



Newsletter

June

2021

2021 Nature-Based Early Learning Virtual Conference

July 26-30, 2021

Hosted by the Natural Start Alliance

The largest national gathering of nature-based early education professionals is staying online this year—more content, lower cost, lower carbon footprint!

[Follow this link for information for more information and registration](#)



SEEA Conference 2021

September 10-11, 2021

Hosted by Environmental Educators of North Carolina

[Lutheridge](#)

Arden, NC

Make sure to check out the conference section below for more information and updates!

SEEA Project Updates

Don't Waste It

The first group of facilitators, a total of 19, attended the Train-the-Trainer (T3) workshop on June 4th and 5th. It went great and they have already begun thinking about their first in-person workshops. Others from state teams will attend their in-person T3 facilitator training during the SEEA Conference in September in North Carolina. The *Don't Waste It* Steering Committee is currently seeking proposals for a consultant to build out the online workshop in Moodle for wider online distribution throughout the Southeast. The states participating in the *Don't Waste It* program are Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

The Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA) is a network of state affiliates of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) located in the southeastern United States. Member states include AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, and TN. SEEA offers a regional conference and provides networking and professional development opportunities for the southeastern states.

SEEA JEDI Course

KAEE and EENC have both launched their JEDI Courses! An internal review from board members and other stakeholders has been completed, and some small changes will be shared and discussed with the consultants from the Center for Diversity in the Environment, EcoInclusive, and Youth Outside. KAEE's program, [JEDI101](#), is part of their eeCredential program and will run August 16-December 3. EENC's first fully asynchronous cohort will launch on July 5, and the program has been approved as a Criteria I workshop for the North Carolina Environmental Education Certification program.

The online, self-paced, Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) in environmental education (EE) was developed in partnership with EENC, KAEE, the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education, and the consulting organizations listed above. The course is designed to provide a strong foundation in the language, concepts and principles of equity work. It is meant to be an introductory course and spark interest in further learning around justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

The course contains 4 modules and is paced out to span 6 weeks and 12 hours. Topics include:

- Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Introduction
- History and Language of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Understanding, Identifying, and Disrupting Implicit Bias and Systemic Oppression
- Power and Privilege in Action

2021 SEEA Conference

EENC is excited to host the 2021 SEEA Conference, September 10-11, 2021, at [Lutheridge](#) in Arden, North Carolina. All conference information and updates can be found online at <https://eenc.org/conference>.

- July 21, Registration slated to open
- September 8 (Wednesday): The SEEA Leadership Team in-person meeting and strategic planning
- September 9 (Thursday): Field trips and workshops, including the T3 for Don't Waste It (by invitation only)
- September 10 (Friday): Conference begins
- September 11 (Saturday): Conference end late afternoon

There will be a variety of lodging options ranging from tent camping (bring your own tent!), to bunkhouse, to hotel-room style. A limited number of scholarships are available for in state and out of state residents. Residents of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, South Carolina and Tennessee, please [apply for a partial scholarship here](#). North Carolina residents should apply for scholarships through EENC.

Those looking to make advance flight reservations should investigate flights into the Asheville Regional Airport (AVL) which is a short 10 minutes from Lutheridge. The next closest airport is Greenville-Spartanburg (about 1 hour away), then Charlotte-Douglas (about 2 hours away). Lutheridge is conveniently located off of I-26 and I-40.

SEEA Conference Keynote

EENC is pleased to announce the 2021 SEEA Conference Keynote speaker, Trish O'Kane. Dr.

O'Kane is a writer and award-winning teacher who has published two books, and has taught for 14 years in three major universities and a women's prison. She is the creator of *Birding to Change the World*, a place-based environmental education program at the University of Vermont which pairs undergraduates with schoolchildren in a birding-mentoring program. A dedicated and obsessive birder, in the past 10 years she has not only watched and studied birds with a scientific eye, spending over 1000 hours in the field, she has helped feathered parents raise baby bluebirds, tree swallows and black-capped chickadees in tiny houses and volunteered as a baby bird incubator "nurse" at a wildlife rehab facility. Before studying the natural sciences, she was a human and civil rights investigative journalist for 15 years in Central America and Alabama. She has published widely in US and Latin American media including *The New York Times*, *TIME Magazine*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *NACLA*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Envío*, and *Noticias Aliadas*.



