

Environmental Justice Small Grant Awards - FY 2004

**The EPA Office of Environmental Justice
Hazardous Substances Research Small Grants Program**

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal state, local, and tribal programs and policies.

Environmental justice is about local people facing local problems by working collaboratively with the local government agencies, impacted community groups and the responsible state and/or federal agencies. Environmental justice promotes environmental and public health protection within the context of sustainable development.

EPA recognized that community involvement was critical to environmental decision-making and made a commitment to invest resources in projects that would financially benefit affected communities. In Fiscal Year (FY) 1994, the Office of Environmental Justice established the Small Grants Program whose purpose is to assist community-based/grassroots and tribal governments that are working on local solutions to local environmental problems. Each year funds are made available for the Small Grants Program and funding is divided equally among the ten EPA regions where the actual grant is awarded and managed.

Starting in FY 2004, the program has been renamed the *Environmental Justice Hazardous Substance Research Small Grants Program* and has a new focus. The purpose of the new programmatic focus is to provide financial assistance to affected local community-based organizations to support projects to *examine issues related to a community's exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks.*

This publication is an inventory of the profiles of the Environmental Justice Hazardous Substances Research Small Grants awarded for FY 2004. Each region conducts a grant selection process in which grant proposals, for the EJ Small Grants Program, are evaluated through a competitive review and ranking process. Award decisions are made within each region based on established criteria that include geographic and socioeconomic balance, diversity of project recipients, and sustainability of benefits of a project after the grants is completed.

Environmental Justice Small Grants Program Summary

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>	<u>Awards</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>	<u>Awards</u>
1994	500,000	71	2002	1,113,000	74
1995	3,000,000	175	2003	858,907	56
1996	2,800,000	152	2004	423,545	17
1997	2,700,000	139			
1998	2,500,000	123			
1999	1,455,000	95			
2000	899,000	61			
2001	1,300,000	88			

REGION 1
(CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)

MASSACHUSETTS

Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH) \$25,000
143 Border Street
East Boston, MA 02128

As part of the Chelsea Creek Vision Plan, NOAH and its partners will train two environmental youth crews. The crews will be trained to identify and categorize contamination levels at key sites along the creek using available site histories and local knowledge. Based on the type and level of contamination, the crews will research and identify best practices for remediation of those sites as well as determine possible liability issues. Students from the Urban Ecology Institute will research policy barriers preventing the transfer of control over the identified sites to partners wishing to create public open space on the site.

Regional Environmental Council (REC) \$25,000
P.O. Box 255
Worcester, MA 01609

REC, in conjunction with Worcester Polytechnic Institute and local residents, will work to identify major sources of potential public health and environmental risk in the Quinsigamond Village, a historically industrial corridor in Worcester, Massachusetts. REC will lead a team of academics and community partners in the development and testing of community-based research methods. REC and its partners will characterize potential hazardous exposures by gathering community knowledge and data on historical and current land use. REC will organize several community meetings and four site walks to discuss and collect information on historical and current sources of potential exposure. Data collected from this research will be used in the future development of a community risk assessment.

***TOTAL* \$50,000**

REGION 2
(NJ, NY, PR, VI)

NEW JERSEY

Isles, Inc. **\$25,000**
10 Wood Street
Trenton, NJ

Isles, Inc. is seeking to improve housing conditions by partnering with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ), School of Public Health and Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI). The partnership will research and report the extent of multiple exposures of contaminants found in the older housing stock in the City of Trenton, New Jersey. The information collected will be used to encourage home repairs by landlords, changes in household cleaning and maintenance practices, and improved local code enforcement utilizing “healthy home” principles. Isles will increase community capacity to address this problem by training community members to collect dust samples (metals, pesticides, lead) from 75 homes. The samples will be analyzed by the laboratories of EOHSI and to serve as healthy home counselors. Isles will communicate these results to occupants, community and faith-based groups, city officials, landlords and similarly situated communities outside Trenton, NJ to raise awareness of findings, and to encourage changes as indicated by the data. Also, the project may assist toward identifying dangerous levels of toxins before children or other vulnerable residents are harmed or adversely affected.

