

# Annual Awards Banquet Honors Outstanding Teachers and Students



On May 9, 2013, the Spring Valley Lake Country Club in Victorville took on a fiesta theme as MEEC hosted its Sixth Annual Teacher and Student of the Year Awards and Sponsor Recognition Banquet. More than 80 educators, students, business and civic leaders gathered to celebrate and recognize the outstanding achievements of students and teachers from High Desert communities.

MEEC recognized Dawn Cook, Lucerne Valley Elementary School, Lucerne Valley, as MEEC's 2013 Teacher of the Year and Roger Aburto, Granite Hills High School, Apple Valley, and Michael Richardson, Phoenix Academy, Apple Valley, as MEEC's 2013 Teachers of Excellence. The Teacher of the Year received a check for \$300 and a plaque, while each Teacher of Excellence received a check for \$100 and a plaque.

MEEC's Teacher of the Year and Teachers of Excellence are selected annually based on their continuous and enduring contributions to environmental education, capacity for creating and implementing successful environmental activities, creative approaches, promotion of individual and societal environmental responsibility, and for encouraging youth to make

informed decisions about environmental issues. Winners are nominated by their principals and selected by MEEC's Executive Board.

Nine High Desert students were also recognized during the event for their outstanding abilities to lead by example and for promoting environmental awareness and positive change within their schools and communities. Each Student of the Year who was nominated by their teacher or principal was awarded a certificate, trophy, a \$60 check and a \$60 Staples gift card.

MEEC also recognized the five recipients of MEEC's annual Environmental/Science Scholarship Program. The 2013 recipients were: Luz Lule Camargo, Antelope Valley High School, Lancaster; Bailee Murphy, Serrano High School, Phelan; Kenneth Moody, Quartz Hill High School, Quartz Hill; Rebeca Thweatt, Oak Hills High School, Oak Hills and Sierra Zacks, Yucca Valley High School, Yucca Valley. Each graduating high school senior who received MEEC's \$1,000 scholarship has declared a major in Environmental Science, Environmental Engineering, or another closely related Science or Engineering field.



*Teachers Honored: L-R: Teacher of Excellence, Michael Richardson of Phoenix Academy, Apple Valley; Teacher of the Year, Dawn Cook of Lucerne Valley Elementary School, Lucerne Valley; and Teacher of Excellence, Roger Aburto of Granite Hills High School, Apple Valley.*



*2013 Students of the Year: Back Row L-R: Wyatt Martin, Serrano High School, Phelan; Daniel Garcia, Lancaster High School, Lancaster; Kassandra Luke, Littlerock High School, Littlerock; Omar Edwards, Victor Valley High School, Victorville. Front Row L-R: Alexis Medina, George Visual and Performing Arts, Adelanto; Korrina Medina, Lucerne Valley Elementary, Lucerne Valley; Kimberly Aguilar, Phoenix Academy, Apple Valley.*



*2013 Scholarship Recipients: L-R: Luz Lule Camargo, Antelope Valley High School, Lancaster; Rebeca Thweatt, Oak Hills High School, Oak Hills; Bailee Murphy, Serrano High School, Phelan; Kenneth Moody, Quartz Hill High School, Quartz Hill.*



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## High Desert Teachers Attend Prestigious Environmental Institute

**K**ey Issues is a national training institute located in Silverthorne, Colorado which is held each summer. Using Colorado's breathtaking ecosystem as its setting, Key Issues allows teachers to combine classroom time and outdoor exploration of the natural environment.

For the eleventh year, this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was made available to four teachers via full scholarships provided by the Los



*Teacher Debbie Tsubota analyzes specimen samples collected from a stream during an outdoor activity in Colorado.*

Angeles County Sanitation Districts, AVAQMD, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics and MEEC. LACSD, AVAQMD and Lockheed Martin Aeronautics sponsored three teachers from the Antelope Valley to take part in this year's Keystone Center program which gives educators the skills to explore current local and global environmental issues with their students using a non-biased, standards-based framework. In addition, MEEC sponsored one teacher from the San Bernardino County High Desert/Riverside County Blythe region to attend the Key Issues training this summer.

