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North American Association
for Environmental Education

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LAURA DOWNEY WINS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARD

Local educator recognized by North American Association for Environmental Education

Manhattan, KS, 1BNovember 1, 2018– Laura Downey, PhD, a longtime educator in the field of environmental education (EE), was recently recognized by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE). Dr. Downey received the Walter E. Jeske Award, which is the highest honor NAAEE bestows for contributions in EE. It is named after Walter Jeske, former Chief of the Education and the Publications unit within the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, a leader in the field until his untimely death in 1981.

Dr. Downey has demonstrated her EE commitment for more than 20 years, serving as a mentor to so many in the field of EE. She has also been a nexus for collaboration within her state as well as across state borders, and an invaluable link between the EE community and formal classrooms. Dr. Downey began her career in education, teaching elementary and middle school students in Chicago Public Schools and in Kansas, where she began incorporating EE activities into her science methods courses, discovering the intersection between her love for the environment and her love for teaching. In 1998, she shifted her energies from the classroom to the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE), where she became the Executive Director in 2000. Under her leadership, KACEE became the lead organization to support numerous programs across Kansas. Through her numerous contributions to the NAAEE Affiliate Network, she works tirelessly to support the network, serve as a mentor to state EE leaders, and encourage others to pursue leadership roles across the field.

"Dr. Laura Downey's leadership and service have made an invaluable contribution to the field of environmental education," said Judy Braus, NAAEE's Executive Director. "Our award winners truly exemplify innovative, inspirational, and resilient leadership that will help us shape a more sustainable and equitable society."

This year, NAAEE presented 13 awards to outstanding individual and organizational leaders across North America and worldwide. For a full list of 2018 winners, visit www.naaee.org/our-work/programs/awards.

About the North American Association for Environmental Education

For four decades, the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) has been dedicated to advancing environmental literacy and civic engagement through the power of education. NAAEE supports a network of more than 20,000 educators and 56 regional affiliate

organizations working in environmental education in more than 30 countries. For more information, visit www.naaee.org.

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