PUERTO RICO

Carribbean Environmental and Development Institute **\$25,000**
Health Initiative for Harm Prevention
954 Ponca De Leon Avenue
San Juan, PR

The project will conduct socio-cultural research to develop a culturally-relevant health communication model. The model will provide information about ways to prevent exposure and reduce risk from the harm associated with the organic, chemical and heavy metal compounds/substances found in fish and seafood from the San Juan Bay Estuary System. The goals of the research will be to gather the necessary cultural data to: (1) increase awareness of fish contamination and prevention measures; (2) isolate data gaps in the information about the complex socio-cultural environment of fish consumption among the resident population at the San Juan Bay Estuary System; (3) develop a collaborative relationship between public health researchers, community advocates, and health care professionals serving the affected communities, and (4) acquire the information needed to foster behavior changes among the vulnerable populations at risk from potential exposure(s).

TOTAL **\$50,000**

REGION 3
(DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WA)

PENNSYLVANIA

Greater North Penn Area Transportation Management Association (TMA) 134 N. Main Street North Wales, PA 19454	\$25,000
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The applicant plans to study air quality in several communities in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The study will train elementary through high school students (a population diversity of 10-25% nonwhite) and employ them in collecting air sampling data. The study will focus on a regional transportation corridor that spans a broad range of suburban communities. The communities range from older, more diverse and lower than median income municipalities, municipalities of intermediate diversity and income to a newer, higher income and less diverse municipality. The study will identify air quality associated with newer, less diverse, higher income municipalities along the Southeastern Pennsylvania's regional transportation corridor as compared to the older North Wales Borough to the newer, Lower Salford Township. The findings of this study will be used by regional planning entities.

TOTAL	\$25,000
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Region 4
(AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)

FLORIDA

The Farmworker Association of Florida, Inc. \$25,000
815 South Park Avenue
Apopka, FL 32702

This Lake Apopka Project is to complete 100 community health surveys and address health problems and accessibility of quality health care of farm workers. The Lake Apopka Project is two-fold: one is to empower and organize African-American, Latino, and Haitian Lake Apopka farm workers' families who are experiencing significant life-threatening health problems connected to their exposure to multiple sources of environmental contamination such as direct pesticide spray, pesticide drifts into the fields, labor camps, and residential areas and the second is to research and document the health problems of the Lake Apopka farm workers community and raise consciousness about farm workers health problems and appeal for further farm workers health research, and advocate for improved health care for farm workers. The Lake Apopka Project will benefit the Lake Apopka farm workers' community by enabling them to take an active role in addressing the issues that affect their lives and health.

This project aims to make important connections among multiple sources of environmental contamination, pesticide exposure, wildlife studies, and farm workers health.

KENTUCKY

West Jefferson County Community Task Force \$25,000
2900 West Broadway, Suite 218
Louisville, Kentucky

The grant project will assess cancer and non-cancer health risks from exposure to toxic air emissions that has impacted areas around the Rubbertown Complex in Louisville, Kentucky. This will be accomplished by engaging youth from the Louisville Urban League youth program to be the conduit for a health survey. The community/target audience engaged for the health survey will encompass residents who live within a 2-3 mile radius of the Rubbertown complex, and a small percentage of those who lived in the area in the 50's and 60's. The health survey will identify and assess, quantify and qualify health concerns of the community and provide a basis for historical trends on health symptoms, ailments and complaints. The overall results of the health survey will be used to develop a statistical data base of health information on residents of the impacted area around the Rubbertown Complex. The survey is expected to reach 2,000 persons.