The teachers selected by MEEC to attend the training session in July were: Heather Hanson, Esperanza Elementary School, Palmdale; Deborah Tsubota, Trona Elementary School, Trona; Susan Norton, Gregg Anderson Academy, Palmdale; and Malissa Voegel-Bidnick, Alpine Elementary School, Littlerock.



## Joshua Tree Blooms for Desert Studies Workshop Teachers



*Teachers use what they learned to explore the desert environment.*

**O**n March 23 and 24, 2013, twelve teachers trekked into Joshua Tree National Park to take part in this year's Boeing-sponsored "Desert Studies Photography" workshop. Participants were awarded scholarships covering their meals, lodging and travel stipends to spend a day and a half hiking through the Covington Flats area of Joshua Tree National Park and the Big Morongo Preserve located southeast of the Morongo Valley. MEEC was excited to welcome back wildlife biologist and photographer David Lamfrom who also serves as Senior Desert Program Manager for the National Parks Conservation Association, to instruct

Lamfrom worked with the teachers on their photographic techniques while helping them identify different types of plants and animals which they encountered along the way. A special treat for this year's workshop participants were the Joshua Trees' plentiful blossoms, which the teachers photographed in different stages of bloom. As the workshop closed on the second day, teachers shared some of the photos they took during a discussion, along with ideas for further engaging their students' skills.



*Teachers learn digital media techniques in Joshua Tree.*

teachers on the benefits of using digital photography, pen and ink drawing, and other forms of media to enhance students comprehension of environmental topics.

## Register Now For 2013 YELC STEM Service Learning Conference!

**M**EEC is gearing up to host its 8<sup>th</sup> annual Youth Environmental Leadership and STEM Service Learning Conference, coming October 5, 2013. YELC encourages teams of students to design and implement an environmental Service Learning project which addresses an environmental school or community need.

As Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and Service-Learning go hand in hand, this year's event will introduce "STEMFest", an exhibitor forum that will provide students with an opportunity to meet knowledgeable and dedicated professionals and mentors from MEEC Sponsor companies and agencies, who can help them implement their chosen Service Learning project. Students will also engage in fun STEM hands-on activities and learn about "green" careers during "STEMFest".

YELC's returning Keynote Speaker will be Joel Greene, founder and host of the nationally-syndicated PBS television programs "Curiosity Quest" and "Curiosity Quest Goes Green". Joel is passionate for kids and his invaluable knowledge will help students and teachers discover the steps that it takes to become "ambassadors of the environment" and feel empowered to make a difference.

Environmental Service Learning projects can be as simple as providing recycling bins on your campus, conducting an easy energy audit to save your school \$\$, or even planting a water-wise garden. What about using robotics for a recycling project? Or harnessing the sun's energy to purify water? Existing student clubs, classrooms, or even groups of friends are encouraged to develop a project that improves their environment.

Transportation Grants are available for teams traveling to YELC from outside of the Victor Valley. Team Registration Forms are available at <http://www.meeconline.com/yelc-fall-2012-application-deadline-is-august-15-2012/>

**ATTENDING TEAMS ARE ALSO ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR A \$250 GRANT TO IMPLEMENT THEIR SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT!!!!**

For more information or to request a Transportation Grant Application, please contact Christie Robinson, YELC Coordinator at (760) 245-1661, ext. 6101.



## MEEC Teachers Take to the Sea

**O**n June 23, Boeing sponsored eight teachers to attend a three-day MEEC-hosted workshop on Catalina Island. Teachers departed from Long Beach and arrived at The Catalina Experience White's Landing facility a couple of hours later, where they were given a briefing by camp staff.

The group's first activity was a discussion about the different intertidal zones, which was followed by a kayak trip to observe the animals and kelp that inhabit the island's coastal zones and a trip to the beach's tide pools. After encountering many small crabs and anemones, the naturalist showed the group several large moray eels. The day ended with a squid dissection that allowed teachers to investigate the unique adaptations of this mollusk. Following the dissection came a cooking demonstration, where the remaining edible parts of the squids were fried into Calamari and enjoyed by all.

