



IMPACT REPORT

2017-2018



EcoRise inspires a new generation of leaders to design a sustainable future for all.

Our school-based program empowers youth to tackle real-world challenges in their schools and communities by teaching sustainability, design innovation, and social entrepreneurship.



WE BELIEVE

At EcoRise, we believe our growing environmental crisis and political gridlock on climate change stem from a simple fact: The majority of K-12 students in the American education system graduate from high school environmentally illiterate and unprepared to build resilient communities of the future.

Our solutions-oriented, K-12 program directly addresses the problem at its root, providing students the opportunity to act as sustainability leaders and change makers in their communities, developing projects with social, environmental, and economic impacts—from California to Texas to Washington D.C.



1 / **Education is the bedrock of social and environmental change.**

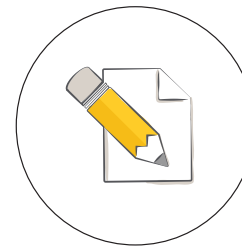
2 / **Youth have the power to design a sustainable world.**

3 / **Teachers are the key to unlocking student innovation.**

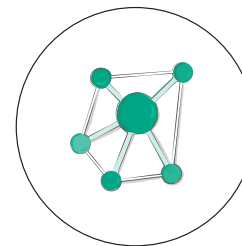
4 / **Partnerships magnify and accelerate community impact.**



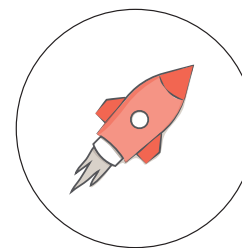
As former educators, we understand the importance of teacher support and student agency. That's why our model is teacher-first, student-driven.



STANDARDS-ALIGNED CURRICULUM



TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



STUDENT INNOVATION FUND

OUR PROGRAM

OUR CURRICULUM



Sustainable Intelligence

Builds sustainability knowledge across seven eco-themes: water, waste, food, energy, air, public spaces, and transportation

Audience: K-12 teachers who aim to cultivate eco-literacy and sustainability thinking in students of all ages; available in English and Spanish



Design Studio

Guides students to develop and implement creative solutions to pressing problems using EcoRise's design-thinking process

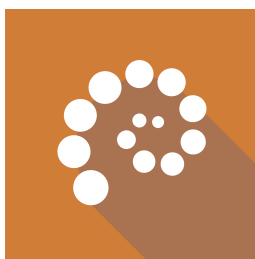
Audience: 5th-12th grade teachers who aim to cultivate collaboration and creative problem solving skills via real-world projects



LEED Prep

Guides students to learn green building techniques and apply them to their school and community and prepares them to take the LEED Green Associate Exam

Audience: High school CTE teachers who aim to give students marketable credentials for entering the workforce as architects, builders, designers, and other green building professionals



Biomimicry and Science

Challenges chemistry, physics, and biology students to look at nature as mentor in order to solve sustainability challenges

Audience: Middle and high school teachers who want to inspire students to appreciate and learn from nature as they design innovative solutions to common problems



The Business of Social Good

Introduces principles of social entrepreneurship, sustainability, and design thinking and challenges students to develop a business idea

Audience: High school business and entrepreneurship teachers who wish to model social, environmental, and economic balance to inspire students to create and support sustainable businesses

“EcoRise has put a framework around Environmental Education. With the support of their curriculum it is easy to find ways to teach your required material and about the environment at the same time, providing meaningful, hands on, integrated lessons that engage your students.”

MARY ANN SETTLEMYRE
CENTREVILLE ELEMENTARY | FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA

OUR TEACHERS

This year we served

1,101

teachers in

458 schools

engaging

61,656

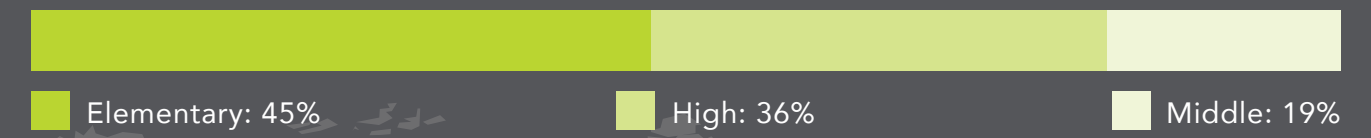
students!

