

Forty Environmentalists Receive TogetherGreen Fellowships

November 16, 2011

New York, November 16, 2011 – Restoring acres of cornfield to native prairie in Iowa. Creating a greenhouse program at a prison in Portland. Providing green jobs training for Oakland at-risk youth. Bringing the healing power of the natural world to patients with dementia. These are just a few ways in which 40 promising conservation leaders will advance their environmental vision and leadership skills as recipients of the 2011 *TogetherGreen* Fellowships.

The *TogetherGreen* Fellowship Program invests in high-potential individuals from all backgrounds, providing them with the tools, resources, visibility, and a peer network to help them lead conservation actions that will help shape a healthier environmental future. Audubon and Toyota launched the five-year *TogetherGreen* initiative in 2008 to fund innovative community projects, build conservation leaders, and offer volunteer opportunities across the country to benefit the environment.

“We are thrilled to award *TogetherGreen* fellowships to another talented and diverse group of environmentalists who have the passion and skills to inspire and lead others,” said Audubon President David Yarnold. “They are the talented leadership the environmental community needs to tackle the huge challenges and opportunities confronting us.”

Each year, 40 *TogetherGreen* Fellows are selected to conduct projects in a community or region focused on engaging diverse audiences in habitat, water, and/or energy conservation. Sample fellowship projects that will receive 2011 funding include:

- **Habitat:** In Connecticut, Ken Elkins (Audubon Center at Bent on the River) will develop a replicable training program called “Bird Tales,” a low-cost therapeutic program that brings the healing power of the natural world to people living with dementia. Working with a dementia care expert, Ken will incorporate Audubon at Home principles into dementia patient therapy in order to improve quality of life and improve habitat at four care facilities.
- **Water:** In Florida, Daniell Washington (Big Blue and You Foundation) will pair 15 inner-city students with filmmaker mentors to learn the film production process and create five different public service announcements about water resources.
- **Energy:** In Kentucky, David Wicks (Get Outdoors Kentucky: GoKY) will support independent research projects focused on environmental issues impacting Louisville as part of four-week high school math and science summer program. Interdisciplinary activities include: field study, classes at U of L, a science fair component, and development of a research proposal with a mentor.
- **Engaging diverse audiences in conservation:** In Providence, Rhode Island, Allison Rogers (former Miss Rhode Island and Miss USA pageant competitor) will develop environmental training materials and an online blog to educate Miss America contestants on the conservation actions and projects occurring in their home states.

This year’s Fellows class vies from 38 cities in 27 states. Fifteen professionals are from within the Audubon

network and 35 are aligned with outside organizations. Fellows receive a \$10,000 grant; assistance launching a conservation action project, specialized training, and the opportunity to become part of an exciting alumni network of conservation professionals.

TogetherGreen Fellows participate in a weeklong professional development course at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife's National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia focused on enhancing conservation skills and sharing the latest thinking on achieving sustainable conservation success. Near the completion of their 18-month fellowship, Fellows attend a multi-day retreat focused on sharing best practices, fundraising, diversity, evaluation, and strategies to sustain their conservation action projects over the long term.

"The results from the first three years of the Fellows program brought to life everything that *TogetherGreen* sought to accomplish," added Pat Pineda, group vice president of philanthropy for Toyota Motor North America. "I'm confident that the next group of Fellows will continue that success and make a difference for years to come."

A complete list of the 2011 *TogetherGreen* Fellows and details about their conservation projects can be found at <http://www.togethergreen.org/fellows>.

If you or someone you know has a creative environmental project and would like to apply for a *TogetherGreen* Fellowship, applications will be available online beginning in early 2012 at <http://www.togethergreen.org/fellows>.

###