

Ohio Environmental Education Fund Statewide Partnership in SFY 2022

Environmental Education Council of Ohio, \$64,500

In 1995, Ohio EPA's Office of Environmental Education initiated a long-term partnership with EECO to build statewide capacity for environmental education in ways that could not be accomplished within the confines of a short-term general grant. Through this 26-year partnership, Ohio EPA and EECO provide professional development opportunities and regional resource fairs for teachers and non-formal environmental educators, as well as quality curriculum resources aligned with the Ohio Department of Education's Learning Standards and Model Curriculum.

Environmental Career Ambassadors

For K-12 education, the partnership continues to focus on the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). In 2013 Ohio EPA and EECO joined forces with The Ohio State University School of Environment and Natural Resources to launch a new statewide network of volunteer **career ambassadors in environmental science and engineering**. More than 400 professionals in 84 Ohio counties have volunteered, indicating their willingness to:



- *Make classroom presentations
- *Participate in school career fairs
- *Host field trips
- *Offer internships and job shadowing
- *Mentor young professionals, and
- *Recruit additional career ambassadors

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the partners shifted focus from in-person to video calls and webinars when possible, and the career ambassadors recorded a popular series of online [video career chats](#). These prerecorded videos have been an outstanding new resource for educators. In the past year the videos have been viewed 625 times.

This year EECO staff, partner organizations, Ohio EPA staff members and volunteer career ambassadors spoke with **15,531 middle school, high school and college students through career fairs and classroom presentations**. The partners also mentored **36 students, offered 78 college internships and 12 job shadowing opportunities to allow high school students to observe environmental professionals at work**.

Ohio EPA staff and EECO's part-time **regional directors** work closely with educators at the local level to offer workshops and share teaching resources. We offered many workshop options this year from virtual, hybrid and in person events. This year the partners offered **62 regional professional development workshops to 1899 educators**, offering teachers certification in nationally recognized curricula such as [Project Learning Tree](#); [Project WET](#) (Water Education Today) and Healthy Water, Healthy People; [Project WILD](#), Project WILD Aquatic, Flying WILD, and WILD School Sites; Climate modules for all three projects and their Early Childhood components; [Windows on Waste](#), and [the Wonders of](#)

[Wetlands](#). The partners also exhibited or presented at 26 special events, festivals and conferences, interacting with 15,665 participants.

Ohio EPA—Environmental Education Council of Ohio Partnership Regions



Environmental Career Ambassadors Initiative
<https://eeco.wildapricot.org/eca>