This year, we facilitated

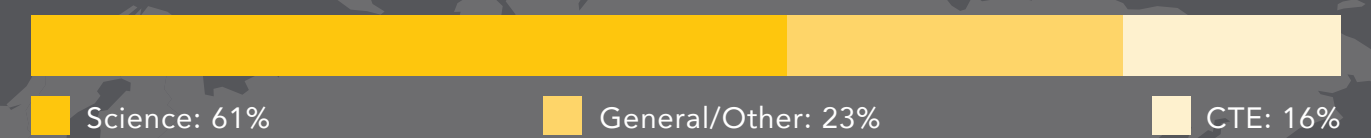
2,994

hours of teacher trainings.

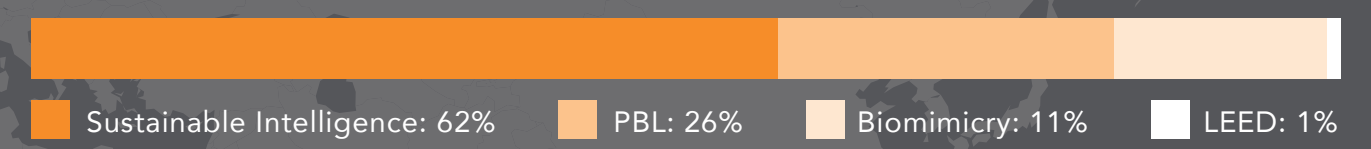
SCHOOL BREAKDOWN



SUBJECT TAUGHT



PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



CURRENT REGIONS

- Austin
- Boston
- Houston
- Sacramento
- San Antonio
- Washington, D.C.

UPCOMING REGIONS

- Dallas/Ft. Worth
- New Orleans/Baton Rouge
- New York City

GLOBAL COMMUNITY

EcoRise develops international partnerships to provide teachers access to our curriculum globally. Through our network of local champions, EcoRise lessons are now used in 1,000 additional classrooms in 28 countries.



In this year's program evaluations, teachers reported the following:



92%

say EcoRise creates a more **authentic learning experience** for students



97%

say EcoRise empowers them to be a **more effective environmental educator**



91%

say EcoRise improves students' **21st-century skills**



82%

say EcoRise resources lead to **sustainable student behavior change**



91%

say EcoRise fosters student **eco-literacy**



93%

say EcoRise curriculum **supports their school's academic goals**



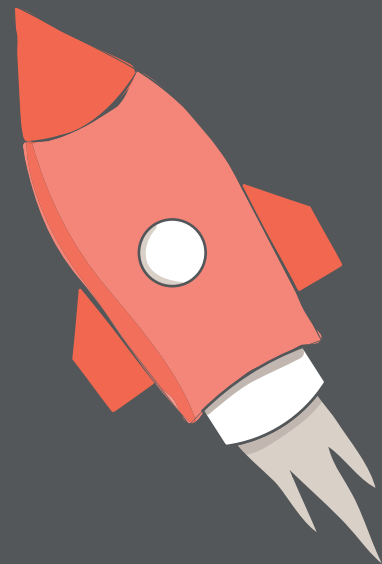
97%

will **continue using EcoRise curricula and resources** in their classrooms next year

In 2017-18, we awarded

\$42,122

in Eco-Audit Grants to



94

student innovations!

*In the next 12 months,
these projects will save over*

\$503,000

*in resource costs for
school districts!*



EXAMPLE STUDENT INNOVATIONS


A Plant for Every Space
 Bus Passes for All!
 Butterfly Garden
 Carbon Footprint of the Future
 Constructed Wetland for Drinking Water
 Fixing Forks
 Fruit Peel Purifier
 Light Sensors
 Natural & Mechanical Ventilation
 No Idling Campaign
 Operation Zero Smog
 Outdoor Environmental Science Lab
 Power Strips to Reduce Carbon
 Project Chicken Coop
 Project Food Forest
 Reusable Snack Bags
 Revamping Recycling in the Cafeteria
 Solar Bus Book Nook
 Transportation Awareness Campaign
 Walk to School Week
 Waste Busters
 We Want More Lettuce!
 Zero-Waste Lunchboxes

Student innovations are having a measurable impact on schools and communities.