NAAEE Updates

NAAEE Celebrates 50 Years!!

Excerpt from a letter to members and supporters from Judy Braus, April 7, 2021

This year is a special one for NAAEE: It's our [50th Anniversary](#). We're excited to celebrate this milestone with you and to use it as a time to reflect on where we've been and where we're going. It's a wonderful opportunity to feel pride in our work and to toast our accomplishments, while also thinking about why what we do matters and how our work can be more transformational as we look ahead to the next decade and beyond.

NAAEE's seeds were planted by a small group of community college educators in 1971, a time of world-changing environmental awareness in the United States and across the globe. EPA and NOAA had just been created, and groups like the Friends of the Everglades and the Natural Resources Defense Council were also emerging. The 1970s also saw the first Earth Day, with teach-ins and demonstrations to protect our air, water, and the nature we all depend on. *Limits to Growth*, published by the Club of Rome, sparked debate over a new concept of sustainable development. Internationally, the UN Conference on the Human Environment was held in Stockholm, Sweden, and the UN Environment Program (UNEP) was established to tackle the recommendations that came out of it. And in 1977, the Tbilisi Conference would shape the field of environmental education for decades to come.

As we reflect on our history, it is clear that the issues we're dealing with have become more complex, global, and intersectional. The world has changed, and so have we. We have become increasingly intentional about working across sectors, across geographies, across disciplines, and across socio-economic boundaries. What started as a movement mostly focused on protecting the environment has become a more diverse, multi-cultural movement to enhance not just the natural world, but humanity itself by addressing the connections between nature loss, systemic racism, climate change, poverty, and other wicked societal issues. We have also seen exponential growth in research-based evidence that environmental education, coupled with good science and policy, can lift up learners of all ages, including vulnerable populations who consistently suffer the brunt of environmental degradation.

Transforming Education

After a year of dealing with a global pandemic and a worldwide racial reckoning, we have an unprecedented opportunity to think more deeply about how we can revolutionize our education systems. As Justin Dillon, the President of the [National EE Association of the UK](#) says, "We need to seize the moment and advocate for a total rethink of what we teach, why we teach, and how we teach. It is as simple and as complicated as that."

The good news is that we're already seeing innovation in EE, including more learner-centered strategies. We are focusing on nature and the community as vital to our post-COVID strategies, promoting civic engagement in a more deliberate way, understanding the importance of reaching our earliest learners, and integrating environmental justice into environmental education so that we can honestly discuss our histories, as uncomfortable as that can be, to help transform our work.

We have much to celebrate, from [guidelines on effective practice](#) that were created by and for the field, to new actions propelled by [young leaders](#). We're also finding innovative ways to build stronger communities by encouraging community-centered solutions and partnering with groups working on equity, inclusion, and justice, such as the [Center for Diversity and the Environment](#), led by Queta González.

Throughout the year, we will be reflecting and celebrating with special webinars, social media campaigns, and stories from many of you. A fundraising effort will also ensure that we can provide more scholarships and support for our field going forward. We hope you will visit our [50th Anniversary website](#) to find out more and keep checking back as we continue to add content.



Seeking Reviewers! Nonformal EE Program Guidelines Revision



Your help and input is needed! The *Guidelines for Excellence: Nonformal EE Programs* were first published in 2004 and have been updated about every five years since then. The review process is iterative; our writing team developed a first draft and you are invited to review this draft and provide comments that will be used in the continuing revision process.

For more information [visit this post on eePRO.](#)

NEW! eeADVOCATE Newsletter

In June, NAAEE began a quarterly advocacy-focused newsletter called **eeADVOCATE**. In it, they will deliver policy updates and news to your inbox. You'll receive a comprehensive review of the field's most recent accomplishments and a preview of opportunities that lie ahead. Also included are tools and advice for advocating for EE at the state and federal levels.



