

The Environmental Education Advocate

The Newsletter of the National Environmental Education Advancement Project

Spring 2002



Photo by Abby Ruskey

Evaluating Success Strategies for Community-Based EE

by Abby Ruskey, Co-director, NEEAP

Evaluation theory and method is the starting point for EETAP’s Demonstration Communities project. Thanks to a successful planning meeting in Las Cruces, New Mexico February 12-14, this project will increase environmental education (EE) opportunities for the citizens of Orange County, California; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and the border cities of El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Mexico. How will the project contribute to these communities? Three EETAP partners with backgrounds in community based EE programs and training are collaborating with community leaders to determine goals and implement courses of actions.

The three EETAP partners share the following similarities.

- They use “tools” to help constituents be better decision makers.
- They are working within community groups whose context is broader than EE.
- They seek to work with the change agents in each target audience.
- They will work to bring more people into EE and at the same time recognize and respect related efforts that may not be labeled “EE”.
- They will target audiences that are not yet trained in EE.
- They have much to learn from each other: each has something to give and to gain.

EETAP partners including Cindy Kriefels of the Groundwater Foundation (Orange County, CA), Lisa La Rocque and Alma Galvan of Project del Rio (El Paso, TX/Juarez, Mexico) and Hyder Houston (Oklahoma City, OK), a consultant to NEEAP (formerly with the Greater Washington Urban League), will each be facilitating a distinctly different project within their community and among the constituencies they have targeted.

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Teambuilding in the EETAP States

NEEAP Staff

“At its core, team learning is a discipline of practices designed, over time, to get the people of a team thinking and acting together. The team members do not need to think alike – indeed it’s unlikely that they ever will. But through regular practice, they can learn to be effective in concert.”
(*Schools that Learn, A Fifth Disciple Resource, Peter Senge, et.al.*)

Teamwork is necessary to achieve the components of comprehensive environmental education (EE) programs and reach environmental literacy. This is why the National Environmental Education Advancement Project (NEEAP) is focusing on teambuilding in each of the eight EETAP States. Each EETAP State has goals in place for strengthening EE training (see “*In the Spotlight: EETAP State Updates,*” pages 4-5), and we hope to provide tools for and learn lessons about team development as the program continues.

The first step in EETAP State team development was the application process for the program. This application asked states to identify specific roles and match individuals to these roles. Now, NEEAP is working with state leaders to define these roles and responsibilities and then create links between roles at the state and national levels.

Teamwork is essential for EETAP States to achieve comprehensive initiatives such as training teachers through EE in-service and

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Editor's Note

Dear EE Advocate Readers:

Spring is here and we're happy to report on a variety of "budding" projects underway at NEEAP and EETAP.

The Demonstration Communities Project and the EETAP States Program featured on page one of the newsletter are our flagship capacity building programs. Working together with community and state-level partners, EETAP organizations are helping support stronger EE programs and the growing capacity building network. We've forged plans, distributed plan implementation funds, developed a directory of services and focused on defining team roles to achieve model programs and significant advances for EE in each state and community. Learn about the progress in the three communities and eight states we are partnering with, and make a note to check in on the programs next year. By then, the rich data gathered from the process involved in developing these model initiatives will be useful for capacity builders everywhere!

Specific information about state initiatives will be found in "In the Spotlight: EETAP State Updates" on pages 4-5. In addition to updates from the eight EETAP state teams, read up on Pennsylvania's latest model initiatives this year in "News From Here and There". If you're interested in a research perspective on high performance teams packed into one page, you'll want to turn to our "At the Grassroots" column with a feature from organizational development specialist Dr. Corky McReynolds. Capacity building resources and opportunities are at your fingertips in the column of the same name found on page 7.

With wishes for success in your efforts and good health,

Abby Ruskey
Co-Director, NEEAP

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News From Here and There



Pennsylvania

EE leaders in Pennsylvania have forged two more elements of the infrastructure needed for environmental literacy in the Keystone State. In January, Pennsylvania approved statewide standards for Environment and Ecology curriculum in K-12 schools with essential elements of what students should know and be able to do at the end of grades four, seven, ten and twelve.