National Student Impact

 **31,867 gal**
WATER SAVED

 **179,783 tons**
CARBON REDUCED

 **6,275 lbs**
FOOD PRODUCED

 **11,235,824 kWh**
ENERGY CONVERTED

 **237,527 lbs**
WASTE DIVERTED

 **140,551 ft²**
GREENSPACE RECOVERED

Celebrating Student Innovation Across the Nation

ECO-AUDITS: WASTE, AIR, WATER, FOOD, PUBLIC SPACES, TRANSPORTATION
GRANTS AWARDED: \$40,572 AWARDED ACROSS 3 REGIONS

In the spring of 2018, EcoRise hosted a record-setting **three** regional events to showcase Eco-Audit grant-funded projects in San Antonio; Austin; and Washington, D.C. Across all three regions, one thing was abundantly clear: Our future is bright! The showcases featured a total of 37 student teams and attracted over 550 attendees who were amazed by the students' professionalism and understanding of complex environmental concepts, as well as the rich array of innovative student ideas. At each event, the excitement of the student presenters was contagious as they enthusiastically and clearly articulated the concepts behind their work and the positive impact their projects are having in their school communities.

On May 1—under the large dome of the Confluence Park pavilion—student teams from 12 San Antonio-area schools gathered to present their sustainability projects to the public at the Second Annual Student Sustainability Showcase, which EcoRise co-hosted with the National Wildlife Federation. Student teams presented their green ideas, including an outdoor classroom; a rainwater collection system that helps conserve water but can support a vegetable garden; and a campaign by high school students to teach local elementary school students about their carbon footprint to parents, school administrators, local community members, and program sponsors.

On May 11, student teams from 12 Austin-area schools presented their work at the

Fourth Annual Student Innovation Showcase at Austin City Hall. As the atrium filled to capacity, the students excitedly presented their ideas family members, classmates, community members, educators, and even to Austin Mayor Steve Adler. Overseen by students of all ages, from kindergarteners to high school seniors, the tables overflowed with projects that spanned six eco-themes—water, waste, food, public spaces, air, and transportation.

On May 31, the inaugural D.C. Student Innovation Showcase was hosted by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) in their office in downtown Washington, D.C. The atmosphere was buzzing as student teams from D.C. Public Schools and Fairfax County Public Schools presented their green ideas to a room packed with over 150 people. The students were passionate and professional while presenting about a cafeteria recycling campaign, water filtration designs, a classroom greenhouse, reusable utensils for the cafeteria, reusable water bottles, recycling and composting initiatives, a garden restoration, and a food-waste reduction program.

"It was inspiring to see the excitement and professionalism that students brought to the showcase. Kids can't care about a topic they don't know about; project-based learning allows students to take learning into their own hands and internalize it for a lifetime," commented Sally Parker, Energy and Sustainability Liaison of D.C. Public Schools.





Project-Based Learning Puts Students in the Driver Seat

ECO-AUDIT: PUBLIC SPACES
GRANT AWARDED: \$500

After attending EcoRise’s three-day PBL Academy, Haley Galyean was prepared to implement her first project-based learning, or PBL, unit into her sixth-grade math classroom at Oakcrest Intermediate School in Tomball ISD; but she had no idea of the transformation of social and leadership skills she would see in her students by the end of the unit.

As part of a Tomball Independent School District district-wide initiative, all teachers and administrators learn how to implement project-based learning into their schools and classrooms. As a professional development service, EcoRise’s PBL Academy trains and supports teachers in transforming passive learning into active participation, linking multidisciplinary programs with sustainability education. In this inverted teacher-student relationship, students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge.

