



# The Kids Ecology Corps

Inspiring young people to make environmental action part of their every day lives and in the lives of those around them

a program of Partners in Action, Inc.

Fall 2006 Newsletter  
The Kids Ecology Corps

1350 East Sunrise Blvd.  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304

[www.kidsecologycorps.org](http://www.kidsecologycorps.org)

## North Fork Mangrove Restoration

The Red Mangrove restoration project, introduced during the 2005/2006 school year, gives students the opportunity to see a live Red Mangrove tree up close and to become its caretaker. Once the mangroves begin to sprout roots and shoots, they can be transplanted to a saturated soil or sand mixture where they grow even larger.

In May, fifteen 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from North Fork Elementary School and several high school students from Pope John Paul II High School in Palm Beach County participated in a Mangrove Restoration Project by planting 30 Red Mangroves along a canal of the North Fork of the New River. Working closely with Gene Dempsey, Urban Forester for the City of Fort Lauderdale, Parks and Recreation, as well as the Broward County Environmental Protection Department (EPD), a planting site was identified in walking distance of North Fork Elementary School. Students planted the Mangroves, observed the role Mangroves play in creating a habitat, and enjoyed a hands-on lecture about native and invasive exotic plants and their impact on our environment. 🌍

## Greetings from The Kids Ecology Corps

From the Desk of:

Emily Nell Lagerquist

Executive Director

Greetings!

This past year has been very exciting! We educated over 7,000 young people, in spite of three very disruptive and destructive hurricanes. Plus, we are thrilled to report that over 2,400 young people were involved in our first year of eco-action projects in the schools.

At McNab and Coral Park Elementary Schools over 1,200 pairs of shoes were collected as part of our re-use a shoe program for redistribution in the community by the Salvation Army.

Seventy-five students from Markham Elementary School and Sawgrass Springs Middle School collected over 310 pounds of garbage in two separate beach clean-up events.



## New Video Teaches the Value of Trees

Hurricane Wilma's tremendous destruction of our trees left many people feeling anxious about replanting trees near their homes. We are delighted to report that we have received funding from the Florida Division of Forestry, Hurricane Supplement to develop and produce a video with students from Northeast High

School and John Lemmon Films, an animation studio, to educate young people about trees. The video will talk about the value of trees and how to plant and care for them so that they are wind resilient – and, therefore, hurricane resilient.

**Looking for a way to make a difference?** This eight-minute video still

The entire school of Wilton Manors from pre-k to fifth grade helped to create a beautiful butterfly garden and KEC volunteers and staff joined students at Pioneer Middle School to plant a butterfly garden certified as a National Wildlife School Yard Habitat.

For Earth Day in April 2006, The Kids Ecology Corps was also instrumental in helping to teach student volunteers how to create a butterfly garden at the Parkland library.

All of our programs are designed to engage young people while also meeting the Florida Sunshine State Standards. 🌍



Above: Board Member Todd DeJesus explains butterfly gardening to youngsters at Parkland Library.

Left: Danielle Rudisill and students from North Fork Elementary School planting Red Mangroves along a canal of the North Fork of the New River.

needs some funding, and contributions are most gratefully welcome! The video will show how trees are absolutely essential for our urban environments, and will be available throughout the hurricane-prone Southeastern United States. Please call Emily Nell Lagerquist at 954.524.0366 if you'd like to be a part of this important and fun project. 🌍

## Reaching Out Through Eco-Art



The Kids Ecology Corps and ArtServe partnered to create a three-week Eco-Art program piloted at Virginia Shuman Young Aftercare in Ft. Lauderdale. Focusing on “at promise” youngsters, the program’s

purpose was to deepen the participants’ knowledge about environmental issues and challenge them to identify simple actions to care for our earth, while stimulating their creativity in the visual and performing arts.

Five comprehensive learning modules were presented over a period of three weeks to 75 students. The topics included Pollution, Oceans, Water, Wildlife, and Trees. Students learned about these themes and then expressed their understanding of them through The Arts – visual, drama, and dance.

Artwork created by the young eco-artists ranged from photographs to hand-painted t-shirts to large expressive murals, as shown here. The work was exhibited at the ArtServe’s JM Family Enterprise Gallery

and later at the Broward County Government Center and the City of Fort Lauderdale government building. ArtServe is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the business and administrative needs of artists and non-profit cultural organizations in Broward County. The Kids Ecology Corps and ArtServe are planning another series of Eco-Art aftercare programs in the Spring of 2007. 🌍

## Keep it Cool: Save Our Home

Thanks to a grant by the AD Henderson Foundation, we will be piloting a new program called **Keep it Cool: Save Our Home**. Working with underserved Broward elementary schools, we will enhance our already well-received presentations **Kids Care about Our Trees** and **Oceans Blue: Mystery of the Reef** to address issues related to Global Warming and Climate Change. Through in-school presentations and hands-on eco-

action projects with 1,000 students, KEC will support the development of their environmental literacy skills while strengthening their reading, writing, math and science skills.

Children will learn about Global Warming and how it affects them and the health of our oceans and forests. They will also be challenged to identify solutions they can implement to help reduce causes contributing to Climate Change. 🌍

## Students Gather for Planting

More than 50 students gathered in October at the outdoor learning lab on BCC’s North Campus in Coconut Creek. The group, made up of fifth graders from Deerfield Park Elementary School and students at Broward Community College, planted bushes and groundcover to create a “critter

friendly” area and to attract birds and butterflies by providing a source of food for them. The highlight of the day was the special guest appearance of Jack Groh, Director of the NFL Environmental Program. Mr. Groh proudly announced that the site and event had been



Fifth Graders from Deerfield Park Elementary School with Al Christie, Science Coordinator (top row second from left with hat) and Jack Groh, Director NFL Environmental Program office. (top row, right) at BCC planting and dedication, October, 2006.

chosen by the NFL to be part of the carbon neutral program to help offset the CO<sub>2</sub> release of the Super Bowl in Miami in February of 2007.