The second day began with the teachers taking to the sea to observe how different areas of the island's coast are constructed. Using sand sieves, the teachers performed an experiment to classify the sand on the beach and better understand the different forces that act on coastal structures. The teachers then snorkeled along the rocky shore and kelp beds while identifying many species of marine life, including abalone, garibaldi and countless smaller fish. The night came to an end with the group viewing samples of the ocean's food chain by the lights of the camp's boat dock.

Before leaving the island, the teachers participated in an ecological hike, where they learned about the native, endemic and invasive species that call Catalina home. During the hike, participants were lucky enough to spot three different bison that range freely on the property and a bald eagle. Boarding the ship, the teachers were excited and already planning how they could implement what they had learned back in their classrooms.



Teachers get a better look at Catalina's coastal creatures while snorkeling.



Teachers get up close and personal with starfish during a marine ecology lesson.

## Inaugural Solar Oven Competition Heats Up!

**M**EEC and the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District hosted the High Desert's first-ever "Solar Cook-Off Competition" on June 15, 2013 at Doris Davies Park in Victorville. Twelve teams of students in grades 4-12 were challenged to work in teams of 2-5, using scientific know-how, creative thinking, teamwork and experimentation to design and build solar cookers. As a design and cooking event, teams were encouraged to develop and expand their Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) skills while constructing a working solar oven and recipe. Awards were given in each

division for "Best Oven Design" and "Top Solar Chefs." A total of \$2,475 in prize money was awarded to the winning teams. Sponsors for the event included Abengoa Solar, BrightSource, First Solar, County of San Bernardino, and Southern California Edison.

The "Solar Ninjas" from Knight High School, Palmdale, won first place for both design and cooking in the 10-12<sup>th</sup> grade division, winning \$450 for both categories; the "Le Frescos" from Encore High School in Hesperia won first place in the 7-9 grade division, and the "Pizzanators" from Gregg Anderson Academy in Palmdale, placed first in both categories in the 4-7 grade division.



Design Judges query students about their cookers.



The "Pizzanators" share their enthusiasm for solar construction.



"Soul-ar Sisters" and their advisor, Mrs. McShea (aka: Sunflower).

## EBB Grant Program Transports Lancaster Students to MDAQMD

**T**he MDAQMD believes change can happen through the power of education," states the agency's Executive Director, Eldon Heaston. To this end, the District recently hosted more than 120 sixth grade students from Yucca Elementary School in Lancaster during two MEEC-sponsored EnviroBus Buck field trips.

Over the course of two days in April, two groups of 60 sixth graders toured the MDAQMD's Air Monitoring Station, challenged their lungs in an outdoor "wind tube" demonstration, and learned how smog is created during two fun hands-on simulation activities.



MDAQMD Associate Air Quality Specialist Orlando Salinas uses a map to point out the location of the District's air monitoring stations to students.



Students learn about air pressure and lung capacity by inflating 8' wind tubes.



Students use microscopes to view PM10 particles.



Community Relations & Education Manager Violette Roberts uses food coloring to help students understand their personal contribution to air pollution.

## Clean Air Month Poster Contest Draws 800-Plus Entries



**"D**ust in the Air...Why Should I Care?" was the theme of the MDAQMD's 17th Annual Clean Air Month Poster Contest. The competition drew more than 800 entries from fledgling artists throughout the MDAQMD's jurisdiction, which encompasses the High Desert portion of San Bernardino County and Riverside County's Palo Verde Valley.

Twelve winners were selected in three age categories—4 to 7; 8 to 11; and 12 to 18. During an awards ceremony at the MDAQMD on May 29, winners received gift cards ranging in denomination from \$15 to \$100, depending on place awarded. Teachers whose students were selected as contest winners were also recognized for encouraging their participation. Each winning poster and its artist will be featured in the MDAQMD's 2014 calendar, which will be published this fall.

