

**Environmental Justice Small Grants Program  
2008-9 Awards**

**Project Descriptions**

**Region 1**

Organization: *Rhode Island Legal Services, Inc.* (Providence, RI)

Project Description: Conducting a ten week class for 15 youth from the Hartford Park Public Housing Project in Providence, Rhode Island. Participating youth will create two 30-second public service announcement videos (one in English and one in Spanish) on the threats to human health posed by common household cleaning products and a 5-minute video on how solid waste and trash contribute to poor living and health conditions in low-income neighborhoods.

Organization: *United Somali Women of Maine* (Lewiston, ME)

Project Description: Developing and implementing an outreach campaign on lead hazards, the risks of pesticide application, and basic life skills to educate the refugee population residing in the Lewiston/Auburn area of central Maine. The project's goals are to increase community capacity to ensure the environmental quality and safety of their home environments while also reducing lead and pesticide hazards in homes.

Organization: *Spanish American Union, Inc.* (Springfield, MA)

Project Description: Improving the quality of the indoor environment in public housing developments by reducing exposure to pesticides, encouraging integrated pest management, and reducing asthma triggers for families at risk. The project will collaborate with partners and work with youth to provide education, outreach and encourage actions to raise awareness and reduce health hazards and risks from pesticides for families in public housing in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Organization: *Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice* (Hartford, CT)

Project Description: Reducing the negative health effects from air toxics in Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport, Connecticut. It will provide education, outreach and capacity building for urban residents to reduce exposure to toxic cleaning products and encourage use of safer, less toxic alternatives to reduce environmental and public health problems in indoor environments.

**Region 2**

Organization: *Make the Road New York* (Brooklyn, NY)

Project Description: Conducting research and educating communities on the toxic risks of lead paint and pesticides. The research will identify the level of exposure to those risks and the reasons for that exposure (e.g., lack of knowledge, lack of alternatives, etc.). Residents will be educated on ways they can reduce their individual/household exposure, the dangers of lead paint poisoning and how to identify household toxics. The recipient will promote healthier alternatives, such as the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices as an alternative to toxic household pesticides.

Organization: *Heart of Camden, Inc.* (Camden, NJ)

Project Description: Studying and identifying the environmental and public health issues in Camden City, NJ. Specifically, it will develop a comprehensive environmental health information tool, consisting of emissions data, contaminated soil sites, the status of pending air pollution mitigation and site remediation effort data. A description of known and potential health effects, related to the identified pollutants will be developed. In addition, the project will analyze and compare the hospital utilization rates of Waterfront and South-Central Camden community members (i.e., for respiratory and cardiovascular disease) to other urban and suburban New Jersey communities.

Organization: *Green Faith* (New Brunswick, NJ)

Project Description: Studying air monitoring efforts and truck route identification related to operations at Port Newark, NJ. Toxic releases from this area will be identified by community youth and adult residents. The recipient will perform broad-based outreach and education on the results of these efforts to a range of Newark community and faith-based organizations. An Environmental Health and Justice Tour will be conducted for Newark residents. The project will provide the foundation for a long-range, comprehensive "greening" of Port Newark.

Organization: *Healthy Schools Network, Inc.* (Albany, NY)

Project Description: Engaging low-income communities and their schools in learning how to avoid asthma triggers, and empowering them to take action to reduce these triggers. The recipient will identify and select 15 communities from among six New York State counties, based on hospital discharge asthma-mapping data and student profiles from the NYS Departments of Health and Education, respectively. School officials will be identified, educational forums conducted (including webinars, meetings and interactive workshops) and local partnerships cultivated. Recommended actions will be provided to local schools and their communities for follow-up.

### **Region 3**

Organization: *Heritage Health Foundation, Inc.* (Braddock, PA)

Project Description: Developing a community educational program to teach residents about asthma resulting from indoor and outdoor air quality, lead poisoning from lead-based paint, and asbestos exposures from older building materials. Public meetings will also be held to educate residents on local transportation-generated air quality factors and environmental health issues. In addition, the project will develop partnerships between different stakeholders, including residents, environmental groups and local governmental agencies.

Organization: *Episcopal Community Services of Maryland* (Baltimore, MD)

Project Description: Supporting the implementation of an intergenerational community education program to address the issues of household health factors that contribute to lead poisoning and asthma in Collington Square –an impoverished urban neighborhood in East Baltimore. The planning and implementation of this project will contribute to the

increased knowledge base of community residents as they seek to address these environmental and public health issues.