According to Dr. Patti Vathis, EE Specialist in Pennsylvania's Department of Education (DOE), the curriculum will occur in a set scope and sequence so students are able to build on what they've learned in previous years. Stated Vathis who was the key leader for this effort, "The potential here is that in years to come, Pennsylvania will have citizens that can be active participants and problem solvers in real issues that affect them, their homes, schools and communities. This will come from a knowledge base that a lot of us currently don't have." For details on the Standards for Environment and Ecology visit: www.pde.state.pa.us/k12/lib/k12/envec.pdf

Also in Pennsylvania, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has provided \$300,000 for teacher preparation to nine higher education institutions. A similar amount is expected over the next three years. The Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education (PCEE) provides support to a network of teacher training institutions incorporating EE and will work with the grant recipients. For more information about PCEE, visit www.sru.edu/Depts/pcee/

Focus of the 9 Standards for Environment and Ecology in Pennsylvania

- ▶ Watersheds and Wetlands
- ▶ Renewable and Nonrenewable Resources
- ▶ Environmental Health
- ▶ Agriculture and Society
- ▶ Integrated Pest Management
- ▶ Ecosystems and their Interaction
- ▶ Threatened, Endangered, and Extinct Species
- ▶ Humans and the Environment
- ▶ Environmental Laws and Regulations

At the Grassroots...

Observing the 5 P's of Team

by Corky McReynolds, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

What would an outsider be able to observe if a group of people was truly functioning as a highly performing team? Imagine someone looking in on your team in action over a period of time using the following 5 P's: Purpose, Protocol, Progress, People, and Product as a guide. Could an observer identify these benchmarks in your team?

P 1: Purpose

Mission level: The team must be working within an overarching common mission. If a team, board of directors, committee or task group of a state EE association is working well, then its function must exist within the parent organization's mission. Teams fail when they begin to create roles, tasks and self appointed directions that do not directly or positively impact the very mission of the organization they are intended to serve.

Team level: All members of the team need to have participated in the development and acceptance of the purpose, which becomes the benchmark for measuring achievements and success. The team's purpose needs to be clear, concise and written.

Outcome level: The team should have established specific and attainable outcomes that match and support its purpose and overarching mission.

P 2: Protocol

Parameters: A team's purpose should fit within a set of boundaries and expectations. Boundaries are real but can be invisible, and unclear boundaries often result in a significant source of frustration. A successful team will have clearly identified its boundaries and strive to work with these parameters. Boundaries often include personnel issues, allocation of resources beyond their control, and other areas that could conflict with the mission or policies of the parent organization.

Working Together: Teams should be observed using visible guiding principles that define and govern how the members function and treat one another. Highly functioning teams take time to create, print and display their 'rules of engagement'. A team protocol becomes a contract that establishes and maintains positive behavior.

Decision-Making: An observer should be able to determine the type of decision-making process the group uses to process and evaluate information. The process should encourage fair participation and creative and critical thinking that results in the team collectively setting priorities for action.

P 3: Progress

Priorities: The results of team planning, however formal or informal, should establish priorities that can be measured toward progress and completion.

Tasks: Priorities need specific action steps and concrete tasks. Have tasks been completed or are they in some stage of progress? Specific tasks become the method for accountability among members and ways for the team to evaluate their effectiveness.

P 4: People

Roles: There are typical job functions within a team that should be divided fairly. Do all members have a role? Teams thrive when members are trained and share roles equally, such as taking turns facilitating meetings, serving as recorder, timekeeper, etc.

Commitment: Team members should be engaged, committed and dedicated to the team's purpose and tasks. Establishing a protocol to reengage team members should be developed before team planning begins. If individuals become disengaged the team's process allows for individual assessment that both encourages reengagement or possible reassignment.

Interpersonal Conflicts: A procedure should be in place to resolve or manage interpersonal conflict. The procedures should have been collaboratively developed and written within the team and clearly understood by all members.

P 5: Product

Completion: Can the team demonstrate closure on priorities and tasks? The team should be able to provide documentation of mission-based short term and long-term activities. Even if the team is a standing group there should be very discernible points along its path that can be finished before it is ready to move ahead.

Continuation: The team should have a method to evaluate itself, its success or failure to complete its work; and to determine the viability and need for the team to continue. Too often teams never face the challenge of 'sunset'; instead they tend to begin to protect themselves as a team. Celebrate successes, learn from failures, and then dissolve. A new team with new members formed around new priorities encourages growth while equipping more people with skills.

Each of the 5 P's of team represents the reality of a successfully functioning team. Observing a team in action the outsider should be able to identify the 5 P's as part of the norm and experience the positive results of a real team in action.

Does your team have the 5 Ps?