The contest was co-sponsored by the Daily Press, the Air & Waste Management Association's Mojave Desert Chapter and Victor Valley Transit Authority, who also awarded bicycles to two contest participants, whose names were drawn at random from all the entries.

The MDAQMD's annual poster contest is held each May as a vehicle for raising awareness amongst High Desert youngsters about the pivotal role individual actions and choices play in protecting air quality.



*Pictured left to right, top row, are: Jazmin Lozano, Mariana Elementary, Apple Valley, 2nd Place Winner, Age 8-11; Faith Warburton, Pathways to College, Hesperia, 3rd Place Age 8-11; Holly Adams, Granite Hills High School, Apple Valley, 4th Place, Age 12-18; Kaila Kiefer, Oak Hills High School, Hesperia, 2nd Place, Age 12-18; Julian Lainell, Oak Hills High School, Hesperia, 1st Place, Age 12-18; Bottom Row: Daelynn Gonzalez, George Visual & Performing Arts School, Victorville, 4th Place, Age 4-7; Alexis Stevenson, Mariana Elementary, Apple Valley, 2nd Place, Age 4-7; Demarco Wade, Mariana Elementary, Apple Valley, 1st Place, Age 4-7; Peyton Cressy, Friendly Hills Elementary, Joshua Tree, 1st Place, Age 8-11; Ayla Kamali Acosta, Discovery School of the Arts, Victorville, 3rd Place, Age 4-7; Arianna Wiscowiche, Discovery School of the Arts, Victorville, 4th Place, Age 8-11. Not pictured: Kieleigh Evatt, Crestline Elementary, Barstow, 3rd Place, Age 8-11.*

## Essays Focus on a Cleaner Earth

**M**EEC sponsor Lockheed Martin Aeronautics recently challenged High Desert students to write about five different ways they could reduce their ecological footprint and protect the Earth for future generations. As a result, more than 150 students submitted their ideas during MEEC's final essay contest of the school year, whose theme was "Earth: There's Only One." During an awards ceremony held on June 4, winners were given a chance to read their essays aloud to their families and teachers, while showcasing their ideas on recycling and renewable energy sources. Third place winners received \$15 gift cards; second place received \$25 gift cards; and first place winners received \$50 gift cards.



**Back Row:** Sara Mouchet, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Palmdale Aerospace Academy, Palmdale; Wallace Jordan, 10<sup>th</sup> grade, Granite Hills High School, Apple Valley; Noelle Hele, 10<sup>th</sup> grade, Granite Hills High School, Apple Valley; Christian Perry, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Palmdale Aerospace Academy, Palmdale; **Middle Row:** Katie Wooliver, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Palmdale Aerospace Academy, Palmdale; Yitzel Serna, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Ocotillo Elementary School, Palmdale; Jamie Mantras, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, Lucerne Valley Elementary, Lucerne Valley; **Front Row:** Jacqueline Hernandez, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, Discovery School, Lancaster.

## MEEC School Garden Mini Grant Project Takes Root!!

**F**or the sixth year, MEEC is offering High Desert schools within the Mojave Water Agency's boundaries (excluding schools in Antelope Valley) an exciting program and funding opportunity via, "A Garden in Every School." Recent studies have found that 77 percent of students involved in environment-based education score higher across all standardized tests and have higher grade point averages than their peers. These studies gave way to the introduction and authorization of Assembly Bill 1535 by the California Department of Education to award \$15 million for grants to promote, develop, and sustain school gardens. Sadly, this program was one of the first budget cuts recently made to education. But through a generous grant sponsored by MEEC partner Alliance for Water Awareness and Conservation (AWAC), schools may apply for a grant for "seed" money to provide them with basic tools necessary to start a school garden. MEEC will begin accepting proposals in August of this year for school garden projects.