Organization: *Neighborhood Interfaith Movement* (Philadelphia, PA)

Project Description: Increasing the capacity of residents in Northwest Philadelphia to reduce pest problems, pesticide use and lead presence in homes and daycare centers through the creation of a community intervention partnership. NIM will collaborate with academic, governmental and non-profit partners to provide train-the-trainer sessions to create Healthy Homes Advocates (HHA), and to conduct Integrated Pest Management training.

Organization: *Southern Appalachian School* (Kincaid, WV)

Project Description: Providing literature, house calls and the opportunity for residents of rural coal camp communities to attend relevant meetings that will focus on the consequences of lead and mercury contamination in human bodies from dental work, construction materials, water supply and soil. In collaboration with partners and families, lead and mercury exposures will be identified and addressed.

#### **Region 4**

Organization: *NC Environmental Justice Network* (Tillery, NC)

Project Description: Providing outreach, education, and technical assistance to communities and health care providers in 5 rural counties of eastern North Carolina. The project will assist these communities in organizing to advocate for local governmental decision-making to approve policies and programs that will reduce or alleviate the environmental health impacts of confined animal feeding operations (CAFO) in the target counties. The project will also assist communities in organizing landowners, testing and analyzing wells for groundwater pollution, and to advocate for local decision-making to implement cleanup/repair efforts on community wells or identify and implement alternative drinking sources like tapping onto county or community water lines.

Organization: *A Place for Hope, Inc.* (Rock Hill, SC)

Project Description: Creating a Healthy Community Action Plan Committee (HCAPC) with residents from the Blackmon Road Community in York County, SC. Through a series of committee meetings and an environmental professional training, the committee will create a Community Needs Assessment that will compliment and contribute to a County led Neighborhood Master Plan. These meetings will help in refining and implementing the project goals and objectives of identifying current and needed resources, partnerships, and actions that need to take place among residents and outside stakeholders, and evaluating their progress. Two trainings will consist of a local environmental conference and a regional healthy housing.

Organization: *Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government* (Lexington, KY)

Project Description: Assisting the recipient's efforts to expand its services to Medicaid eligible children ages 0-72 months within a five county area; who qualify, but are not registered for its services. They are primarily focusing on: (a) conducting in-home lead-based paint,

environmental observations and (b) providing information on avoiding these hazards through diet and other exposure risks.

Organization: *City of Jacksonville Housing and Neighborhood Department* (Jacksonville, FL)

Project Description: Conducting focus groups to identify and prioritize environmental health concerns of the residents in “health zone 1” of the Jacksonville Urban Core. These focus groups will be held in collaboration with the Duval County Health Department, Division of Environmental Health and Safety and Disease Control and Healthy Jacksonville. The goal is to improve the health of Duval County residents through progressive health promotion, disease prevention and treatment efforts. The project will also focus on reducing environmental risks inside of the home by offering healthy assessments, and educating residents on environmental hazards.

## **Region 5**

Organization: *Metropolitan Tenants Organization* (Chicago, IL)

Project Description: Educating low-income individuals in rental buildings throughout Chicago about lead poisoning, pests, pesticide use and their rights as tenants. The project will include training and implementation guidance on how to mitigate lead risks and Integrated Pest Management systems. The project aims to reach up to 1000 renters living in forty to seventy, troubled, larger multi-unit buildings.

Organization: *City of Milwaukee* (Milwaukee, WI)

Project Description: Establishing a training program that will increase residents’ awareness about the environmental impacts of urban populations on water in Milwaukee. It will include education and implementation of best practices on stormwater management, water conservation, while also increasing knowledge and understanding the impact of water issues on public health in Milwaukee. Training will be provided in English, Spanish, Hmong and Lao languages. A group of 15 resident Peer Educators will be formed who will facilitate 10 educational sessions in local schools, neighborhood based organizations and faith based organizations with a goal of educating 100 local residents.

Organization: *Women’s Environmental Institute at Amador Hill* (North Branch, MN)

Project Description: Providing education and outreach to the community on: GIS maps of toxic pollutants in the affected area, the impacts of perfluorochemicals on the community, and asthma triggers and asthma intervention strategies. The project will also collect and disseminate preliminary scientific information on toxic exposures from industrial pollutants. Additionally, soil and food basket samples will be collected and sent for laboratory analysis and the results will be shared with the communities in culturally appropriate formats.