**Purpose
Protocol
Progress
People
Product**

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In the Spotlight: EETAP State Updates

The EETAP States Program seeks to quickly and successfully advance EE training in eight states utilizing the tools of capacity building and focusing on priority initiatives in the field of environmental education. This two-year program is funded by EETA; managed by NEEAP. Thanks to the EETAP States for providing the following updates.



Arizona

Cooperation Helps “Fund” EE Initiatives

The Arizona Association for Environmental Education (AAEE) is comprised of dedicated people making remarkable strides in the name of environmental education (EE). Now, due to the EETAP States Program, AAEE has secured the funding and the staff to bolster dreams into reality.

Cooperation is the glue that holds AAEE together as we move toward our goals. These goals are straightforward: increase collaborative workshops, increase correlations to the Arizona Academic State Standards, facilitate EE Guidelines for Excellence workshops on the US/Mexico border and develop an on-line EE database. These goals are important, but what has developed out of implementing these goals is outstanding! Membership is increasing, communication is leading to more collaboration, and the momentum keeps building as more individuals and organizations become involved. “Capacity building” is no longer a buzzword in Arizona EE, but something we witness as an everyday event.

California

Extending EE Resources to Educators Working With Bilingual and English Language Learners

The California EETAP States project is focusing its efforts on expanding the number of K-12 educators providing EE, especially among educators working with bilingual and English Language Learners. To accomplish this goal we are focusing on two main initiatives: 1) reaching out to pre-service educators serving areas with large populations of English Language Learners and 2) reaching out to educators involved in the California Association of Bilingual Education (CABE). Participating in these efforts are environmental educators from three key California EE networks: Golden State EE Consortium, California Regional EE Community Network (CREEC) and California EE Interagency Network. We recently exhibited at the CABE annual conference, which drew 7,000 educators and on April 2nd at a CABE regional conference attended by approximately 500 educators of English Language Learners. Plans are underway to participate in three regional CABE conferences later this year. CREEC Regional Coordinators will follow-up on connections made with CABE educators and will connect them to local resources. As well, planning is underway for a pre-service conference in the spring of 2003.

Illinois

Building Centers of Regional Environmental Education (CORE²)

Through the EETAP grant, more than 20 Illinois agencies are working together to build a sustainable infrastructure (called Centers of Regional Environmental Education - CORE²) that improves communication and the availability and quality of EE teacher training services throughout Illinois. Five CORE² teams, each with broad, diverse representation are being developed. CORE² teams will strive to partner to offer teacher trainings that serve the needs of each region. Some elements of a successful CORE² include offering teacher trainings that are:

- Coordinated through Regional Offices of Education.
- Aligned with learner and teacher content standards.
- Offered with recertification credits.
- Presented throughout the region.
- Offered at various knowledge and skill levels.

To date, CORE² teams have been identified and a series of trainings for the teams are planned for the next 18 months. The first meeting of the CORE² teams took place at an all day workshop on April 18, 2002. At this workshop, teams developed goals and objectives, a timeline and a budget.

Missouri

Strengthening EE Training Through Certification, Community Leadership and On-line Resources

Environmental educator training in Missouri is being strengthened thanks to the EETAP States Program. Initiatives include the implementation of an environmental education certification program, development of an on-line networking and resource system, and facilitation of a community-based leadership clinic. Launched in the fall of 2001 the certification program provides a framework for EE professional development as well as recognition of an individual’s knowledge and skills related to EE. Using the results of a recent survey and the services of EE- Link, a new on-line networking and resource system is being developed that will facilitate communications and access to quality EE programs and materials. Planning is also underway for a community-based leadership clinic designed to provide a forum for developing EE action plans in local communities. The Missouri Department of Conservation’s Office of Environmental Education and the Missouri Environmental Education Association are coordinating to provide these initiatives. A network of partners is intimately involved in making them happen.



Ohio

Providing EE Resources to Underserved Audiences

EETAP support in Ohio is being used to increase access to EE resources and opportunities among selected underserved audiences. The project is being advanced by the 12 regions of the Environmental Education Council of Ohio (EECO), each region focusing on one of the following audiences:

- ▶ Culturally diverse audiences in urban areas
- ▶ High school audiences
- ▶ Social studies audiences
- ▶ Language arts audiences
- ▶ Early childhood audiences



Our key task this year is to coordinate local meetings of stakeholders representing these audiences as well as EE professionals interested in collaborating on coordinated programs. The purpose of these meetings is to develop new approaches using existing resources that would increase the effectiveness of program delivery to the selected audiences. In urban areas, much depends on relationship building and fostering a climate of understanding and cultural sensitivity. For formal educators, demonstrating that environmental education is relevant to specific curricular demands is crucial.