Interested teachers must submit a letter (one or two pages maximum) describing the proposed project and/or desired materials, and how the project will address educational standards. The application letter must also contain a timeline for implementation and a budget cost breakout based on the applicant's research of actual material costs, including shipping and handling, if applicable. Labor costs are not eligible for funding. Projects must be implemented/materials must be utilized in schools located in the High Desert portion of San Bernardino County (within the Mojave Water Agency's boundaries). **Recipients will be notified in early November and grants will be awarded by November 30th.**

**Maximum grant amount is \$250.00.** Individual award amounts to be determined by MEEC. Only one grant will be awarded per school per school year. To date, MEEC has awarded school garden grants to 19 schools in the High Desert.

**Application deadline is October 30, 2013.** Proposals may be mailed to MEEC/Garden Grants, 14306 Park Avenue, Victorville, CA 92392 or faxed to (760) 241-6271. For questions, contact MEEC Program Specialist Samantha Murray at (760) 245-1661 ext. 6717 or visit [www.meeconline.com](http://www.meeconline.com) today!



## CORNER

### COORDINATOR'S

I am so pleased to have been selected as the new MEEC Program Specialist and look forward to being part of such a

wonderful organization! I come to MEEC with a BA in Environmental Studies and five years' experience working in the environmental education sector. Most recently, I was involved in the development and implementation of forest and fire ecology curriculum for The Southern California Mountains Foundation. I'm looking forward to continuing my work in environmental education and working with educators who understand the significant role EE plays in their students' lives.

Some of my goals are to develop more classroom presentations, add new teacher workshops on some of today's relevant environmental issues, and build upon STEM-based learning with the incorporation of Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science into MEEC activities.

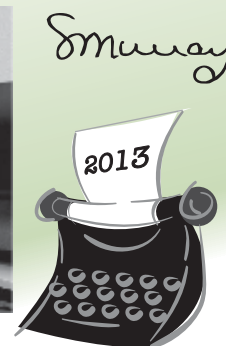
As we enter into a new school year, I'd like to remind you about the many resources MEEC has available for our teachers. MEEC has two resource libraries located in Victorville and Antelope Valley. Materials and kits on various environmental topics are available for teachers to check out free of charge. A list of available materials can be found on our website under the "Teachers" tab.

The popular EnviroBus Bucks transportation grant program has added new field trip locations to its already impressive list of environmentally-relevant sites. MEEC also offers mini grants to help fund EE project ideas. Remember to check your e-mail for upcoming workshops, contests, and other opportunities.

I have met many dedicated and passionate teachers since I have joined MEEC. The time that is taken to incorporate environmental education into the classroom is highly visible in the essay contest entries, photos and letters that you share. I am looking forward to meeting and working with many more of our MEEC teachers this coming school year.



**Samantha Murray**  
MEEC Program Specialist



## NEED \$\$ FOR AN EE PROJECT? 2013/2014 MINI GRANT APPLICATION PERIOD NOW OPEN!

**G**ot a great idea for an environmental school project? Need supplies for an EE lesson you're planning for your class? Thinking about a campus weather station? What about a renewable energy project for your school?

For a limited time, MEEC is accepting proposals for environmental education school project and material mini-grants. Interested teachers should submit a letter describing the proposed project and desired materials, the project/materials' environmental component and how the project will address educational standards, in one to two pages maximum. Letter must also contain a timeline for project implementation and a budget or cost breakout based on the applicant's research of actual material costs, including shipping and handling, if applicable. Labor costs are not eligible for funding. Projects must be implemented/materials must be used in classrooms located in the High Desert portion of San Bernardino County, the Antelope Valley or the Palo Verde Valley of Riverside County. Applicants must also teach within these jurisdictions.

How about a year's subscription to "Curiosity Quest's Go-Green DVD Series" for your classroom or school library? (Educators interested in purchasing a year-long subscription to the CQ "Go-Green" DVD Program are also eligible for a 15% discount for DVD sales – just type in promo code "MEEC" in the shopping cart on their website at <http://curiosityquest.org/membership.html>). MEEC's Mini Grant Program may be able to help purchase a subscription for your classroom!

