



For Immediate Release  
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## **National Environmental Education Foundation Partners with Bayer Fund for Expansion of Greening STEM Demonstration Project**

WASHINGTON, DC—Thanks to generous support from Bayer Fund, the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) announced today it will move forward with Phase II of its Greening STEM Demonstration Project with Teaneck Public Schools in Teaneck, New Jersey, for the 2021-2022 school year.

“We are thrilled to partner with Bayer Fund to showcase the viability of environmental education in our schools,” said Meri-Margaret Deoudes, president and CEO of NEEF. “The continuation of this cornerstone Greening STEM project is integral to NEEF’s work to bridge formal and non-formal STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education through place-based learning opportunities.”

NEEF will resume implementation of its Greening STEM program model at two middle schools in northern New Jersey after the project was disrupted in March 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic. The initial project provided hands-on field experience by engaging 7th-grade students in a water quality monitoring project and 8th-grade students in a macroinvertebrate biomonitoring study at their local watershed. NEEF produced a short video series covering this project which can be found here: <https://www.neefusa.org/education/greening-stem-in-action>.

“The semester-long program enabled students to act as real citizen scientists conducting water quality and macroinvertebrate field studies on-site at Teaneck Creek,” said Alexa Fantacone, executive director at Teaneck Creek Conservancy, a local nonprofit. “Multiple students who participated in this program reported that they had an increased understanding of the topics discussed as a direct result of the hands-on nature of the program. They stated that the tangibility and importance of the work spurred an interest in STEM, water quality management, and ecology.”

Phase II of the Greening STEM Demonstration Project will take place during the 2021-2022 school year and relaunch the series of hands-on STEM learning activities focused on local watershed health that was developed collaboratively by school faculty and Teaneck Creek Conservancy staff. Building teacher capacity and confidence as STEM educators are two Greening STEM goals.



In addition, program evaluation will assess students' interest, attitudes, and engagement in science; changes in confidence regarding STEM abilities; understanding of real-world applications of project content; and awareness of STEM-related careers and pathways.

"Teaneck Public Schools remains committed to using its resources to support the teaching, learning, and leading opportunities that were made available through this collaboration," said Terrence Williams, principal at Benjamin Franklin Middle School in Teaneck. "We look forward to developing future leaders, and I am confident that the support from Bayer Fund, along with the continued work of the Teaneck Creek Conservancy and NEEF, will get us there."

In 2020, Bayer Fund awarded more than \$17 million to over 3,400 charitable and nonprofit organizations to help address essential needs in food and nutrition, STEM education and community development. Over the last five years, nonprofit organizations across the U.S. have received more than \$80 million.

"Throughout the years, the grants given through Bayer Fund have helped strengthen our communities across the United States," said Al Mitchell, president of Bayer Fund. "We're proud to be able to provide support to develop programs that help combat challenges such as food insecurity, STEM education, and support services to patients and families managing an illness or disease."

To learn more about Bayer Fund visit <https://www.fund.bayer.us>.

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## About NEEF

The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) is the nation's leading organization in lifelong environmental learning, creating opportunities for people to experience and learn about the environment in ways that improve their lives and the health of the planet. Congressionally chartered in 1990, NEEF is a non-partisan, non-advocacy organization working to make the environment more accessible, relatable, relevant, and connected to people's daily lives.

Learn more at [NEEFusa.org](https://www.neefusa.org)—or follow NEEF on Facebook ([Facebook.com/NEEFusa](https://www.facebook.com/NEEFusa)) and on Twitter at [@NEEFusa](https://twitter.com/NEEFusa).



## **About Bayer Fund**

Bayer Fund, a philanthropic arm of Bayer, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the communities where Bayer customers and employees live and work by providing funding for food and nutrition, education and community development projects.

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## **About Teaneck Public Schools**

First in the country to voluntarily integrate its schools, our school district provides a wide array of programs to meet the needs and learning styles to approximately 3700 pre-K through grade 12 students.

The District's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan includes:

**Mission:** The Teaneck Public School District educates and empowers students by providing a high quality, rigorous educational experience which prepares students for success within a diverse, global society.

**Vision:** The Teaneck Advantage: Educational Excellence for All.

For more information, visit [www.teaneckschools.org](http://www.teaneckschools.org) or follow us on Facebook (Teaneck Public School District) or our YouTube channel (Teaneck Public Schools).

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