The event marked the official dedication of this wonderful teaching resource, which was made possible through the efforts of The Kids Ecology Corps, in partnership with BCC’s Science & Wellness Education Department and the BCC Administrative and Maintenance Departments, the Florida Division of

Forestry, Urban Community Forestry Program, Broward Beautiful, Broward Tree Trust Fund and the Broward County Public Works Department.

The project, started last year, sustained some damage from Hurricane Wilma. Today, the hardwood hammock is growing and thriving. The goal of activities such as this one is to inspire young people to make environmental action part of their everyday lives. 🌍



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## Emerald Award for Special Achievement

Hard work pays off in more ways than expected! The two outdoor learning laboratories at Cypress Bay High School in Weston and BCC in Coconut Creek (created in 2005) are growing in and bearing fruit – students have a place to learn about our native habitats, teachers have an alternative to the ordinary classroom, and wildlife have a wonderful home.

And it doesn't stop there! The Broward County Commissioners selected The Kids Ecology Corps for the 2005 Broward County Emerald Award for Special Achievement in the NatureScape Broward category. We received this award for our extraordinary efforts to promote environmental stewardship and protect our urban forest through our Kids Care about Our Trees program. Mayor Ben Graber and Commissioner Kristin Jacobs honored The Kids Ecology Corps at the ceremony held in the Broward County Commission Chamber in April. 🌍



Commissioner Kristin Jacobs, NatureScape Broward Committee Chairperson, Nici Daw and Emily Nell Lagerquist, KEC and Broward County Mayor Ben Graber at 2005 Emerald Award Ceremony

## Kids' Korner

### Eco-Cool Things to Know about Water:

- A faucet that drips at the rate of one drop per second will waste 20 gallons of water each day!
- A five-minute shower uses about 25 gallons of water.
- The best time to water your lawn is in the early morning, to avoid evaporation and waste.
- A person can live up to a month without food, but only three or four days without water.

### From the Mail Box:

Dear Ms. Rudisill,

Thank you for having us with you planting the mangroves. Thank you for educating me with all of the information about mangroves. We had a lot of fun especially while stepping in the water and when we got out our shoes made squishing noises.

Sincerely,  
A. E., North Fork Elementary

Dear Ms. Danielle Rudisill,

Thank you and Kids Ecology Corps for telling us about different plants, animals, and habitats. Now I know not to litter, and not to destroy the mangrove habitats.

I learned that there are three types of mangroves. And some can look like regular trees. And even in sand. And to grow mangroves they need lots of water.

Sincerely,  
J. S., North Fork Elementary

## Funding Pays Off with an Added Benefit!

Thanks to grants by the AD Henderson Foundation, The Sun-Sentinel Children's Fund of the McCormick Tribune Foundation and the South Florida Water Management District for the year 2005-2006, we helped 6,000 young people in 40 Broward County elementary schools develop math, reading, writing, science, analytical and critical thinking skills – of those students over 2,000 participated in hands-on learning activities such as beach clean-ups, re-use a shoe programs, and the planting of butterfly gardens.

We created Environmental Educator Tool Kits related to our presentations *Wild Things Around Us*, *Kids Care About Our Trees* and *Oceans Blue: The Mystery of the Reef*, as well as for the *North Fork Great Treasure Hunt Art Contest*. A total of 79 tool kits were distributed and received enthusiastically by teachers in 22 different schools. One unforeseen plus was our training of three teachers to become Eco-Presenters within their own schools. What a thrill!

Many thanks also goes to the Division of Forestry, Urban and Community Forestry

Program for making it possible for us to develop materials that take students to the next level. Also a big thank you to the La Kretz Fund of the California Community Foundation for funding the eco-action component of these learning experiences.

Over 43% of the young people participating were eligible for the free and reduced lunch programs. Whenever and wherever we can, our goal is to encourage young people to learn the fundamentals and apply them in action projects. This certainly fits the bill! 🌍





## The Kids Ecology Corps

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### About Us

**The Kids Ecology Corps** is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization whose mission is to inspire young people to make Environmental Action part of their every day lives and in the lives of those around them.

As of November, 2006, with a small staff and dedicated volunteer Eco-Presenters, KEC has reached over 53,000 young people from pre-k through high school. We present engaging stories and information about current environmental topics such as: global climate change, water conservation, pollution prevention, urban forestation and the condition of our oceans. We perform a unique service. No other organization in Southeast Florida covers the broad spectrum of environmental issues we offer in face to face presentations with young people. Our programs are tailored to both class size and students' ages. These experiences are fun and compelling! Following are some examples of our live programs:

**Nature's Way of Recycling** – A stimulating game to learn the basics of reducing garbage and preserving our natural resources.

**Wild Things Around Us** – Kids learn about South Florida animals and how to protect their habitat.

**Oceans Blue: The Mystery of the Reef** – An interactive play that teaches young people how our actions on land impact the health of our oceans.

**Kids Care about Our Trees** – Kids learn about the importance of trees and the differences between native, exotic and invasive plants.

**Wonderful Water** – Fun, hands-on experiments plus a fact-filled presentation about the importance of water in our lives.

We touch even more young people in the USA and around the world via our website [www.kidsecologycorps.org](http://www.kidsecologycorps.org). In fact, about 50% of those who access our website are Kids Ecology Corps members from countries in Europe, Asia, South America, Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific. 🌍

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