah Hall
2001 Jessica Kester
2000 Tom Shepherd
1999 Lois Nixon
1998 Deborah Miller
1997 Luann Bridle
1996 Anne Taylor
1995 Sheila Jones
Everyone is eligible for the following awards:

**Exceptional Environmental Education Program** recognizes a program, education center, organization, partnership or educational system that exemplifies excellence in environmental education. The program reaches far beyond the usual magnitude and degree of scope and scale to create: a sustainable commitment to environmental education, a more environmentally literate public, a stronger profession for environmental educators, and otherwise supporting EENC’s mission and objectives.

2019  North Carolina Envirothon, Contact: Richard Hayes
2018  AmeriCorps Project Conserve, Contact: Amy Stout
2017  Outdoor Environmental Learning Centers, New Hanover Soil & Water Conservation District, Contact: Dru Harrison
2016  The Mountain Science Expo, The North Carolina Arboretum, Contact: Michelle Pearce, Youth Education Coordinator
2015  Urban Outdoor Connection Program, Contact: Anthony Shaheen, Outdoor Recreation Specialist
2014  Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park
2012  Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education, Melinda Paterson, Center Director
2011  Environmental Education Program at the Kathleen Cray Edwards Library, coordinated by Melanie Buckingham, Environmental Resource Librarian
2010  Evergreen Community Charter School, Asheville, contact: Suzan Mertz, Executive Director, and Marin Leroy, Environmental Education
Everyone is eligible for the following awards:

**Outstanding Partner** recognizes a business, non-profit, or governmental agency that have partnered with EENC to support the mission and growth of EENC. This organization has made significant contributions to EENC by providing in-kind contributions; donations of employees’ time, talent, and materials; monetary support to the EENC Board or Board Training; or by providing significant funding or services to the annual conference, funding for EENC’s annual conference. This partnership enables EENC to experience a growth in professionalism and/or membership, which may not have been possible without this contribution.

2019  Office of Public Affairs & Environmental Education, Lisa Tolley  
2018  No Award  
2017  No Award  
2016  Mt. Jefferson State Natural Area & New River State Park, Thomas Randolph  
2015  Chimney Rock Management, LLC at Chimney Rock State Park, Emily Walker  
2014  No Award  
2013  North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching  
2012  Potash Corporation of Aurora, Steve Beckel, General Manager  
2011  North Carolina State Parks  
2010  NC Office of Environmental Education  
2009  In Your Head Advertising  
2008  NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher  
2005  Blue Gecko Web Design  
2004  Progress Energy  
2003  Haw River Program  
2002  NC Coastal Federation  
2001  Southern Cherokee Nation  
2000  U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Environmental Education  
1999  Environmental Resource Program at UNC-Chapel Hill  
1998  Environmental Media Corporation
The following awards require the recipient to be a member of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina:

**Outstanding Newcomer** recognizes an Environmental Educators of North Carolina member of five years or less who has made significant contributions to EENC during his or her short time with EENC.

- 2019 No Award
- 2018 Chelsea Sloggy, Union County Soil & Water Conservation District
- 2017 No Award
- 2016 No Award
- 2015 Shannon Culpepper, EENC Policy Chair
- 2014 Jonathan Navaro, Communications Chair, NC Division of Air Quality
- 2013 Jonathan Marchal, The North Carolina Arboretum, EENC Western Section Chair
- 2012 Chip Freund, Communications Chair
- 2011 No Award
- 2010 Blair Ogburn, Balsam Mountain Preserve, Education Chair,
- 2009 Sarah Fuller, Membership Cahir
- 2008 Kelly Hoke, Western Section Chair
- 2007 Shelby Gull-Laird; Sandra Weitzel
- 2006 Elizabeth Burke; Lynn Cole
- 2005 Marc Dreyfors
- 2004 Rachel Golden
- 2003 Julie Worth
- 2002 Charlotte Clark
- 2001 Sara Ashenburg; Mir Youngquist-Thurow; Maureen Stock
- 2000 Shannon Leigh Deaton; Aaryn Kay
- 1999 Belinda Hogue
- 1998 Nancy Pritchett
- 1997 Kristin Arnebold
- 1996 Deborah Miller
- 1995 Steve Law
The following awards require the recipient to be a member of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina:

**Outstanding Practitioner** recognizes a member of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina who works regularly as an environmental educator, lending their skills to the growing body of environmental education as a profession. The individual will have made significant contributions to the Environmental Educators of North Carolina through statewide participation, leadership in their region, and being an advocate for high quality education through how they teach, live, and do.