Read more about the eeADVOCATE and sign up today! <https://bit.ly/eeADVOCATE>

2021 NAAEE Conference: Power of Connection

Excerpt from a letter to members and supporters from Judy Braus, April 7, 2021

We'll again be gathering virtually, after hearing everyone's concerns about both safety and costs. Last year's online attendance of more than 2,000 was our largest ever. The conference will take place over two weeks, with eePRO Group meetings and pre-conference workshops and the Research Symposium in the first week (October 4–8) and the full conference in the second week (October 11–15).

Our theme for the 50th Conference is "[The Power of Connection](#)". The pandemic has made us realize how much we crave connection. During this year of lockdowns and social distancing, we've been compelled to think about the importance of our ties with others: to our friends and families, our colleagues, our communities, and the natural world. We will build on all we've learned about how education deepens our connections by bringing people together from all backgrounds and disciplines to help solve our most pressing problems and create more just and sustainable communities.

We hope you will join us in October for this special gathering. We will again offer [tiered pricing](#) so that anyone who wants to attend will be able to join!

NAAEE Affiliate Network Goals

The NAAEE Affiliate Network advances environmental literacy to create a more just, equitable and sustainable future. As a network, we collaborate on joint efforts and share learning to:

1. Build and strengthen the capacity of individual Affiliates, the Affiliate Network and NAAEE to advance the field of Environmental Education
2. Center social and environmental justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in our work as environmental educators, individual Affiliates, the Affiliate Network and NAAEE.
3. Elevate and increase support for environmental education through advocacy and shared messaging to magnify the reach and impact of our work.
4. Provide space and opportunity for fostering innovation, shared learning, and addressing emergent issues.

Other Events

Communities Grow Greener When Young People Have a Voice: Building Alliances for Place-Based Learning and Civic Action

Tuesday, June 22, 2021
3-4PM EST

[For more information on this eeWebinar and to register](#)

This webinar will introduce the key steps in involving young people in local investigations and civic action to improve their communities, including building sustained relationships with community partners.

eeWORKS: Demonstrating the Power of Environmental Education

Wednesday, July 7, 2021
3-4PM EST

[Click this link to register](#) for this eeWebinar

Hear from researchers and learn about communications tools you can use to help you structure and evaluate programs, provide professional development, apply for funding opportunities, make the case for EE to policymakers, and more!

Affiliate Network Community Call Open Space

Wednesday, July 21, 2021
2-3PM EST

<https://zoom.us/j/99323689678>

Meeting ID: 993 2368 9678

Passcode: Affiliates

A time for Affiliate leaders to come together to share challenges and successes, and pose questions to other leaders in the network for guidance and advice.

Southeasterly Winds



Alabama

Environmental Education Association of Alabama (EAA)

<https://www.eaa.us/>

The Alabama State Parks Division operates and maintains 21 state parks encompassing approximately 48,000 acres of land and water in Alabama. The parks range from Gulf Coast beaches to Appalachian Mountains, providing opportunities and facilities from basic day-use activities to resort convention lodging, restaurant and golfing areas. Alabama is home to the fifth largest number of plant and animal species in the United States. The geologic variety, widespread water resources, and suitable climate of the state all play a part in this biodiversity.

The recreational opportunities are equally impressive. Sixteen of the 21 parks offer extensive public access to outstanding waterways that host boating, fishing, water skiing, wildlife viewing and other related opportunities. The parks are rich with trails that accommodate biking, horseback riding, hiking and backpacking, as well as running and walking. Two parks host some of the most spectacular cave features in the southeastern United States. Golf courses are offered at three of the parks. Geocaching and birding trails have become popular new activities.



Park interpretive programs seek to extend knowledge of the state's natural environment to our many partners. Many parks have Naturalists on staff to share information about the state's rich natural history. Their programs vary by park and include outreach to local schools, nature programs in the parks, summer camps, and much more. Please use the contact info and links below to learn more about the interpretive programs in these parks. You can also check out the [Alabama State Park Events Calendar](#) for upcoming programs.