Oklahoma

Linking Leaders and Creating An EE Master Plan for OK

Oklahoma created a new consortium, (Oklahoma Consortium for Environmental Education - OCEE), that brings to the EE table many stakeholders who had not previously been involved. Our steering committee is made up of representatives from governmental agencies (The Office of the Secretary of the Environment, The OK Water Resources Board, Department of Parks and Tourism, OK Conservation Commission, OK EE Coordinating Committee, The City of Oklahoma City - Stormwater, Langston University – Center of Outreach, Tribal Outreach, OK Department of Environmental Quality), not-for-profit organizations (OK Urban Leagues, Opportunities Industrialization Center, OK Association for EE, The Nature Conservancy, Latina Community Association, OK Kids in EE), a religious group (The Council of Churches), and the community (OK City Zoo). Our first step has been to create a needs assessment survey to be sent to all 77 counties to identify leaders and to determine what Oklahomans perceive to be the EE needs for our state. With funding and support through the EETAP States Program we are reaching beyond the traditional EE community to create a cohesive network of EE leaders across the state. Leadership clinics will follow for those identified leaders and in the second year, a Leadership Institute will be held to design a Master Plan for EE in Oklahoma.



Utah

Certification Program Assesses Competency in EE

The Utah Certification Program has made significant progress in a relatively short amount of time. Thus far a diverse group, both professionally and geographically, of environmental educators has developed a rubric to assess competency. The group has also begun exploring administration of the program. The rubric was developed using the recently completed *Guidelines for EE Providers in Utah*. There are five sections in the rubric: Environmental Literacy; Foundation of Environmental Education; Professional Responsibilities of Environmental Educators; Planning and Implementing EE; and Assessment and Evaluation. The Certification Program will likely go through a three step process with the first being a self reporting, followed by a peer review and a review by the certification committee. This certification writing team has met twice and has focused on implementation and revision of the rubric as well as the pilot testing and administration of this program. Pilot testing of the Certification Program is scheduled to begin in June, 2002.

Washington

Linking Student Learning With Teacher Preparation

A team of Environmental Educators in Washington State plans to link the needs of schools incorporating “our environment as the integrating context” for learning with teacher preparation. Our strategy is built around Washington’s EE Assessment Project goal to demonstrate improvement in student learning by creating and tracking performance on state standard-like assessments. EE professionals in Washington State have created EE standards or benchmarks based on the knowledge of systems, inquiry, civic participation and policy analysis. These EE benchmarks and associated assessments offer schools a motivational context for preparing for the mandatory state standards tests.

This project is designed to bring the faculty of Schools of Education into the process of establishing the value of EE assessment to schools. These faculty will also plan how to incorporate EE context into teacher preparation methods courses. To date, the Washington team has:

- ▶ Pilot tested 25 EE Assessments in December 2001
- ▶ Revised the EE assessments for field testing in Fall 2002
- ▶ Created standards and assessments for The Arts and Environmental Health as subsets of the benchmarks.

In April the Co-Managers of the Washington team presented to the Deans of the 22 Schools of Education who are responsible for training preservice teachers in the state. Following the presentation, 17 of the 22 recommended working with their teacher preparation faculty. This summer the team will meet with college faculty to seek assistance with the Fall EE Assessment Field Test and facilitate methods course planning which includes EE.



(Teambuilding in the EETAP States, cont.)

pre-service, increasing the cultural diversity of EE leaders and audiences served, utilizing NAAEE's Guidelines for Excellence and developing searchable databases of resources.

“The work NEEAP did to define team roles really helped me as Project Manager to get other team members to take ownership of additional roles and responsibilities.”

Jill Rubio, AZ

The key point of contact for the state and national partners is the Project Manager who has lead responsibility for team development. Each Project Manager has in turn formed a core team, with the assistance of guidelines created together with NEEAP. In addition to the Project Manager, state teams

are made up of a Fiscal Agent, Communication Coordinator and Evaluation Coordinator. The *Fiscal Agent* is the organization that receives and manages the funds, the *Communication Coordinator* sets the stage for promoting state successes and the *Evaluation Coordinator* takes the lead in implementing evaluation strategies of the state's activities. Some states have added additional team roles to assist with project implementation.

Defining team roles is advantageous to both the Project Manager and NEEAP staff. Jill Rubio, Project Manager of the Arizona team stated: “The work NEEAP did to define team roles really helped me as Project Manager to get other team members to take ownership of additional roles and responsibilities.”