Organization: *People for Community Recovery* (Chicago, IL)

Project Description: Educating youth aged 14-18 (and larger community) in the predominantly African American Altgeld Gardens, located on the Southside of Chicago, about harmful effects of multi-media environmental hazards. The project also seeks to

engage the community in local and national EJ issues and provide them with environmental job opportunities. The project will include classroom instruction, hands-on activities, and social activism training. Topics will include: lead and asbestos awareness, mold identification and inspection, indoor air quality, hazardous materials and risk management, basic building inspection, and construction management.

## **Region 6**

Organization: *Mountain View Neighborhood Association* (Albuquerque, NM)

Project Description: Addressing the increasing tensions related to environmental issues between Mountain View residents and government staffers through community outreach and education. The goals of this project include: developing air quality permitting documents in understandable language to make it easier for the residents to comprehend, and educating the residents and businesses on how to properly dispose of hazardous waste and the impact it has on the environment.

Organization: *Louisiana Bucket Brigade* (New Orleans, LA)

Project Description: Collaborating with refinery neighbors to develop a comprehensive understanding of unauthorized discharges from Louisiana's 17 refineries. This refinery efficiency initiative will review the incident reports that detail these discharges from 2005-2008. They will educate the neighbors through information sessions with the communities.

Organization: *American Indian Law Center* (Albuquerque, NM)

Project Description: Providing information on state permitting processes and environmental justice to New Mexico tribal communities, tribal leaders and others. The project will publish workshop materials that describe environmental and natural resources extraction permitting processes. It will also educate New Mexico tribes regarding environmental justice concepts. The information will be disseminated at workshops held in tribal communities throughout the state.

Organization: *City of Alton* (Alton, TX)

Project Description: Improving and promoting healthy environments through utilizing promotoras (indigenous community health workers). The recipient plans to build on the infrastructure of Alton and the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD) history of training and educating Alton colonia residents on key environmental issues. The project combines the expertise of the City of Alton, Texas, the Texas A&M School of Rural Public Health and CCHD in Alton colonias in Hidalgo County, located in deep South Texas along the US Mexico border.

## **Region 7**

Organization: Public Health Solutions (PHS) District Health Department (Crete, NE)

Project Description: Increasing the accessibility to blood lead level testing and lead information for parents of young children, and to increase the lead safety of at risk houses. It will improve the overall health and safety of roughly 4,000 children in the

rural five- county health district served by PHS. Lead poisoning awareness and prevention is a vital component of environmental and public health that has historically lacked resources and attention in this region.

Organization: *Legal Aid of Western Missouri* (Kansas City, MO)

Project Description: Reducing the risk of lead poisoning from house paint, lead-containing toys, and other sources and. The recipient will also increase environmental literacy and meaningful involvement by facilitating sessions “Planeta Para Todos,” to help migrant families to develop a more comprehensive understanding while empowering them to practice preventative measures.

Organization: *Metropolitan Energy Center, Inc.* (Kansas City, MO)

Project Description: Providing residential energy efficiency and environmental health workshops and training to the community. The project seeks to increase the awareness of home related energy and environmental problems through the training of community residents with limited English speaking proficiency who wish to become involved in the housing industry dealing with energy efficiency and environmental health issues in residential structures.

Organization: *Father Flanagan’s Boys’ Home* (Boys Town, NE)

Project Description: Training staff from the Boys’ Town pediatrics clinic on how to screen patients to identify environmental concerns adversely affecting their health. They will learn how to make appropriate referrals, and work collaboratively to address their patient’s health and environmental concerns. Families served by this clinic will receive information on how to assess services to improve their home environments, as well as, resources and materials to foster relationships with medical and legal professionals to address their concerns.

## **Region 8**

Organization: *Citizens for San Luis Valley Water* (Alamosa, CO)

Project Description: Testing unregulated household wells and educating participants about the protection of their health and the need for securing and monitoring their drinking water supply. Test results will provide insight to health care providers, local governments, regulatory agencies, and decision makers and will be centralized in a database. These points will be mapped and provide opportunities for further analysis.

