



YES! Update 12.5.2016

Program Announcements

- The YES! staff would like to say "Thank You" to Aleta Kolan for over 6 years of great service to the YES! program. Aleta started out as the Southern Coordinator and has most recently been our Data/Communications Specialist. She is pursuing her Masters in Nursing and will only be working with YES! on a limited basis. She has been and continues to be a valued member of our team, and we wish her all the best in the future! --Shelli-Kae Foster/YES! Program Manager
- Team Reminders
 - Please complete the [Winter Workshop survey](#) by 4 pm on December 7 so coordinators know what your team is interested in and the dates you are available.
 - If your team has not already done so, be sure to submit at least one project idea via the [Project Proposal form](#) on the YES! website! Throughout the year, be sure to submit additional projects via this form as they come up.
 - Continue to submit [blog posts](#) about your projects throughout the year! Send photos to your coordinator to include in the blog post.

Focus on Water Quality

Looking for project ideas focused on water quality? Plant native prairie grasses/plants in areas that do not need to be very accessible. Native plants are adapted to rainfall conditions for the area, so they do not need to be watered like a turf grass. Plus, bonus wildlife habitat!

Regional Highlights

Northeast: The Northern Lights Community School YES! Team is planning several environmental education activities that they plan on presenting to area elementary schools. Wrenshall HS YES! Team is providing the labor to construct a recycling center that will serve over 500 rural residents in Carlton County.

West Central: Tis the season! As your families put up their holiday lights, I encourage everyone to think about where non-working lights end up. Most teams in this region are participating in holiday light collection, which is a great option for a quick project that keeps hundreds of pounds of waste out of local landfills. Find out more information about the statewide project at <http://recycleminnesota.org/recycle-your-holidays/>

Central: A strong participation in the YES! Program by Royalton students partially influenced the interest in adding a STEM designated teaching facility. Royalton High School is proud to do their unveiling of their new STEM Lab!

Southern: The Forest Lake YES! Team hosted guest speaker Madalyn Cioci of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to learn about a study the MPCA did on transitioning schools from plastic utensils to reusable utensils. The team is looking into what it will take to transition their school to more reusable options in the lunchroom and will be meeting with their custodial staff and administration soon!

State & National Grants & Other Opportunities

- **November 19, 2016 – January 1, 2017:** Water/Ways Exhibit has officially made its way to the Audubon Center of the North Woods. Water/Ways is a traveling exhibition and community engagement initiative of the Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street program. For more information please visit their [website](#).
- **Deadline December 2016:** [Youth Garden Grant](#) from the National Gardening Association is designed to support school and youth educational garden projects that enhance the quality of life for students and their communities. Any nonprofit, school, or youth program planning a new garden program or expanding an established one that serves at least 15 youth between the ages of 3 and 18 is eligible to apply. The selection of winners is based on demonstrated program impact and sustainability. Apply online [here](#).
- **Deadline December 22, 2016:** [The Green Ribbon Schools Awards](#) from the U.S. Department of Education are available to all prek-12 schools, school districts, and post-secondary institutions. They honor schools that:
 - Reduce environmental impact by conservation of energy, water and waste
 - Improve health and nutrition through gardens, food service and outdoor activities, and
 - Provide effective environmental education

YES! in the News

- Sleepy Eye team: [Sleepy Eye YES! team participates in 10th Annual Fall Summit](#)
- ACGC team: [ACGC YES! Team implements BMP by installing tree trench at school](#)
- [Vertical Farming](#)