From Cahaba Lily Field trips to Hikes with Mike there have been several new opportunities to get back outdoors. The backdrop for these events have been our Alabama State Parks and National Wildlife Refuges in Alabama. Upcoming "Hike with Mike" adventures can be found on the [EAA facebook page](#). For more information about our state parks visit <https://www.alapark.com/about-alabama-state-parks>

Florida

League of Environmental Educators in Florida (LEEF)

<https://leef-florida.org/>

Wednesday, June 23, is our next installment in our LEEF Speaker Series, *Welcome to AWAY*. Presenter Dawn Perex, and Educational Specialist with the Solid Waste authority of Palm Beach County, will share how waste is managed in Palm Beach County, as well as how to Recycle Right. During this presentation, we will also focus on the 4Rs – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rethink! The presentation will be via Zoom, from 7-8pm, EST. Registration for non-members is \$5. [More information and registration can be found on the LEEF web site.](#)

The LEEF Board of Directors has many new members that began in the Spring, so there has been a lot of getting to know each other and learning to collaborate as a team. The new president, Jennifer Diaz, is enthusiastic and encouraging everyone to stretch a bit outside of their comfort zones. This includes seeking sustainable donors within the membership and at large. Grants currently make up a large part of the LEEF income, but the goal is to increase and stabilize the revenue stream for the organization.

Georgia

Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia (EEA)

<https://www.eealliance.org/>

EEA is launching a new professional learning opportunity this summer. Based on the NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence series, “Excellence in EE Materials” is an interactive two-hour workshop that will be followed by six self-paced online modules. Upon completion, the cohort will gather for reflection and closing session. This workshop is being supported by a grant from NAAEE. Email info@eealliance.org to receive a short application form by the end of June.

Kentucky

Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE)

<https://www.kaee.org/>

KAEE accepting nominations for their annual [Excellence in EE Awards program](#). These awards recognize the outstanding achievements in the field of EE, and nominations can fall into two categories; Individual Awards (Rising Star in EE, M.K. Dickerson Outstanding Educator, Lifetime Achievement in EE) and Group Awards (Community Partner/Government Agency, Business, PreK-12 School). The nominee must have an earnest involvement in the field of EE and have made, and continues to make, significant contributions to EE in Kentucky.



Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion in Environmental Education

eeCourse



The Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) in Environmental Education course has been designed to provide a strong foundation in the language, concepts and principles of equity work. It is meant to be an introductory course and spark interest in further learning around justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. The overarching goal of this course is to inspire grassroots change in organizational cultures by getting more and more people engaged in equity work.

The KAEE course will be moderated by Reverend Leonard Curry. Leonard is a sought-after thought leader, intellectual, public speaker, preacher, teacher, and writer. He is the proud Pastor of St. James AME Church in Ashland, KY, a PhD Candidate at Vanderbilt University, and the owner and founder of [Leonard Curry Consulting, LLC](#), a company that focuses on antiracism, diversity, and inclusion consulting. He brings a wealth of knowledge from the education, non-profit, and ecclesial sectors to his consulting. A trained researcher and facilitator, Leonard combines what he has learned from education, pastoral care, chaplaincy, and church leadership to name resistances, to identify the values at the root of them, and to push beyond those resistances towards personal, social, and professional equity and inclusion goals. Leonard has a BA from Rhodes College, an MDiv and STM from Yale Divinity School, and an MA from Vanderbilt University. Leonard is excited to help strengthen communities and their commitment to Antiracism, Inclusion, and Belonging.

This course can be taken individually or as a team. Scholarships are also available for JEDI101. We do not want cost to be a barrier in any way for those looking to grow in this area. Please fill out the [application form for scholarship info](#).

Mississippi

Mississippi Environmental Education Alliance (MEEA)

<https://www.meeainms.org>

A couple of opportunities for adults and youth in Mississippi! The MSU Master of Science in Conservation Education program is going fantastic also the Summer Science Scholars program is not just for Mississippi youth. Besides these two programs Mississippi EE educators are busy doing Teacher workshops and youth camps.