Funded projects must be completed/purchased by June 18, 2014. Average grant amount will vary from \$100 to \$500, but may be higher. Individual award amounts to be determined by MEEC. Only one grant will be awarded per teacher per school year.

Application deadline is October 31, 2013. Proposals may be mailed to MEEC/EE School Mini-Grants, 14306 Park Ave, Victorville, CA 92392, e-mailed to [christier@mdaqmd.ca.gov](mailto:christier@mdaqmd.ca.gov) or faxed to (760) 241-6271. For questions, contact Christie Robinson, CRE Specialist at (760) 245-1661 ext. 6101.

## Essay Winners Go Green with Recycling

**J**ust in time for Earth Day, MEEC sponsor Boeing invited students to submit essays sharing their thoughts on why recycling is an important part of creating a healthy environment. More than 200 students from throughout the entire Mojave Desert put pen to paper to share their ideas about recycling paper, cans, electronics, and water, as well as what would happen to the earth if no one recycled. Special guest and essay contest judge John Popovich, Boeing's Palmdale Site Leader and Program Support for Flight-Test Value Stream, was on hand to present the awards. Winners of the 250 words-or-less essay contest received special certificates, a Boeing DVD on the new 787 and gift bags containing a computer mouse, a Boeing poster, calendar, pen-pointer combination and license plate frame, courtesy of the Boeing Company, as well as receiving gift cards valued between \$15 to \$50 from MEEC for their winning essays.



*Green Winners: Back Row L-R: Ariel Fernandez, Branch Elementary, Edwards; Destiny Jacobs, Cactus Intermediate School, Palmdale; John Popovich, Boeing's Palmdale Site Leader and Program Support for Flight-Test Value Stream; Jazmin Lozano, Mariana Elementary, Apple Valley. Front Row L-R: Makenzie Brooks, Friendly Hills Elementary, Joshua Tree; Breanne Baxter, Mariana Academy, Apple Valley; Ave Gay, Academy of Academic Excellence, Apple Valley.*



## FEATURE: Meet Debbie Tsubota

TEACHER



**D**ebbie Tsubota was born in Chicago, IL and was raised in the northern part of the state, surrounded by lakes and farms. Growing up, the thought of living in the California desert never crossed her mind. As the eldest of four siblings and fifteen cousins, Debbie says "I grew up teaching, I always knew it was what I wanted to do." After graduating high school, Debbie and her parents moved to California. Pursuing her

dream of teaching, she earned her B.A. and teaching credential from CSU Fresno and a M.A. from Fresno Pacific University. Debbie was "persuaded" to teach in Trona while on a practice interview at that end of her senior year at Fresno and has been with the district now for 14 years.

Debbie began her career with Trona Joint Unified School District teaching kindergarten and first grade at Trona Elementary School. While her sons were growing up, she took some time off and volunteered as a full time Math and Language Arts instructor at the school they attended. She then returned to Trona Unified, teaching 7th, 8th and 9th grade English and Science classes. For the last three years she has been teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade and will be teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade at the elementary school this upcoming school year.

Debbie first became active with MEEC about three years ago. She believes in challenging her students to give their best in all areas of their lives. As part of that challenge, she has led a group of students at MEEC's YELC STEM Service Learning conference for that last two years. Their first year Service Learning project was a raised-bed, drought tolerant garden which was expanded and sustained by the next year's class who also purchased a composter and recycling bins for their campus. "My students have enjoyed participating in the conferences. There has also been an obvious correlation between their 'can do' outlook about their Service Learning projects, and their attitude toward learning and school. They are proud of the work they have done and this has increased their confidence as they move up to middle school," said Debbie.

Every year, Debbie takes advantage of as many MEEC teacher workshops and essay contests as possible. She loves taking the hands-on activities back to her classroom, but also values the networking experience with other teachers that the workshops provide. Teaching Earth Science to her 6<sup>th</sup> graders, Debbie got great use out of the renewable energy kits provided by MEEC. "The kids love showing off what they have learned with their kits during our Open House," said Debbie. She was also selected to attend this summer's Key Issues Institute training in Silverthorne, CO which she found to be an excellent experience. She cannot wait to share what she learned with her colleagues upon her return to school in the fall.

