

2009 IAN/ICEC Conservation and Environmental Education Excellence Award Winners

The Iowa Association of Naturalists (IAN) and the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition (ICEC) are proud to announce this year's recipients of their Conservation and Environmental Education Excellence Awards Program. The winners are as follows:

Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award

Sandy Fulcher-Black Hawk CCB (Retired)

This award commends lifetime achievement in environmental education (EE) excellence and leadership. During her 15 years at the Hartman Reserve, Sandy Fulcher devoted much of her career to not only being a superb naturalist herself, conducting thousands of education programs with students and families, but also to guide her former interns to become the next generation of naturalists. Sandy inspired her interns with her patience and kindness.

Bohumil Shimek Environmental Educator Award

Pat Trotter, 4th grade teacher at Baxter Elementary

This award commends outstanding efforts by an environmental educator. Pat Trotter is an extraordinary teacher that is always cheerful, looking for new ways to engage her students, and incorporates environmental studies into much of her classroom curriculum. Each year, she coordinates programs with Jasper County Conservation, Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge Learning Center, and Springbrook State park to teach her students a wide range of topics that include Iowa's natural history, bird banding, GPS, ecological differences between habitats, and above all, why we should protect our natural resources. By the end of the year, her students are well on their way to being young naturalists.

Chris Holt Youth Environmental Education Award:

Outdoor Adventure Club in Louisa County

This award commends an outstanding environmental education program for or by youth. The goal of the Louisa County's Adventure Club is to take its members out on "adventures" and enable them try new things and learn by exploring, digging, or climbing. Some of the Club's activities include Hiking Wildcat Den State Park, the Putnam Museum & IMAX Theater, the Natural History Museum, Coralville Dam & Fossil Gorge, and Iowa River Clean-up.

Tucker Lutter

This award commends 16 year-old Tucker Lutter for his outstanding dedication to introducing and teaching people the joys of bird watching. Besides being well on his way of locating all the birds on his "life list," Tucker has also developed a Guide to Common Feeder Birds brochure, been active in many birding organizations, publishes his own newsletter "Birding with Tucker," maintains his own birding blog, columnist for *South Dakota Bird Notes*, and has volunteered to teach many introductory birding courses.

“Ding” Darling Environmental Education Award:

Chuck Jacobsen, Clinton County Conservation

This award commends an outstanding environmental education program or event, which educates the general public. Chuck Jacobsen has a unique talent of singing and teaching through his songs. Each year, he hosts various music events, which are mainly folk music, but they are musically environmental. His music includes John Denver, Peter Meyer and many others. Intermixed with folk music, there are also songs for the young people and the young of heart that not only have a catchy beat but also incorporate environmental education (EE) with nature facts.

Frederic Leopold Environmental Education Award:

Monsanto Company (Muscatine Plant)

This award commends outstanding efforts by business, industry, or labor. Monsanto Company’s Muscatine Plant has proved to be an extraordinary supporter of Environmental Education. Monsanto shares ownership and responsibility for the Big Sand Mound Nature Preserve with MidAmerican Energy Company. Monsanto works hard to promote habitat preservation, scientific research, public field days, and school trips on Big Sand Mound. The company has also developed an outdoor classroom that hosts numerous programs, which includes a 5th grade fieldtrip series entitled “Seasons of the Prairie” and AEA sponsored teacher workshops. Besides all of this, the company has contributed greatly to local Hunter Education efforts, EE programming for youth, and park development.

Outstanding County Conservation board EE Program (2 or less interpreters):

Jasper County Conservation

This award commends excellence in county conservation board’s environmental education program of counties with two or less interpreters. In 2008, Jasper County Conservation programs reached nearly 11,000 people. Operating on an Environmental Education budget of only about \$95,000, with over 95% of that dedicated to salaries and benefits, Jasper County Conservation staff focuses efforts on grant writing and donations. This year alone, successful grant applications and private donors have allowed JCC to enhance programming through the purchase of 25 sets of cross country skis, ice fishing equipment, interpretive signs, a vast amount of local history program materials, 8 canoes and a trailer, and 12 kayaks and a trailer.

Outstanding County Conservation Board EE Program (3 or more interpreters)

Pottawattamie County Conservation EE staff

This award commends excellence in a county conservation board’s environmental education program of counties with 3 or more interpreters. In 2008, Pottawattamie County Conservation reached over 16,000 people through their educational programming that includes classroom programs and public event like the annual HawkWatch programs, maple tree tapping, monarch tagging, paddling the Nishnabotna River, and many others. In September 2007, PCC held their grand opening of the Hitchcock Nature Center, which includes classrooms, offices, and hands-on interpretive exhibits. Curiosity Cove, a unique interactive area focused on children, is by far the facility’s most popular exhibit and teaches kids about the wonders of nature.

Sylvan Runkel Environmental Education School Award

Central Clinton Community Schools

This award commends an outstanding whole school environmental education program. Central Clinton Community Schools is a firm believer in supporting and promoting environmental education. In their efforts to educate their students on the environment, they regularly utilize the resources provided by the Clinton County Conservation EE Staff. With the school's involvement with Clinton County Conservation, they are able to provide a wide array of program for their students from classroom programs, field trips, outdoor recreation programs, and other special events.

Outstanding Interpretative Print Media Award:

Naturally Louisa County Newsletter

This award commends outstanding development of newsletters, brochures, or trail guides. In 2008, Louisa County launched the Naturally Louisa County Newsletter that replaced their former newsletter of 20 years. In each issue, you will find updates from multiple conservation agencies, local economic development organizations, and ISU extension. With this holistic approach, Louisa County's goal is to showcase how natural resources contribute to our economy, quality of life, and the importance of preservation for future generations.

Outstanding Interpretative Non-Print Media Award

Jackson County Conservation's "Stories of Hurstville"

"Stories of Hurstville" is an interactive audio/visual exhibit that was installed at the Hurstville Interpretive Center in May 2009. The goal of the exhibit is: to give visitors access to over 70 historical photos as well as segments of oral histories and an IPTV program about Hurstville, encourage greater understanding of how Iowa's rural communities and industries utilized local resources at the turn of the 20th century, encourage greater involvement in historic preservation projects in their communities, and compliment existing Hurstville exhibits at the Center.