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**The Gray Family Foundation Awards More Than $213,000 in Statewide Environmental Education Program Grants**

***Portland-Metro Organizations Receive $101,854***

**Portland, Ore. — May 4, 2015 —** The Gray Family Foundation announces more than $213,000 in spring grants awarded for environmental professional development for teachers and volunteer mentors around Oregon. Organizations in the Portland-metro area received $101,854 as part of the most recent grant cycle.

Since 2007, the Gray Family Foundation has supported students and teachers in connecting with outdoor environments through a variety of environmental literacy experiences. The Environmental Education Program with the Gray Family Foundation seeks to encourage a strong local land ethic, sustainable communities and stewardship of the natural environment by citizens throughout Oregon.

“We’re proud of the recipient organizations of our spring grants and their commitment to institutionalizing long term experiences for educators and students that build a sense of place and responsibility toward our state,” said Nancy Bales, executive director of the Gray Family Foundation.

The Environmental Education Program grants recently awarded in the Portland-metro area were to the following organizations:

* **Bolton Primary School**, West Linn; **$14,000** to support 10 elementary teachers from Bolton Primary to write place-based environmental curriculum for preschool to 5th grade children that is aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards.
* **Cascade Mountain School**, Hood River; **$4,994** for the creation of a training program for 20 middle and high school science teachers to integrate place-based service education into their classrooms.
* **Center for Earth Leadership**, Portland; **$8,000** to create a statewide training and resource center to promote formation of Eco-School Networks in Oregon school districts and to support trained Network parents in leading sustainability efforts at their respective schools. Each Network will be guided by a steering committee of parents.
* **Friends of Tryon Creek State Park (FOTC)**, Portland; **$10,000** to provide more than 60 volunteer nature guides with trail-based instructional techniques designed to meet the needs of diverse student groups. FOTC will also collaborate with teachers to create seven outdoor teaching units (one per grade; K-6) infused with culturally relevant instructional practices.
* **Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge**, Sherwood; **$16,400** to train 50 formal and non-formal educators to deliver environmental lessons that respectfully present contemporary Indigenous perspectives as well as accurately depict Native American histories of the region.
* **Growing Gardens**, Portland; **$15,000** for teachers to use school gardens to enhance learning and academic achievement for students in science, math, language arts, and environmental and engineering practices.
* **Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership**, Portland; **$10,000** to deliver two professional development workshops for 40 teachers and create check-out kits that provide the skills and resources needed to lead outdoor learning experiences that integrate science education with Common Core literacy requirements.
* **Oregon Forest Resources Institute**, Portland; **$9,460** to use Oregon’s forests as subject matter and equip teachers to develop and deliver model lessons aligned with state standards that will enhance and extend students' outdoor school experiences.
* **Tualatin SWCD**, Hillsboro; **$10,000** for teachers in the region to learn more about managing soil health and incorporating it into the curriculum, with direct ties to state and federal standards.
* **World Forestry Center (WFC)**, Portland; **$4,000** to send three educators from rural communities to WFC's International Educators Institute, thereby building their capacity to lead students in engaging, inquiry-based environmental education and field learning.

Over the next several years, the Gray Family Foundation will continue to build awareness by networking in communities statewide, encouraging collaborative partnerships and supporting best practices for environmental education. Learn more by visiting <http://grayff.org/>.

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**About the Gray Family Foundation**

Launched in 2007 as the Gray Family Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation, the Gray Family Foundation’s Environmental Education Program seeks to institutionalize a series of age appropriate experiences for students, teachers, and citizens that build a sense of place and responsibility toward Oregon and the region. Since 2007, the Gray Family Foundation has awarded more than $7.8 million in grants statewide. <http://grayff.org/>