The team roles each match the needs of states and will evolve with the implementation of team work plans. These state teams are not only crucial to the success of each state's efforts, but will facilitate collaboration beyond the EETAP States Program and contribute to the shared goal of environmental literacy.

Successful Teamwork in Action

Mary Rice, a seasoned environmental educator and part of the EETAP States Project team in Illinois, explains how two groups with slightly different viewpoints, experiences and approaches have been able to work as a team toward a shared goal. “In recent years, Illinois has benefitted greatly from the collaboration of its two statewide organizations, the EE Advancement Consortium (IEEAC) and the EE Association of Illinois (EEAI). These organizations have worked together on statewide, regional and national projects — from the writing of a statewide strategic plan for EE to organizing a leadership clinic, and from writing successful grants to establishing a coordinated approach to teacher training. A spirit of teamwork has evolved over time and the skills and strengths of each organization continue to contribute in vastly different ways to benefit our common goal to help the citizens of Illinois become environmentally literate.”

What's New With EETAP?

by Bob Holsman
EETAP Communication Director



Attending EE conferences is a great way to develop professional contacts, pick up new ideas, and energize your professional self. We encourage everyone to register early for next August's North American Association for Environmental Education Conference in Boston (www.naaee.org).

The drawback with EE conferences, however, is that they tend to only attract...well, environmental educators. A continuing challenge for the advancement of our field is the need to export EE to a broader cross section of educators. That is why EETAP is providing new training opportunities through established professional education associations as a strategy for building capacity.

For example, EETAP has partnered with the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) to develop an EE network among ASCD's 163,000 professional members. The ASCD EE Network debuted at the annual ASCD conference in February in San Antonio, Texas. EETAP also helped to coordinate and promote several EE presentations to ASCD members as a way to encourage awareness about EE's potential to improve student learning and achievement. The call for proposals for next year's conference “Igniting the Passion for Learning - Innovative Responses to Complex Issues” is available at www.ascd.org.

For several years, EETAP helped coordinate “EE Street” in the exhibit area of the National Science Teacher's Association (NSTA) annual conference. In February, twenty organizations participated in EE Street at NSTA. The U.S. EPA's Office of EE distributed a new EE Poster developed in partnership with ASCD and the World Wildlife Fund. Titled “Teaching with the Future in Mind”, EETAP and U.S. EPA will distribute the EE poster at other conferences over the next two years.

Finally, NAAEE and Project Learning Tree are developing a 12-hour EE training workshop for the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) conference in November. We expect that these outreach efforts with education associations will expand the breadth and scope of professional educators who receive training in EE. Expanding the circle of educators who are knowledgeable about EE is an important key to advancing environmental literacy.

Resources & Opportunities

In order to assist states and communities who are building capacity for environmental education and developing sustainable grassroots organizations, NEEAP offers Resources and Opportunities. In this section, you will find information and contacts geared towards networking, partnering and funding opportunities, new initiatives, and relevant Internet links and listserves.



Attend "The Boston TEE Party"

The 31st annual North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Conference will be August 6-10, 2002 at Boston Park Plaza Hotel in Boston, MA. For details and registration instructions go to www.naaee.org/conferences/index.php Early Bird Registration ends May 31, 2002. The "TEE" of this year's theme (The Boston TEE Party) stands for "Total Environmental Education": the celebration of a rich, multi-faceted, lifelong environmental education that encourages, welcomes and encompasses a diversity of concepts, mediums, formats, methodologies and approaches.

ASCD Infobrief on EE Available On-line

A report linking environmental education to student achievement can be now viewed on the web site of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) at www.ascd.org/readingroom/infobrief/issue26.html. The InfoBrief "Environmental Education: Moving Into The Educational Mainstream" published last August by ASCD highlights the use of environmental teaching strategies to promote educational achievement and draws a connection between environmental education and state learning standards.

EE Barter Network Improves Access to Free EE Capacity Building Tool

Revised in January 2002, the new website has a new look and feel which is more user-friendly and intuitive than the original version. The process for setting up a barter trade agreement has been streamlined and can now be created in one easy step. Improvements to the new site: Login is no longer required to view the main site, you can quickly locate Barter Network members, and Resource Specialists can now earn and spend EEBU's (EE Barter Units). Check out the website for a first-hand look. www.edgateway.net/eebarter



Free Contact Management Tools Available

CompassPoint is providing two database tools: 1) eBase which provides contact information summarized on one screen but the user can "drill" down for specific details. Users must have Filemaker 5 to customize this feature (www.ebase.org), and 2) Organizer's database which runs on the windows platform and is essentially an electronic rolodex with the ability to track donation and membership information (organizenow.net/odb.html).