We are excited to announce that we have doubled enrollment since the inception of our new, 100% online Master of Science in Conservation Education program. The Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Aquaculture faculty at Mississippi State University are delighted to be a part of educating and training the next generation of change makers in the field of environmental education. Click to learn more: <https://online.msstate.edu/conservationed/>

The Summer Science Scholars program is a self-paced, virtual learning opportunity that will introduce high school students to diverse scientists and science topics related to agriculture, natural sciences, food and health, human sciences, and related fields. Students who complete the program will be eligible for additional on-campus STEM experiences and even scholarships to college for enrollment in select STEM-related majors.

North Carolina

Environmental Educators of North Carolina (EENC)

<https://eenc.org/>

In the third year of the mini-grant program, EENC was able to award 11 grants to educators from across our state! With EENC's support, they will building school gardens and improving their schoolgrounds, purchasing much-needed supplies, and partnering with their communities to support black, indigenous, and people of color participating in EE.

Congratulations to the 2021 mini-grant awardees:

- Ranita Anderson, "Read, Question, Reflect, Imagine, Act: Using Language and Literacy to Promote Gardening and Beyond"
- Marguerite Bishop, Nash County Public Schools, "Nashville Elementary Learning Garden- Composting Project"
- Cindy Furey, Chapel Hill Carrboro Schools, "Green Eagles Leadership Club Daypacks"
- Lauren Gibson, NC State University, "Providing classrooms with pesticide testing strips for an inquiry-based water quality testing activity"
- Lauren Greene, North Carolina Botanical Garden, "From the Mountains to the Coast: Virtual Field Trip"
- Marilyn Jesrani, Carolina Outdoor Fun, "The Environmental Benefits of Backyard Chickens"
- Jessica Metz, New Kituwah Academy, "Bring Water to the Garden"
- Sarah Pursel, Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, "Bountiful Botany: Medicinal Plants of the Plateau"
- Alayna Schmidt, WNC Nature Center, "Racially Diverse Speaker Series for Nature-based Teen Volunteer Program"

- Shalyn Yost, Boys and Girls Club of Henderson County, "Outdoor Explorers"
- Mir Youngquist-Thurrow, Agape Center for Environmental Education, "Water Quality Testing Resupply"

Our grant recipients will be working on projects now through December 1. Stay tuned to see how these EENC members are promoting excellence in environmental education!

EENC has also released their 2020 annual report, and it can be [viewed online](#).

South Carolina

Environmental Education Association of South Carolina (EEASC)

<https://eeasc.org/>

EEASC is growing! Special thanks goes to Sarah Whitmire, EEASC Membership Chair, for all of her hard work in increasing membership and developing new incentives. Through her leadership, membership is at an all time high with 245 members from across the state. **That is an 89% increase since January 2020!** We recently adopted the Green Steps School program and the Palmetto Environmental Education Certification Program, and in the past year we've hosted more than 24 professional development and networking events for our community. And, in 2020, we hired a part-time administrator to help the volunteer board keep up with our organization's growth. In order to support our current and future growth, and for the first time in eight years, there will be a small increase in membership fees in the upcoming fiscal year. Along with the new rates, we have added lots of new benefits for you to enjoy!

Who likes discounts and FREE stuff? WE DO!!!! Starting July 1st these will be your new benefits as members of EEASC.

- NEW Mini grant program offering grants up to \$1,000 for projects, field trips, and professional development
- \$5 off admission to Riverbanks Zoo
- Teacher discount rate for membership to Roper Mountain Science Center
- \$1.00 off admission to Edventure
- Access to EEASC's Zoom account
- 10% off at Gardener's Outpost
- Members Only Events (e.g., professional development)
- Organization Spotlight in our newsletter
- Organizations get discounted booth space at EEASC conferences.

