



Hot Air from EEOP – A Newsletter

Environmental Education Outreach Program (EEOP)
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Web version @
<http://www.nau.edu/eeop/newsletter>

The Newsletter

This newsletter is a service of the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) Environmental Education Outreach Program (EEOP). The EEOP staff created this newsletter for K-16 students, educators, and tribal professionals that are interested in learning more about environmental issues.

DUE NOW - Student Summer Internship (SSI) – Need Interns

The EEOP staff is actively recruiting interns for Summer 2009. The deadline for student intern applications is Feb 15th. There is an online application that should be completed, followed by several additional documents that can be mailed to the EEOP office. When completing the online application, please use good sentence structure and good grammar. All the documents submitted will be evaluated to create a picture of your communications abilities.

After the 15th, the EEOP staff will begin the process of placing an intern with each of the selected host sites. The EEOP staff will select the potential host sites and then match several interns to each host site based on student skills and interests. The staff at the host sites will interview the interns and select the intern of their choice.

If you would like more information about the Student Summer Internship (SSI) program please contact the EEOP staff or visit the EEOP website.

Grant Writing

In volume 4 issue 9 there was an article about grant writing for teachers. (Previous newsletters can be found at the EEOP website.) The article mostly covered options besides grant writing. Grant writing is lots of work and there are many pitfalls. After considering all your options, if you still think you need/want to write a grant, there a number of helpful resources available online.

<http://www.schoolgrants.org/>
<http://www.npguides.org/index.html>
<http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html>
http://www.hotwinds.com/Grant_Tips.html

Once you have selected a grant you want to write, read the grantor's guidelines and instructions carefully. Do not try to make the grantor's program fit what you want to do - your program must be in line with the funding agency's priorities. Your ideas should be innovative, creative and educational. Grantors will rarely fund operating expenses - they usually invest in supplemental

programs. Private foundations often seek creative solutions to problems/needs, but they usually do not wish to fund risky projects. Try proposing a project that puts a fresh spin on an existing idea.

Keep your goals realistic! It is important to have an evaluation plan. Grantors want to know if the projects they fund are successful--that your project is meeting its goals. Have a reasonable, detailed budget. Do your homework on costs prior to submitting your application and be sure to explain your budget even if there are no requirements to do so. If possible, cite research that supports the program for which you are requesting funding.

Clarity in communicating your ideas is very important. Have someone who is not involved in the project in any way read and critique your draft application. Proofread! Spelling and grammar errors do not convey a positive image. Follow the grantor's instructions to the letter. Applications are turned away when they do not exactly meet the funding agency's requirements. If your project is rejected, ask the grantor for reviewer comments. The comments can offer invaluable tips for improving your future grant applications.

Even if you follow all the guidelines and submit a perfect application, remember that you might still receive a rejection. Foundations and funding agencies have limited resources with which to fund projects. Do not get discouraged if you get a rejection from a possible funding source.

Not getting funded can be a disappointment, but sometimes receiving the funding can become a nightmare. If you get the funding award and accept it, you are on the hook to do all the wonderful things you promised in the proposal. Next month, we will do an article on grants management after you get the grant.

The EEOP staff will partner with educators on writing grants. Frequently the staff is looking for partnerships for the grants that we write. The EEOP office is 100% grant funded, so we are always looking at grants to submit.

Summer Scholars 2009 – Nuclear Energy Cycle

The EEOP staff is preparing for another year of Summer Scholars. Each year the staff selects a topic for the summer. The staff considers topics that are relevant, current, and involve applications of science, mathematics, engineering and technology. This year the staff is considering the Nuclear Power Cycle as the topic of study. The cycle begins with mining uranium and ends with the disposal of radioactive waste.

Nuclear Power appears to be on the verge of a comeback. It has been three decades since an American utility ordered a nuclear power plant, but 35 new reactors are now in the planning stages. Proponents of nuclear energy tout nuclear energy as a clean, carbon-free alternative to coal and oil. Since there hasn't been a serious nuclear accident in the US since the Three Mile Island meltdown in 1979, no-nukes politics has become a distant memory for some. Another factor is the surge in US electricity demand.

Energy analysts, politicians and even some environmentalists have embraced nuclear energy as a clean power source for a wired world. Furthermore, unlike various speculative technologies, nuclear power already provides 20 percent of the electricity in the US. Last year the existing power plants ran at a record 92% of capacity, virtually trouble free. However, part of what

makes nuclear power attractive is the fact that the alternatives are unattractive. Coal is filthy, natural gas still produces carbon dioxide, solar and wind energy is intermittent.

