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NSHSS Foundation
National Society of High School Scholars Foundation



**NATIONAL SOCIETY OF HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARS FOUNDATION AND CAPTAIN PLANET FOUNDATION
ANNOUNCE WINNERS OF THIRD ANNUAL EARTH DAY COMPETITION**

10 Winners Selected to Receive \$500 Award in Honor of Earth Day

APRIL 22, 2015 (Atlanta, GA) – The [National Society of High School Scholars Foundation](#) (NSHSS Fdn) and the [Captain Planet Foundation](#) (CPF) today announced the winners of their third annual Earth Day competition. Of the 315 applicants, 10 winners were chosen to receive a \$500 award to implement their Earth Day project or use towards education-related expenses. The international Earth Day competition awards applicants whose projects demonstrate environmental stewardship, leadership and volunteerism.

The 2015 Earth Day Award Winners are:

- **Meagan Bethel, Tucson, AZ** – Meagan is researching the travel patterns of big cats as they migrate from Mexico into the US. Previously, she proved a piece of land was a critical habitat for an endangered species to prevent a copper mine from being placed there.
- **Nava Friedman (Victoria, British Columbia, Canada)** – Founding member of her school's ECO club, Nava has demonstrated a continuous commitment to the environment through activities such as leading beach and park clean ups and giving presentations to educate others.
- **Steven Hall, Coeburn, VA** – Steven is president of the Ecology Club and for the past three years he's worked on conservation projects, participated in environmental education meetings, and given presentations on the ongoing, student-led project [Wetlands Estonia](#).
- **Rebekah Kim (Moscow, ID)** – Rebekah is the Founder and Student President of [Future Environmental Scientists and Engineers Network \(FESEN\)](#) and has worked as a water quality lab intern at the University of Idaho Biological and Agricultural Engineering department.
- **Elizabeth Prior, Auburn, AL** – Through her research on a creek that runs through Auburn University's campus, Elizabeth has ensured that the creek will be assessed by an undergraduate student every three years.
- **Andrea Rustad, Stillwater, MN** – Andrea advocates for the protection of monarch butterflies, an endangered species due to the loss of their habitat, and has distributed more than 100 seed packets for her community to grow plants that monarch butterflies inhabit.
- **Nathaniel Simon, Ann Arbor, MI** – In an effort to create an outdoor classroom in a school courtyard, Nathaniel recruited over 35 students to rehabilitate native Michigan plants and animals, remove weeds from the area, and plant 17 different plant species.
- **Casey Sokolovic, Winterville, NC** – Casey developed [Love A Sea Turtle](#), which she started in third grade to raise money for a sea turtle hospital, into an organization that now offers free STEM summer camps for at-risk youth, year-round programs to bolster awareness of environmentalism in the community, and leadership development programs.
- **Jenessa Teta (Wolcott, CT)** – Jenessa gained the support of her high school administration and a local recycling company for a paper recycling program to launch on Earth Day 2015.

- **Ziang Wang, Peoria, IL** – Ziang conducted research to determine the effectiveness of green roofs and presented his research at the [IMSAloqium](#) and at [IMSA's Power Up Conference](#).

“We are very proud to recognize these 10 outstanding students for their dedication to protecting and preserving the environment,” said Claes Nobel, Founder of the NSHSS Foundation and senior member of the family that established the Nobel Prizes. “These students exhibited tremendous initiative to create impactful projects that will spark positive environmental change in their communities around the world.”

To be considered for the Earth Day Award, high school students from around the world with a GPA of 3.0 or higher submitted details about an environmental project they are spearheading, or a project that will be initiated around Earth Day in their home, school, and/or community. Additional details on award submission requirements can be found [online](#).

“This year’s winners are an inspiration to us all,” said Laura Turner Seydel, Chairperson of the Captain Planet Foundation. “We are honored to award these young scholars for their engagement in their local communities and efforts to improve the environment.”

NSHSS Fdn and CPF joined forces in 2013 with the shared commitment of encouraging high school students around the globe to show their dedication to the earth through action, highlighting those that are humanitarians, leaders and creators. Through their partnership, the organizations hope to increase awareness of Earth Day and CPF’s work supporting environmental leadership of high-achieving high school students and educators. In the past two years, a total of 27 Earth Day grants of \$500 each have been awarded to winners who are actively demonstrating a commitment to care for the Earth.

About the National Society of High School Scholars Foundation (NSHSS Fdn):

The NSHSS Foundation was founded in 2004 by Claes Nobel, senior member of the family that established the Nobel Prizes. The NSHSS Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public charity dedicated to supporting education in the form of scholarships for under-represented students in STEM career majors, as well as business, economics, and public policy career majors. The Foundation recognizes the need to produce more graduates in these fields in order to meet the demands of an ever-changing global economy and society to create a better future for all. For more information visit <http://www.nshssfoundation.org>.

About Captain Planet Foundation (CPF):

Based on the critically-acclaimed animated series *Captain Planet and the Planeteers*, CPF was co-founded in 1991 by media mogul Ted Turner and producer Barbara Pyle. Since then, the Captain Planet Foundation has played a critical role in helping to ensure that the next generation of business leaders and policy makers are environmentally literate citizens who leverage technology and information to manage and protect the air, land, and water upon which all life depends.

CPF is a grant-making foundation that has funded over 2,000 hands-on environmental education projects with schools and non-profits that serve children in all 50 U.S. states and in 23 countries internationally. More than 1.2 million children have directly participated in and benefited from these educational projects. In addition to its Small Grants Program, the Captain Planet Foundation also operates the following programs: Project Learning Garden, Project Endangered Species, the Leadership Center, SAGES, Planeteer Clubs, and a number of other science education initiatives that promote the intersections between technology, innovation, the environment and personal action.

For more information: www.captainplanetfoundation.org.