Beginning July 1st membership fees for EEASC will increase to help fund the mini-grant program, plan events (e.g., annual conference), and support contractors and part-time staff who manage our website and bookkeeping. In addition, we've simplified some of our membership categories: For example, the Affiliate and Corporate Membership options will merge into one "Organization" option. The table below outlines the upcoming changes:

Category	Current Fee	Fees 7/1/2021
Student	\$10	\$15
Individual	\$20	\$25
Individual Lifetime	\$300	\$300
Family	\$30	\$40
Affiliate	\$50	n/a
Corporate	\$100	n/a
Organization		\$75

New Energy Education Lessons and Teacher Workshop: The Energy Office, a department of the S.C. Office of Regulatory Staff, has developed ten energy education lessons, aligned to S.C. state science standards, that cover renewables, energy conservation, green buildings, energy resources, and transportation. Download these free lessons from the Energy Office website. In addition, the Energy Office will be hosting an "Energy in Schools" workshop July 27 - 28, 2021. This virtual event is a two-part workshop for building/facility operations staff, district energy managers, and teachers. Attendees will learn about energy use, energy efficiency and conservation, lessons tied to these concepts, and how to engage all members of a school community. For more information about the energy-education lessons or to register for the Energy in Schools Workshop, [please visit their website](#).

Tennessee

Tennessee Environmental Education Association (TEEA)
<http://eeintennessee.org/>

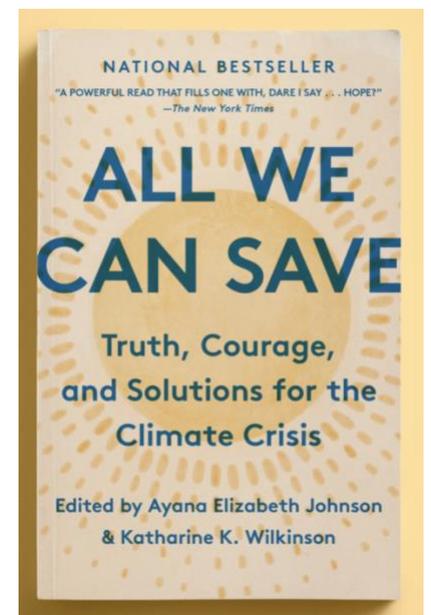
TEEA is continuing their regional TEEA Thursday Regional Meetings, the first Thursday of every month. Information can be found at on the [TEEA Event Calendar](#) or on their [Facebook page](#).

The TEEA Book Circle continues with *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis*. We are starting this process to create a community and dialogue centered around climate change and the [All We Can Save Project](#). All are welcome.

Meetings will be held monthly via ZOOM. You do not have to be a TEEA member to attend, we just request that you [sign up via this Google Form](#).

Meeting Schedule:

June 15: Begin & Root
 July 14: Advocate & Reframe
 August 18: Reshape & Persists
 September 15: Feel & Nourish
 October 20: Rise & Onward



SEEA at Your Service



- Access the SEEA website <http://www.southeastee.com/>
- [2021 SEEA Leadership Team Roster](#)
- SEEA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021
 - Will be revised in the last half of 2021
 - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PrsEUVFA-2yosIEF75XRxVu6RZT3Uw82-ncr54ZpPRU/edit>
- ZOOM Video Conferencing Available to all SEEA States if needed. Please email Ashley (director@kaee.org) to request date/time.

Resources from NAAEE and the Affiliate Network

- eePRO Affiliate Group: <https://naaee.org/eepro/groups/affiliates>
 - NAAEE membership is not required for most eePRO resources
- EE Research Bulletins (EERBs): <https://naaee.org/eepro/research/eeerb>
- eePRO Research & Evaluation group: <https://naaee.org/eepro/groups/research-and-evaluation>
- NAAEE's Research Programs: <https://naaee.org/eepro/research>
- Children and Nature Network's Research: <https://www.childrenandnature.org/learn/research/>
- *Applying Systems Thinking for Our Affiliates* Webinar: <https://youtu.be/2A6vll3Fthc>
- EENC's [Environmental Education is Essential Document](#)

As always, let us know if you have any concerns or questions, as well as suggestions, about how we can structure these updates to serve you better. Please send items for next month (news, updates, pictures) to Renee.

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