Organization: *Trees, Water & People* (Fort Collins, CO)

Project Description: Building organizational capacity to identify and understand local environmental justice issues, within the context of environmental statutes via formal training and practical experience. Training sessions will build skills that will empower, educate, and provide networking opportunities and technical assistance to 15 Hardrock mining watershed groups that represent about 670,000 citizens. Other skills such as grant writing, board development, and establishing volunteer monitoring programs will also be covered

Organization: *Groundwork Denver* (Denver, CO)

Project Description: Empowering low-income Latino immigrant communities to reduce air pollution and properly dispose of household toxic substances. Communities will also be provided with education on mitigating and adapting to the potential impacts of climate change on environmental and public health.

Organization: *Mountain Studies Institute* (Silverton, CO)

Project Description: Educating communities from Southwest Colorado to Northwest New Mexico about ozone, mercury, and other hazardous substances from oil and gas production facilities that create air and water pollution. The recipient will develop radio announcements and outreach materials, and provide air and water quality alerts in newspapers. Additionally, they will coordinate an Air Quality Forum to engage stakeholders and form an advisory committee to empower and facilitate community participation to reduce community exposure to environmental contaminants

## **Region 9**

Organization: *Forgotten People CDC* (Tonalea, AZ)

Project Description: Identifying practical and effective solutions for the Diné communities in the western regions of the Navajo Nation in homes that do not have access to piped water, but rather require the water to be hauled and stored on premises. The data from the assessment phase will be useful in identifying and quantifying problems, and all stakeholders will then work together in transforming this information into an effective action plan to improve and provide safe access to drinking water.

Organization: *Communities for a Better Environment* (Oakland, CA)

Project Description: Conducting a strategic, community-level mobile source emissions inventory of the Hegenberger Corridor where community members will perform diesel truck counting in the community. CBE will then analyze that data to quantify the amount of mobile source pollution residents are exposed to, address the diesel truck routes in the area, and build local awareness and develop community-based structures to mobilize support for an inclusive planning process.

Organization: *Committee for a Better Arvin* (Arvin, CA)

Project Description: Increasing community awareness about the health impacts caused by local environmental issues such as poor air quality, pesticide spraying, and contaminated drinking water; and building the community's capacity to address the public health hazards by engaging them in local land use decisions. Through education campaigns and community trainings, the recipient will bring together community residents and local decision-makers to foster dialogue and collaboration to address the many environmental hazards facing Arvin

Organization: *Center for Community Action & Environmental Justice* (Riverside, CA)

Project Description: Developing a work team in San Bernardino County communities living near the BNSF rail yards to provide outreach and education about particulate pollution and the resulting health risks in San Bernardino. The team will assist in

developing materials and a training plan for community health workers regarding air pollution for use in the CCAEJ community health worker curriculum.

## **Region 10**

Organization: *Verde* (Portland, OR)

Project Description: Building the capacity of low-income, people-of-color residents of NE Portland and residents of the Hacienda CDC's affordable housing project, to participate in and benefit from a major sustainable redevelopment project in their neighborhood. The project will include intensive outreach and education to local residents on the economic, environmental and public health challenges and benefits of the redevelopment project.

Organization: *Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS)* (Barrow, AK)

Project Description: Ensuring that local people have a voice in the decision making on oil and gas development projects in their village and the offshore area adjacent to it, upon which they depend. This will be achieved by identifying and documenting subsistence practices of local indigenous people, identifying the marine resources upon which they depend, and incorporating that information into the development planning process, at a stage early enough that the information can be effectively utilized to avoid detrimental impacts.

Organization: *Farm Worker Pesticide Project* (Seattle, WA)

Project Description: Providing information to farmworkers, their families and communities on the public health impacts of pesticide exposures and actions they can take to protect themselves from exposure. Further, it aims to educate workers on mitigations and alternatives to pesticide use, while informing them about the public policy processes governing pesticide regulation. It will include intensive community outreach, development and enhancement of multi-sector networks at the community level and facilitating opportunities for meaningful involvement.

Organization: *Multnomah County Health Department* (Portland, OR)

Project Description: Educating low-income and minority communities in the Portland area about sustainable ecological, economic and public health development practices. The recipient will build community capacity to benefit from and participate meaningfully in sustainability initiatives, while enhancing the accountability. The project will strengthen the capacity of the Multnomah County Sustainability Program to reach underserved and disproportionately impacted communities.