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EE Consortium Offers Diversity Strand at State EE Conference

(Malibu, CA) - - California's Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (AEOE) will take an in-depth look at diversity at their upcoming Statewide Conference. The Golden State Environmental Education Consortium (GSEEC) is partnering with California's Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (AEOE) to bring a diversity strand to AEOE's 2004 Statewide Conference.

The AEOE Spring Conference, "*Teaching Outside the Lines*," is April 30 – May 2 at Camp Hess Kramer in Malibu. AEOE is dedicated to the education of children and to helping them increase their awareness and understanding of the natural environment. AEOE is a membership based organization composed primarily of naturalists and trail teachers who teach at residential outdoor schools in California.

The statewide conference will feature a variety of keynote presentations and workshops on a wide selection of issues. For complete information about the conference, including registration information, please visit www.aeoe.org.

The Diversity strand was introduced into this year's AEOE conference to equip outdoor and environmental educators with information about what is working when environmental education (EE) issues and diverse communities are wed.

"Maintaining diversity in nature depends on maintaining cultural diversity among our ranks," said Sandi Funke, GSEEC Project Manager.

“Unfortunately, environmental education has been seen mainly as a white middle - upper class endeavor, but often the groups that are most severely impacted by environmental degradation are people of color and/or low-income,” said Funke. “We need to find ways to remedy this disparity if we are to succeed in creating an environmentally literate population”

Participants in this diversity strand will learn what an "authentic" program means to someone living in an ever-increasing diverse urban environment, and how life long EE practitioners can translate concepts to non-traditional audiences in pragmatic ways.

The diversity strand will also provide ways for participants to connect with the next generation of potential participants, recruits, teachers and allies that are avid proponents of a conservation ethic and are in search of the next path to follow to make a difference in their respective communities.

Sharon Fuller, Director and founder of the Ma’at Youth Academy (MYA), will serve as the diversity strand’s keynote speaker. MYA is a multicultural environmental organization dedicated to a safer, cleaner healthier environment. Fuller is the recent recipient of the Woman of the Year Award for California’s 14th Assembly District. MYA seeks to improve all ecological relationships, including those between humanity and nature, as well as between people. Cultural differences are embraced and honored as they promote the preservation and conservation of vital natural resources.

A complete listing of the workshops and sessions in the diversity strand follows this press release.

For more information on the diversity strand, or to register for the conference, please visit www.aeoe.org.

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California Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education
2004 Statewide Conference
Diversity in EE: Listing of Diversity Strand Workshops

The Albatross: An Experiential Approach to Multi-Cultural Education

Mike Marzolla, [University of California Cooperative Extension 4-H](#) & GSEEC

You will join us for a journey that will help you develop your skills as a cultural observer. You will have an opportunity to join with others to share and explore the landscape of multi-cultural understanding.

The Great Society

rikki shackelford, [Web of Life Field School](#)

Interactive activity to engage students to learn about diversity. I will take one group and ask them to make two different societies. Through a number of activities we share about how our societies affect the way we interact with others.

Ingredients for Authentic Collaboration and Partnership

David Romain, Iron Triangle Community Collaborative GSEEC and Jeff Hohensee [TreePeople](#)

Exploring the ramifications of engagement among members of a diverse population seen in the context of our need to collaborate over a wide range of skills.

Organizational Change for Diversity

Jack Shu, Jeff Hohensee, Armando Nieto

What are the cultural and structural changes environmental organizations need to make to effectively serve diverse populations and communities.

Understanding Cultural Diversity through Nature

Kim Bosell, [Monrovia Canyon Park](#)

Making use of comparisons, anthropomorphisms, field study, creative thinking and writing activities to increase the connection for the students with nature and their peers.

Pedagogy for ESL students

Celeste Royer, and Hilda Castillo, Bilingual Environmental Education Consultant

Participants will learn techniques they can directly apply in the field to adjust instruction for English language learners. How to construct program administration and content to meet the needs of recent immigrants to the United States.

Multicultural Environmental Education

[Running-Grass](#), Director of Three Circles Center

This experiential workshop will assist educators in understanding the full dimensions of the challenges of teaching in a multicultural society, identify tools and promising strategies, and inspire them to mobilize environmentalism to heal and build a multicultural society at peace with itself and the natural world. Handouts provided.

Recruiting from Youth Conservation Corps - Where Environmental Experiential Education happens daily

Richard Rodriguez, Program Analyst; Cesar Avilla, Field Program Manager; Reggie Archie, Field Program Coordinator

The workshop will begin with a slide presentation that presents an overview of the work of the Corps does in applied environmental technologies and how this work exhibits authentic community-based experiential education. Presenters will then review some of the successes - and failures - in developing relationships and encouraging dialogue with inner city youth whom initial have little interest or desire in environmental issues and share what they believe to be important attitudes, strategies and skill sets for staff working with urban youth in an environmental field. Participants will then have an opportunity to ask questions and engage in a discussion of how to tap the resources of the corps for potential recruitment, internship and mentoring opportunities.

Diversity Forum-Wrap Up Session

Jack Shu, Armando Nieto, [Running Grass](#)

What are the short and long term tasks for the organization and individuals to move forward on serving diverse communities.

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