2019  Mandy Smith-Thompson, City of Concord
2018  Dana Fitz-Simons, Blue Jay Point County Park
2017  Melissa Dowland, The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences
2016  Anne Ellis, Director of Tom E. Smith Nature Exploratorium
2015  Mir Youngquist-Thurow, Environmental Education Director at Agape Kure Beach Ministries
2014  Anne Ellis
2013  Pat Curley, Instructional Coach- Math and Science Partnership Grant
2012  Terri Kirby Hathaway, Marine Education Specialist, North Carolina Sea Grant
2011  Tanya Poole, Education Specialist, Pisgah Wildlife Center
       Sheila Jones, Certified Environmental Education Specialist, Wake Soil and Water Conservation District
The following awards require the recipient to be a member of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina:

**Outstanding Service** recognizes an active member who has served in several key leadership roles making a significant contribution to further the mission of EENC. This individual has given many hours of dedicated service to help shape EENC into a viable statewide professional organization.

2019  Brad Daniel, Executive Director, 2nd Nature TREC
2018  Erin Hines, Gaston County Soil & Water Conservation District
2017  Lauren Pyle, The Western North Carolina Nature Center
2016  Keith Bamberger, Information & Communications Specialist, NC Division of Air Quality
2015  No Award
2014  Lauren Pyle, EENC Secretary
2013  D’Nise Hefner, Educational Program Director, Blue Jay Point County Park
2012  Sarah Yelton, Environmental Education Coordinator, UNC Institute for the Environment
2011  No Award
2010  Libby Wilcox
2009  Shelby & Renee Strnad
2008  Mickey Jo Sorrell
2007  Tom Shepherd
2006  Sheila Jones
2004  Mir Youngquist-Thurow
2003  Sara Ashenburg
2002  Aaryn Kay
2001  Lois Nixon
2000  Celeste Maus
1999  Deborah Miller
1998  Amber Parker
1997  Laura White
1996  Sally Boerschig
1995  Marti Kane
The following awards require the recipient to be a member of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina:

**Melva Fager Okun Life Achievement** recognizes an individual who has served EENC in key leadership roles for over three years on the Board of Directors. This individual has made very significant contributions in furthering EENC’s mission to serve as a leader in building a statewide network of EE practitioners, providing excellent professional development, strengthening EE throughout North Carolina, and serving as an active state affiliate to the North American Association for Environmental Education.

2019  No Award
2018  No Award
2017  Kim Smart, Education Coordinator, Prairie Ridge Ecostation, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences
2016  Dr. Brad Daniel, Professor of Biology, Environmental Studies & Environmental Education, Montreat College
2015  Dottie Shuman, Professor of Outdoor and Environmental Education, Montreat College
2014  Renee Strnad, NC PLT Coordinator, EENC Board Member (Past President in 2014, Treasurer in 2015)
2013  No Award
2012  Elizabeth Burke, Mud Pie Planet
2011  No Award
2010  Diane Silver
2007  Mir Youngquist-Thurow
2006  Melva Fager Okun
2005  Tom Shepherd
2004  Lois Nixon
2003  Deborah Miller
1999  Marti Kane
1998  Laura White
1997  Sheila Jones
1996  Sandy Ruble
1995  Melva Okun

**Special Award(s)**
2006  Randee Haven O’Donnell (logo)
2010  Evergreen Charter Community School, “Exceptional Environmental Education Center” (see Exceptional Environmental Education Program)
2018  Donna Rogers, Lifetime of EE
2019  Tanya Poole, Lifetime of EE