Haley’s sixth-grade math students started off with a question about campus sustainability and a \$500 grant from EcoRise. How could they make geometry come to life for the good of their campus and the planet? The answer: The People’s Green Spring Garden of Recycled Arts.

“I think sometimes we as teachers want just a set list of what the kids need to do and check, check, check,” said Haley. “But with the project-based learning experience, it’s not always like that. Giving the kids some of the free rein to be creative and think outside the box and come up with their own ideas was somewhat challenging for me!”

The final project was the result of multiple design iterations from the whole class. It was clear that the framework from PBL Academy improved her students’ social and leadership skills. “We kind of combined every group’s ideas into one garden that could include everything we all thought of,” said Allison, age 13.

The students pitched the idea to their principal and district superintendent, who loved it. They then researched structural design, landscape architecture and plant life cycles. They solicited donations and managed their limited budget. They got their parents to join them for their weekend building day, and invited the whole school to maintain the space with an ongoing Garden Club. And they got nature’s approval—birds and butterflies showed up right away.

“It really taught us a lot about unity, how this one garden could unify our whole community.”

MEIBETH
OAKCREST INTERMEDIATE STUDENT | TOMBALL, TX

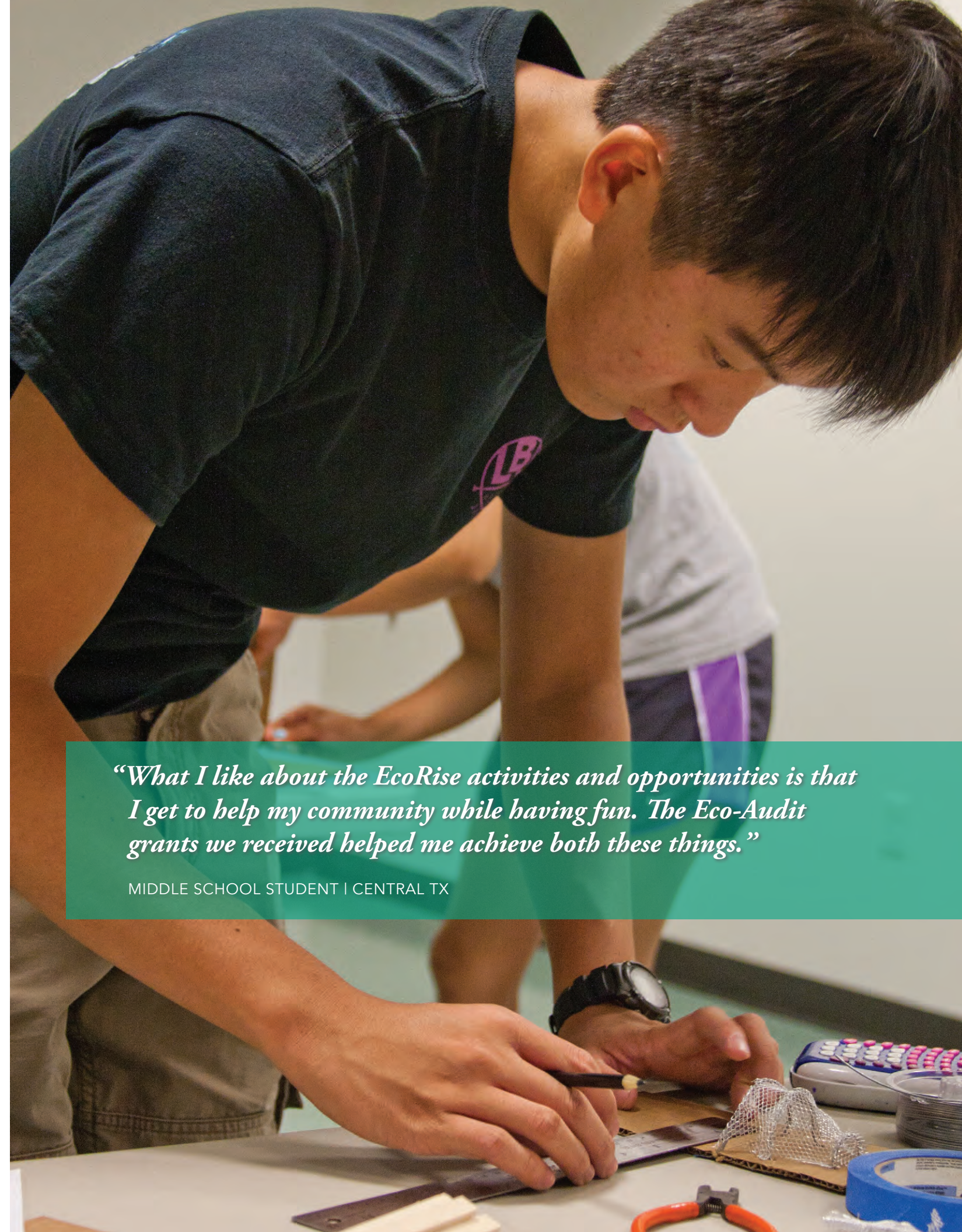
Students Use Biomimicry to Solve Campus Inefficiencies

