



Moon Area School District

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For Immediate Release
November 20, 2008

Moon Area Students Compete in Phipps Conservatory's Fairchild Challenge

Moon Area High School students are taking a lead role in the new Fairchild Challenge Program launched by Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens this school year.

The unique yearlong competition pits MAHS against at least 10 other Allegheny County school districts in nine challenges between October and May. The challenges are structured to promote environmental awareness and stewardship in a cross-section of students, teachers and communities, while allowing competitors to incorporate their personal interests like art, photography, research and theater into environmentally related competitions.

Moon Area students have completed two challenges to date – an alternative energy research poster display and a program T-shirt design, and a recycled art work project is due in December. A total of seven students have submitted entries, which are judged upon detailed and strict criteria by professionals in the community, environmental organization representatives and Phipps employees and volunteers.

"Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens are a treasure in our city. I am excited for Moon Area High School to be involved in the first Fairchild Challenge in Pittsburgh with students who are very concerned about the environment and are willing to take on the nine challenge options," says Judy Shuster, MAHS gifted teacher.

At the end of the school year, the winning school will receive The Fairchild Challenge Award and monetary gifts for their science and environmental programs.

The program started in 2002 at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Miami, where it included more than 40,000 students from 102 middle and high schools in the south Florida area.

Phipps is one of 43 sites around the world around the globe where educators have been trained to implement the program that seeks to create interdisciplinary learning opportunities by combining science, civics, arts and community outreach.

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens has been in Oakland's Schenley Park since 1893. In recent years, the greenhouse has been an advocate for sustainable practices and environmental awareness.