



April 28, 2010

Contact: Sara Kane
Public Outreach Coordinator
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program
(941) 955-8085
sara@sarasotabay.org
www.sarasotabay.org

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Awards 2010 Bay Partners Grants to Local Organizations

SARASOTA, FL - The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) is pleased to announce the awarding of its 2010 Bay Partners Grants to local community organizations in Sarasota and Manatee Counties. The purpose of the Bay Partners Grants is to promote environmental education, awareness, community involvement and stewardship, and to improve the overall quality of Sarasota Bay and its tributaries. Funded projects focus on Bay Education, Bay Restoration or Bay-Friendly Landscaping.

2010 Bay Partners Grant Recipients:

Fully Fund Request

Scenic Waves Partnership Committee, City of Bradenton Beach \$1,575 – *Neighborhood Water Conservation Demonstration Project*. Install a rain catchment system at local neighborhood community center. They will incorporate signage with “bay-wise” lessons and have a workday kick-off event.

Bay Haven Basics Plus and New College \$950 – *The Garden of Reign*. Transform a barren spot on campus to one that is sustained by a rain garden and hosts native plants.

Palma Sola Botanical Park Foundation \$2,000 – *Palma Sola Botanical Park Bay Partners Planting and Habitat Restoration Project*. Enhance an existing landscape with native plants and improve impacted tributary riparian habitats.

Manatee County YMCA, Bradenton Branch/Aquatics \$3,000 – *Bradenton Branch YMCA Bubble Blowers Program*. Students and families learn how to snorkel to conduct shallow water, inshore, grass flat cleanups. Three events to be conducted in summer 2010.

Island Village Montessori Schools \$3,000 – *Island Village Community Bay Education Project*. Educate students and families about the importance of coastal ecology in Florida. Students will have the opportunity to attend sea-camp and other educational experiences at Mote Marine Laboratory and Myakka State Park.

Windward Bay Condominiums \$1,639 – *Create a Saltwater Bioswale Demonstration Plot* – Bay Friendly landscaping project for a demonstration plot of a bioswale with native plants.

Partially Fund Request

Mote Marine Laboratory \$1,000 – *Mote High School Internship Education Program*. High school students will participate in marine research by collecting data about the health of seagrass beds. This will engage students in the scientific process and enhance their understanding of local marine life.

Keep Manatee Beautiful \$1,500 – *Kingfish Boat Ramp Native Landscaping on Palma Sola Scenic Highway*. Enhancement project for boat parking lot to reduce stormwater runoff.

Simply Green Solutions \$1,500 – *Village on the Bay: Waterways Past, Present and Future*. Final design layout and creation of water education model for Cortez Fishing village.

Westchester Condo Association \$1,000 – *Restoration Project to enhance the Southern Boundary of the Westchester Condos*. Removal of non-native plants, restoration with native plants and installation of micro-irrigation equipment.

Wakeland Elementary School of International Studies \$1,000 – *Habitat Hoopla*. Creating a wildlife garden and classroom habitats. Will have planting day that will involve students and parents.

Bayshore Elementary School \$1,000 – *Bayshore Elementary Bay Buddies Bunch* – Cleanups and exotic plant removal at preserves.

Venice Area Audubon Society \$1,000 – *Barrels and Butterflies: Creating a Sustainable Wildlife Garden*. Refurbish an existing butterfly garden using Bay Friendly plants to create a sustainable irrigation system that will use rainwater. Garden will be used for public education and monitoring of butterfly species.

Sunbow Bay Condo Association \$2,500 – *Demonstration Site for Condo Associations on Anna Maria Island Bay Fronts* – Bay Friendly landscaping project with native plantings. They will have an ongoing educational program to keep residents aware of the benefits of Bay Friendly landscaping.

Manatee County Natural Resources \$2,300 – *World Beneath the Waves: Exploring the Fauna of Sarasota Bay by Land and by Sea* – Education program that will teach participants about the fauna of Sarasota Bay for hands-on aquatic collection and paddling sessions.

The 2010 Bay Partners Grant applications were reviewed by members of the SBEP Citizens Advisory Committee. Decisions were based on how the proposed projects addressed the issues of stormwater runoff and pollution prevention; wildlife habitat restoration and protection; recreational use and Bay access; and environmental education and awareness.

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program is dedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset—Sarasota Bay. Its unique program strives to improve water quality, increase habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public. Sarasota Bay is one of 28 estuaries in the United States that have been named by the U.S. Congress as an "estuary of national significance."

SBEP offers special thanks to our partners: Sarasota County, Manatee County, City of Sarasota, City of Bradenton, Town of Longboat Key, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Southwest Florida Water Management District and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

###