ECO-AUDIT: WASTE, AIR, WATER, TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY
GRANT AWARDED: 4 PROJECTS TOTALING \$901.42

Gabi Garcia, from Akins High School in Austin ISD was our 2017-2018 EcoRise Teacher of the Year. Gabi was honored with this award for the planning and preparation of a problem-based learning unit, uniquely combining our Sustainable Intelligence program with our Biomimicry Design Challenge curriculum. Planned not only to promote eco-literacy but to enhance the research and 21st century skills of her seniors preparing them for their college and career goals, this unit created a strong and memorable finish to their high school careers while contributing the Akins "Green School" Legacy. Gabi was persistent in the process and worked to increase her students' sense of self-efficacy. Her students submitted eleven Eco-Audit Grant proposals covering five eco-themes. Four exemplary proposals were awarded funding, totaling \$901.42. Additionally, three of her students' projects were given "honorary awards" for going through the process and creating impactful solutions that required no funding at all. These projects will divert waste from the landfill, off-set carbon, and reduce energy consumption.

"What I like about the EcoRise activities and opportunities is that I get to help my community while having fun. The Eco-Audit grants we received helped me achieve both these things."

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT | CENTRAL TX





“Being part of the teacher ambassador program has challenged me to ‘get out of my comfort zone’ and start networking, presenting, and being in the spotlight. I appreciate the patience, confidence, and loyalty that EcoRise staff have shown me through this journey. I feel like I am making a difference.”

ANDREA TOLE
COVINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL | AUSTIN, TX



Teacher Ambassadors

EcoRise Teacher Ambassadors are leaders in sustainability education and implement EcoRise resources and curriculum in their classrooms having a profound impact on their students.

2017-18 COHORT



Kate Hoffner
Grade 3, Texas



Edwin Yoo
Grade 11-12, Massachusetts



Andrea Tole
Grade 6, Texas



Dina Tucker
Grade 11, Texas



Denise Ortiz
Grades 11-12, Texas



Mary Ann Settlemyre
Grades K-6, Virginia

This summer, we hosted our inaugural Summer Institute in Austin, TX. Teacher Ambassadors and district administrators were invited to cultivate knowledge and leadership skills with the goal of building and strengthening an effective community of environmental educators and change makers.

Thank you to our partners who sponsored our Summer Institute:





VISION
2020

A healthy planet. An educated workforce. Citizens who are prepared to solve challenges in a rapidly changing world. Addressing issues that arise from the changing global environment requires visionary leadership, collaboration across all sectors, and immediate action.

At EcoRise, we believe our growing environmental crisis and political gridlock on climate change stem from a simple fact: The majority of K–12 students in the American education system graduate from high school environmentally illiterate and unprepared to build resilient communities of the future.