Online Media Training Resource

The Greenroom is an online media training resource for environmentalists provided by Environmental Media Services. The site includes information on how to implement a media campaign, a tutorial on basic communications planning, articles on various aspects of effective grassroots media work, and a calendar of environmental media events. www.green-room.org/index.html

Professional Development in Leadership Training From Adopt-A-Watershed

Adopt-A-Watershed's National Leadership Institute will be held July 13-20 in Bend, Oregon. The eight-day series of professional development activities provides intensive leadership training in the integration of educational standards, curriculum application to local environments and service-learning concepts. A Southeast Regional Leadership Institute will also be hosted in North Carolina June 22-29, 2002. Contact Adopt-A-Watershed for further information: P.O. Box 1850, Hayfork, CA 96041, (530) 628-5334, aaw@Adopt-A-Watershed.org www.Adopt-A-Watershed.org



Profit-sharing for a Healthy Planet

Stonyfield Farm's Profits for the Planet Program (PFP) provides funding to environmental and educational efforts that affect positive and meaningful change and have measurable outcomes. In addition to funds, Stonyfield Farm also donates products to organizations. Proposals are accepted throughout the year. www.stonyfield.com/Ido/ProfitsforthePlanetProgram.shtml





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(Evaluating Success Strategies for Community-Based EE, cont.)

NEEAP is providing overall management for the Demonstration Communities Project and Dr. Joe Heimlich, Ohio State University, is the project's evaluator. Heimlich says, "As this is a demonstration project, there is much we need to understand regarding *how* each community approaches its work, the *differences* in the ways the groups form and coalesce, and the *value* of the partnerships as perceived within each community. These are the guiding evaluation constructs. As a group, the demonstration communities have built a program model and are constructing their own efforts within the structure of the program logic of the larger effort." The larger effort will include oversight of the project by the Demonstration Communities Council which includes the participating EETAP partners and the key contact in each community. Additionally, recognized experts in community based EE programs will be asked to serve as advisors to the project.

Through this effort, we hope to gain a good understanding of building community partnerships and new insights into how others can approach locally based EE capacity building.

For more information about the Demonstration Communities Project, contact Abby Ruskey at aruskey@uwsp.edu.

Leadership Clinic Manual & Training: Tools for Transforming Conference Design

A Leadership Clinic training will be held September 21-24, 2002 at the Lied Conference Center in Omaha, NE. This workshop, based on NEEAP's new manual, will equip participants to plan, design and lead their own state, regional or national Leadership Clinic. The workshop will cover all principles, processes and tools developed for participant-driven events. Five state, regional and national teams that are planning to hold a clinic in the next year will be attending this specialized training. Look for more information about this innovative manual and training in the next issue of *The EE Advocate*.

Oklahoma City

In Oklahoma City, Hyder Houston is partnering with Pat Kelley, the Executive Director of the Organization of Industrial Centers (an adult literacy program) and other community leaders. Together these leaders will assess the status of EE programs in the community and determine what else is needed. An EE expo in 2003 is one of the possible events that will come out of the planning of this community group, which will hold its first meeting in June.

Orange County

In Orange County, the Groundwater Foundation will be working with an existing Groundwater Guardian community. Stated Cindy Kriefels, Executive Director of the Groundwater Foundation, "Throughout the Groundwater Foundation's history, we have worked with people at the community level to protect groundwater locally. The Demonstration Communities project allows the Foundation the opportunity to concentrate our efforts on one community in order to determine what elements of local action help a community successfully implement EE broadly."

El Paso/Juarez

In El Paso/Juarez, Project del Rio (PdR) is teaming up with Healthy Communities out of the University of Texas-El Paso. PdR will be working with the Center and seven additional organizations in El Paso, Juarez, and the southern New Mexico border region to identify what skills are needed for individuals and groups to empower citizens interested in creating a healthy environment. Stated PdR Director Lisa LaRoque, "PdR has historically worked to develop students' critical thinking and problem solving skills in real world investigations. The chance to team up with practitioners in the communities that are trying to do the same thing will tell us about the strategies and characteristics that Healthy Communities participants feel are most important. That should be a great benefit to the EE field."