## MEEC Receives Second 3M & Good360 Product Donation



**F**or the second year in a row, MEEC was selected by 3M Oak Hills and Good360 as a recipient in their product donation program. This year, MEEC received a donation of office supplies which included Post-It Notes, scissors and four 3M Mobile Projectors (total donation valued at \$5,102.32). Through the product donation program, MEEC has been

able to select various 3M products for use in the everyday administration of their programs, and for use during larger events and teacher workshops. This year, donations provided by 3M allowed MEEC to create "goodie bags" to be used at upcoming teacher workshops. Goodie bag door prizes will range in value from \$20 to \$40, with various 3M office supplies endowed for teacher use. More than 90 boxes of supplies have been donated to MEEC to date, courtesy of 3M and the Good360 Donation Program.

# Fantabulous Feedback

## Letters from MEEC's "Fans"

**"I** just received the notice on our being selected for an EnviroBus Buck Transportation Grant, and we are so very excited! I can't wait for my students to experience the Punch Bowl. I hope you will forward my gratitude and thankfulness to MEEC for this wonderful opportunity."

Dee Dee Spies  
Hesperia Jr. High School  
Hesperia



**"T**rona is a small, somewhat isolated town and MEEC workshops provide not only information and free materials, but also a chance for me to share ideas and network with other teachers."

Debbie Tsubota  
Trona Elementary School  
Trona



**"T**hank you so very much for all your hard work putting on this event! Solar cooking in Victorville all day was such a super experience for the students and spread awareness in the park and to the public as well!!!! Great Job! We are so grateful that you are doing this! Education! Environment! A perfect marriage! THANK YOU!"

Allaire Koslo  
Team Advisor - SOUL-AR SISERS  
Paraclete High School  
Lancaster



**"T**hank you again! The kids LOVED every minute of our science units. And now the younger kids are so eager to get into 5th grade!"

Lisa Aburto  
Yucca Loma Elementary School  
Apple Valley





# EnviroBus Bucks Transportation Grants Now Available!

**M**EEC is pleased to announce that 2013-2014 EnviroBus Bucks Transportation Grant Applications are now being accepted!



Each fall, the EBB Grant Program provides transportation funding opportunities for school bus excursions to environmentally - relevant sites. During these field trips, students are offered a unique opportunity to learn about environmental education hands-on during visits to host sites which promote environmental stewardship. EBB field trips also provide students with an opportunity to study environmental issues, science, and career exploration with experts in the field, and many sites are perfectly suited for STEM exploration. **Eligible educators/schools must be located within the High Desert portion of San Bernardino County, the Palo Verde Valley of Riverside County or the High Desert region of North Los Angeles County, including the cities of Lancaster and Palmdale.**

- EBB applications are now completed online using our new fillable/downloadable forms.
- Approximate length of tours at host sites are listed under the site description along with any fees associated with that site (these entrance fees are not covered by the EBB grant).
- "Dream Sites" will continue to be considered after all eligible grants have been awarded.
- Transportation costs must be included with your application, but if you are unable to obtain an estimate from your District Transportation Dept., you may provide an online printout of roundtrip mileage from your school site to the host site with your District's calculated transportation costs (either per mile or hourly costs).
- We have added some new host sites to our already impressive list of tour sites!

In an effort to make the EBB Grant Application process as accessible as possible, MEEC has revised the EBB grant application as follows:

Remember, application **deadline is October 30, 2013**. Grant winners will be notified November 15, 2013. To apply online, visit [www.meeconline.com](http://www.meeconline.com) today!

## Mojave River Desert Lab Kit Now Available

**T**hanks to a generous grant from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, MEEC has developed a new resource tool for use in the classroom and specifically at Mojave Narrows Regional Park. The Kit provides tools for "place-based" learning as well as preparation for classes to visit the site and is now available for use.