The interest in nuclear power has caused a increase in the price of uranium, which has resulted in increased interest in mining uranium. Northern Arizona has large known uranium deposits, so several mining companies have been filing mining claims. Several tribes in the region are still dealing with a legacy of past uranium mining, so many Native American communities are opposed to uranium mining and nuclear power. For example, the Navajo uranium mining legacy includes over 1,000 abandoned uranium mines.

In the late 1970s, Navajo uranium miners and their families convinced congress that their lung diseases had been caused by their work in underground uranium mines in the 1940s-1960s. Congress finally adopted legislation in 1990 to compensate former miners and their survivors. Starting in 1989 the Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) conducted surface remediation of most of the uranium mines, removing physical hazards such as deep pits and tunnels. The Department of Energy also created the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) program to clean-up uranium mill sites in the 80s and 90s.

Despite compensating former miners and their families, and cleaning up uranium mill sites and uranium mine sites, significant problems stemming from the legacy of uranium development still exist today in the Four Corners Area. One important issue is groundwater contamination resulting from past mining and milling. Although education efforts have been ongoing for over 10 years, tribal members may still be drinking from wells contaminated with uranium.

The EEOP staff will work with students during a week-long program to investigate the issues related to the nuclear energy cycle. One of the major goals of the program is to encourage students to consider pursuing engineering and science careers so that there will be Navajo scientists and engineers to address legacy issues, as well as to consider future opportunities.

For more information about the Summer Scholars program please contact one of the EEOP staff.

Dress for Success

The Dear Abby column gives advice on a wide variety of topics. Recently a businessman sent a letter to Abby. The businessman was shocked by the way people dressed at work. The businessman suggested that if you wanted to be treated as a serious professional, dress like one. He provided several suggestions.

1. Dress for success, not a sexy look. Leave the sexy, short, filmy dresses for your personal life, not work.
2. Cover up. No sandals or designer flip-flops.
3. Don't Pollute. Go easy on the fragrance. Some people have chronic respiratory conditions.

A note from the editor: I particularly appreciated the advice on the fragrance, since I am one of those with a chronic respiratory condition. Perfumes and colognes can be an asthma trigger and many people don't know how to use them properly. The nose quickly becomes desensitized, which means the fragrance user often does not recognize when they overdose with a fragrance. When it comes to fragrances, a little bit goes a long way and an overdose becomes an air toxic for others.

Financial Aid for College

With the recession in full force, funding college expenses may be an even greater challenge than before. Many parents have been investing in the stock market in order to have a college fund for their children. With the stock market dive, these funds have lost considerable value. Meanwhile, since state revenues are also down, universities are increasing tuition. In spite of these challenges, a college education is still a good investment.

Here are some suggestions provided by the Associated Press:

- **Apply As Soon As Possible (ASAP)**. Parents with high school seniors or returning college students should fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after the first of the year for the best chance to receive some funding. You don't want to wait until doing your 2008 taxes; you can submit online using estimated tax information. The FAFSA application is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov
- **Don't Rule Out Pricey Schools**. A high sticker price doesn't necessarily mean a higher out-of-pocket cost, especially at schools where significant merit aide might be available. For example, Harvard University is providing tuition breaks to many students.
- **Don't Forget the Profile**. The College Board Financial Aid Profile is used by many private colleges and universities to determine aid eligibility. Additional information is found at the College Board website, online at www.collegeboard.com.
- **Look for Scholarships**. Private scholarships offered regionally and locally may help fill the financing gap. You can start your search at scholarships.com. Check with your high school guidance office.
- **Call Aid Offices**. Check with the finance aid offices of the schools you are considering. You can use an offer from another school to help leverage more aid from the school of your choice.

Communications

The EEOP staff offers a variety of communications. The EEOP website provides information about programs. We also have a list-serve for sharing information on internships, programs, scholarships, as well as EEOP services and projects. If you would like to join the list-serve send an email to mansel.nelson@nau.edu.

Future Issues

We are interested in articles sharing stories from students, teachers, or tribal professionals influenced by ITEP or EEOP activities.

Credits and Contacts

The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Office of Air and Radiation provides part of the funding to make this newsletter possible. The newsletter is disseminated on various list serves, however, if you would like to join the newsletter list serve, contact Mansel.

Our staff looks forward to providing new services and developing new programs, as well as continuing existing programs. We especially look forward to hearing from you. So please visit our website at <http://www.nau.edu/eeop> or contact us via telephone or email.

Mansel A. Nelson
928 523 1275
mansel.nelson@nau.edu

Matthew Zierenberg
928 523 8864
matthew.zierenberg@nau.edu