By the year 2020, EcoRise will scale our programs and deepen our impact across the nation to **Build Resilient Communities of the Future**. We will:

- Expand our programs to ten U.S. cities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as New Orleans & New York City.
- Expand our programs in rural and urban communities that lack strong environmental education programming to reach 200,000 students annually.
- Provide an expanded library of free curricula for K–12 educators to fan the flames of the movement globally.
- Empower educators around the world to create their own EcoRise program anywhere by hosting a Summer Institute to showcase effective practices.

Partnering for Greater Impact

EcoRise is building an alliance of visionary people and organizations that are passionate about changing the world by bringing sustainability, leadership, and innovation into our children’s classrooms.

SPOTLIGHT PARTNERS



Southwest Airlines strives to minimize their impact on the environment and upholds the triple bottom line of performance, people, and planet. Partnering with Southwest Airlines has magnified EcoRise’s impact substantially and helped EcoRise expand our programs—and move our teachers—across the nation.



The Green Mountain Energy Sun Club invests in nonprofits to advance sustainability and foster environmental stewardship. GME Sun Club is underwriting program fees in the greater Houston-area so educators can access EcoRise curriculum and professional development services free of charge, as well as funding the Houston-area *Student Innovation Fund* so teachers and students have greater access to classroom grants.



As a leader in corporate social responsibility, H-E-B Grocery Stores has consistently promoted sustainability across the value chain—from product sourcing to community outreach. H-E-B is a long time supporter of EcoRise in Texas through program funding and in-kind donations.



BNY Mellon’s philanthropic giving is focused on creating the workforce of the future. BNY Mellon, as part of a larger partnership, has helped EcoRise expand our programming in New York City. “EcoRise and BNY Mellon are doing crucial work to engage and support younger generations in the environmental work that helps ensure a sustainable, shared future for all New Yorkers” applauds the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Sustainability, Mark Chambers.

2017-18 SUPPORTING PARTNERS



PROGRAM COLLABORATORS

- Biomimicry Institute
- Captain Planet Foundation
- Center for Green Schools, U.S. Green Building Council
- Collaborative of High Performance Schools
- Department of Energy and Environment, D.C.
- Green Schools National Network
- National Wildlife Federation, Eco-Schools USA
- Natural Sciences Association of Turkey
- Nepris
- North American Association of Environmental Educators
- Office of the State Superintendent of Education, D.C.
- Plant the Seed
- Representaciones y Inteligencia Sustentable
- Voices for Biodiversity

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- 1% for the Planet
- Austin Impact Capital
- Balcones Resources
- BLGY Architects
- BNY Mellon
- City of Austin Office of Sustainability
- City of San Antonio
- City of New York
- Farwest Capital
- Google
- Green Mountain Energy Sun Club
- H-E-B Grocery Stores
- Impact Circle Major Donors
- Impact Loan Investors
- Klean Kanteen
- Love, Tito’s
- Mission Capital
- Perkins Eastman D.C.

- Rackspace
- Salesforce
- Southwest Airlines
- Tingari-Silverton Foundation
- The Notley Fund
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERS

- Austin Independent School District
- Leander Independent School District
- New York City Department of Education
- North East Independent School District
- Sacramento City Unified School District
- Tomball Independent School District
- Washington, D.C. Public Schools

Our Team

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Texas Program Manager

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Katie Sternberg
Lee Walker

Awards



2018 **Best of Green**
Schools Award: Collaborator



Our Values

WE CULTIVATE
Gratitude



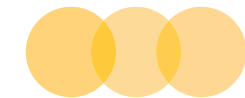
WE ARE
Leading-Edge



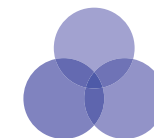
WE PRACTICE
Resilience



WE BUILD
Comradery



WE STRIVE FOR
Equity



WE EMBRACE
Integrity





Join us in building a movement.

Help us unleash the power and potential of youth as leaders and creative problem-solvers in communities across the world.

Join us to champion transformative K–12 sustainability education. Your partnership and support will allow us to serve 4,000 teachers by 2020.

- **Spread** the word about EcoRise
- **Connect** us to new schools
- **Fuel** our work with a generous donation
- **Bridge** new community partnerships



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