The Mojave River Kit includes; Binoculars, Transparent Turbidity Tube, Water Thermometer, Field Microscope w/Case, Folding Magnifier, Laminated Guide to North American Animal Tracks/Scat, Northern California Tracking Guide, Field Guide to Western Birds, Reptiles of Northern America Field Guide, Insects (Golden Guide), Quick Guide to Major Groups Freshwater Invertebrates, Laminated Guide to Aquatic Macro-Invertebrates, Creek and Pond Life Science Activity Kit, Animal Scat Keychain ID Guide, Squirrel Scat Replica, Beaver Scat Replica, Bobcat Scat Replica, Cottontail Rabbit Scat Replica, Coyote Scat Replica, Opossum Scat Replica, Raccoon Scat Replica, Bat Skull (Little Brown) Replica, Beaver Skull Replica, Coyote Skull Replica, Red-Tailed Hawk Skull Replica, Hummingbird Skull Replica, Rattlesnake Skull Replica, Cottontail Rabbit Skull Replica, Student Barn Owl Pellet Kit with Extra Pellets, Beaver Tracking Stencils, Coyote Tracking Stencils, Rabbit Tracking Stencils, Opossum Track Replica, Cottontail Rabbit Track Replica, Beaver Track Replica, Coyote Track Replica, PerfectCast Replica Compound, Serrano Indian Cultural history at the Narrows, water testing activity for grades K-12, and *Lessons of Our California Land* (from the Indian Land Tenure Foundation). All items are kept in a Mobile Carrying Case and can be checked out by High Desert educators.



The Mojave River Kit

The Mojave Narrows Regional Park is a designated EnviroBus Bucks "Dream Site" and grant consideration for this site is approved. The EnviroBus Bucks grant program pays for transportation costs only and schools are responsible for any admittance or vehicle fees associated with the Park. The kit is available for check out at the Victorville MEEC Resource Library on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information on this exciting new kit, call Samantha Murray at (760) 245-1661 ext. 6717.

## MEEC PRESENTS OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE PROJECT AWARDS AT LOCAL SCHOOLS

**I**n early 2013, MEEC once again joined forces with the Mojave Desert Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association, and the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District to present its 2013 "Outstanding Environmental Science Project Awards" at over 20 schools District-wide. Participating schools were located in Apple Valley, Lucerne Valley, Hinkley, Hesperia, and Adelanto.

MEEC stakeholders served as judges for more than 1,000 science fair projects, and presented the "Outstanding Environmental Science Fair Project" award to students participating in events District-wide and at the RIMS (Riverside Inyo Mono San Bernardino) Regional event. Each school fair winner received a \$25 gift card, courtesy of MEEC and the Mojave Desert Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association, while district-level and regional winners received \$50 gift cards.

The purpose of the program – which is open to students in grades K-12 attending school in the High Desert portion of San Bernardino County or Blythe – is to promote environmental education in local schools.



Edwin Unglum, (above) winner of the Outstanding Environmental Science Project Award at the Academy for Academic Excellence, presented on February 21, 2013 in the Grade 5 & 6 competition. Unglum's project on ground-level ozone subsequently advanced to the regional and state levels.



Also visit [www.creec.org](http://www.creec.org)

## MEEC Executive Board

**Tony Penna**  
Apple Valley Ranchos  
Water District

**Philip W. Morlan, Jr.**  
Boeing Company

**Desirea Haggard**  
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**Cheryl Smith**  
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## ★ Welcome New Sponsors

MEEC would like to welcome the following new sponsors to our continually growing list of supporters:

- ★ Apple Valley Ranchos Water Company
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MEEC is fully funded through the contributions of its sponsors and 100% of these funds are used to provide high quality STEM-based, environmental education resources to teachers and students throughout the Mojave Desert. It is because of the continued support shown by our sponsors that MEEC has been able to flourish and accomplish so much on behalf of High Desert educators. We thank our sponsors for their commitment to advancing environmental education and increasing student awareness of the Mojave Desert's unique environment.