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MISSISSIPPI

Picayune Carver Culture Museum, Inc. \$25,000
605 South Main Street
Picayune, MS 39466

The project will conduct a health survey to determine if there is a pattern or prevalence of any one type of disease or illness resulting from the Picayune Wood Treating, Inc. Superfund Site. The Picayune Wood Treating, Inc. Site was found to have contaminated soils and waterways with creosote on and near a community where 100% of the residents are African-Americans and low-income. Moreover, the project will conduct a historical assessment of the area to identify any additional contaminants present on the site of the Picayune Wood Treating, Inc. The impact of the project will be measured by the number of individuals surveyed, the health condition of those surveyed, the potential health hazards associated with known contaminants, any new contaminants identified, and the number of households receiving environmental information. The project will document all information and record risks or hazards identified. The information will be shared with the community through public forums, small group setting and a final report.

The project will train community residents to become a part of the industrial environmental process. They will be taught that appropriate effective involvement will reduce and/or eliminate exposure to contaminants.

***TOTAL* \$75,201**

Region 5

no awards

REGION 7

(IA, KS, MO, NE)

KANSAS

Bridging the Gap, Inc. \$24,910
435 Westport Rd., Suite 23
Kansas City, MO 64111

“Take it Back” Environmental Hazards Research Project
The goal of this project is to research components that affect the environmental harms and risks associated with cleanliness, health, and safety of a neighborhood. The objectives include developing a toolkit for the neighborhood to use that can be implemented in other communities. The research will focus on the community’s perspectives on litter and its effects on safety, health, cleanliness, and economic development. Community residents will conduct quarterly litter indexes.

NEBRASKA

Chicano Awareness Center \$24,973
4821 S. 24th Street
Omaha, NE 68107

“Our Children and Lead” or “Nuestros Niños y el Plomo”
The purpose of this project is to complete a community research assessment. The research will collect data on multiple sources, risk factors, and prevention strategies for lead poisoning. The project will gather baseline data on knowledge & awareness of multiple sources, risk factors, and lead prevention and determine the preferred method of information dissemination. A model for health information transfer will be developed that can serve as a model for similar communities.

TOTAL \$49,883

REGION 9
(AZ, CA, HI, NV, GM, AS)

CALIFORNIA

Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice **\$25,000**
PO Box 33214
Riverside, CA 92519

Wyle Labs Multiple Source Contamination Identification Program
The community of Norco will examine the effects of a hazardous weapons-testing facility (Wyle Labs) by conducting a community health survey. Results from the health survey will be mapped to identify thyroid cancer clusters along contaminated groundwater plumes.

Neighborhood House of North Richmond **\$25,000**
305 Chesley Avenue
Richmond, CA 94801

North Richmond Indoor Air Quality Research Project
A community-driven indoor air quality research project where data collection methodologies designed for community participation will be set up indoors to measure diesel Particulate Matter (air toxics) levels from stationary and mobile sources. The results will be used for indoor air mitigation strategies and to catalog solutions to reduce diesel pollution in the affected locale. Additionally, funding sources for implementation of the alternatives will be identified.

TOTAL **\$50,000**

REGION 10
(AK, ID, OR, WA)

ALASKA

Maniilaq Association **\$24,647**
P.O. Box 256
Kotzebue, AK 99752

Maniilaq Subsistence Program

The intent of this project is to expand scientific knowledge about the possible effects from different metals occurring from source contamination on subsistence food staples within the NW Arctic Borough. This information will help Tribal communities understand their environmental issues and develop solutions to public health concerns.

Alaska Community Action on Toxics **\$25,000**
505 W. Northern Lights, Suite 205
Anchorage, AK 99503

Community-based Environmental Health Survey for St. Lawrence Island, Alaska

The residents on St. Lawrence Island will examine the health effects of hazardous substances by conducting an environmental health survey. The results of the survey will assist the community in identifying hazardous substances that affect their health. The purpose of the survey is to give residents accurate summary data about environmental contaminants.

TOTAL **\$49,647**