



# UPDATES

Pennsylvania Envirothon

Fall 2016

## Penncrest High School Takes 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Honors at the 2016 North American Envirothon

A five-member team of high school students from **Penncrest High School** from **Media, PA** earned the second place honor at the 2016 NCF-Envirothon. A week-long North American natural resource education competition and the leading environmental education program is run by the U. S. based National Conservation Foundation (NCF). The top three scoring teams were awarded a total of \$30,000 in cash prizes at the awards ceremony at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario, on July 28<sup>th</sup>.

The 2016 NCF-Envirothon's cash prizes were sponsored by Smithfield Foods, the world's largest pork producer and supplier. Other event sponsors included National Association of Conservation Districts and Forests Ontario. Each NCF-Envirothon is organized with the assistance of numerous local conservation districts, forestry associations, educators, and cooperating natural resource agencies. This year, over 4,000 high schools across North America participated in the Envirothon at the state or provincial, regional, and international levels. A five-member team of high school students from the University of Toronto Schools, Ontario won the 2016 NCF-Envirothon.

The NCF-Envirothon teams compete on their knowledge of soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and a current issue (2016 invasive species). Each team's knowledge is tested under the supervision of foresters, soil scientists, wildlife specialists, and other natural resource professionals. The teams are also asked to demonstrate their critical thinking skills by giving an oral presentation that details the specific management strategies they would use to address a given natural resources issue.

"We are proud to have represented Pennsylvania and thankful to all our state personnel, including teachers, advisors, and technical specialists who gave us so much support," said Chrissa Kuntz, a coach for the Pennsylvania team.

For more information and photos, visit the [NCF-Envirothon](http://www.ncf-envirothon.org) website.



Photo (l to r): Tim Reich (NCF), Dennis Harrsch, Rachel Hughes, Justin Rosenberg, Vy-Linh Gale, Daniel Rosenberger, Rich Duesterhaus (NCF), and Bill Gill (Smithfield Foods).

*Thank you, NCF-Envirothon and the Forests Ontario, for a wonderful event!*

## “Thank You” notes from Envirothon Students and Parents

The Pennsylvania Envirothon often receives “thank you” notes from students and parents. These notes are a reflection not only of the benefit of the state program, but also the importance of the county program. Because of this, we are sharing some of the notes in this newsletters as well as future newsletters.

*One student wrote, “I recently traveled to Ontario, Canada with the Penncrest Envirothon team to compete at Nationals. I just wanted to say thank you for all of your support and encouragement financially and otherwise. Thank you for funding our trip and our participation in the events in Ontario, without you we never would have made it to Canada! Also, thank you for giving your time to help us prepare for our oral presentation. We won the oral component because of your help. Thank you again for this amazing opportunity and we hope to see you again next year!”*

Along with questions regarding her son’s scholarship awards, this mother wrote, “Thanks for the investment you make in the lives of the Envirothon students. It has been a blessing.”

*Another student wrote, “I have done Envirothon for four years now, and I can honestly say it was the best thing that I did during my high school career. Please keep up the fantastic work. You run an amazing state program that should be a model for others to follow to the letter. Envirothon has made these past four years some of the most memorable of my life; I will never forget them.”*

These are just few notes of appreciation that should make all of you proud.

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## 2017 Pennsylvania Envirothon State Competition Host

### University of Pittsburgh Johnstown



The 2017 Pennsylvania Envirothon will be held Tuesday, May 23 and Wednesday, May 24 at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ), Cambria County.

The oral component will take place on Tuesday and the station testing on Wednesday. All events will be held on the UPJ campus.

UPJ is located in the city of Johnstown, 70 miles east of Pittsburgh. UPJ is a four-year, fully accredited, degree-granting, coeducational, residential undergraduate college, which was founded in 1927 as a regional campus of the University of Pittsburgh, one of the nation’s oldest institutions of higher education.

Teams that have completed their oral presentations may want to make arrangements to visit the historical Johnstown Flood Museum or Inclined Plane. They may also join in on a pick-up game of basketball or soccer on the outdoor courts, or hike on the campus nature trails.

On Tuesday evening, following dinner and the completion of the oral component, there will be an educational presentation as well as a “Pennsylvania Envirothon” trivia quiz, with prizes.

For more information about the UPJ campus, visit [www.upj.pitt.edu](http://www.upj.pitt.edu). For more information on Johnstown attractions, visit <http://www.visitjohnstownpa.com/>.

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## 2017 Current Environmental Issue

### AGRICULTURAL SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP

The Pennsylvania Farmer has played an important role in the efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Pennsylvania makes up 35% of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The Susquehanna River is the largest tributary to the Bay and the actions of the farms in the Bay Watershed play a critical role in the health of its waters. This year's Current Environmental Issue focuses on Agricultural Soil and Water Conservation Stewardship.

Although great strides in reducing pollution have been made over the last decades, nearly one-quarter of Pennsylvania's rivers and streams currently suffer from pollution. Contaminated runoff from agricultural, urban, and suburban areas, sewage treatment plants, septic systems, and even air pollution contaminate Pennsylvania's streams and remain the leading sources of Pennsylvania's pollution to the Bay.



Envirothon participants will learn about Pennsylvania's natural resources and engage in hands-on training and testing. Students will learn the basic concepts of how agricultural Best Management Practices and all natural resource areas are interrelated. By providing a lifelong learning experience for these students, the Envirothon teaches the importance of maintaining a balance of the quality of life versus the quality of the environment specifically relating to agriculture. In addition, as part of the Envirothon program, students gain an understanding of the importance of promoting soil and water conservation stewardship.

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## 2017 Envirothon Resources

The Pennsylvania Envirothon Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the 2017 Envirothon resources are available. Teachers and students can review and download most of the information needed to prepare for the 2017 Envirothon competitions. Visit the [Pennsylvania Envirothon](#) website and click on the "Station Training."

Or...

The 2017 Teacher Resource Packets and new study resources have been delivered to your county's Envirothon Coordinator. If you do not receive them, please contact your county Conservation District office or the Pennsylvania Envirothon office.

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## Pennsylvania Envirothon Scholarship Updates

The Pennsylvania Envirothon has been awarding educational scholarships now for 12 years. Since 2005, we have awarded \$116,500 to 180 students from eight counties. The scholarship program is supported by donations made by Pennsylvania's County Conservation Districts. Thanks to their generous donations, scholarship awards for the 2017 Pennsylvania Envirothon state competition will be increased. We are excited to extend the awards to the top five teams.

Each student on the top five teams at the 2017 state Envirothon competition will receive the following scholarship awards: First place - \$1,250; Second place - \$750; Third place - \$500; Fourth place - \$300; and Fifth place - \$150.



It is a goal of the Pennsylvania Envirothon to continue to increase these awards and recognize more teams at the state competition. Thank you, conservation districts, for supporting the Pennsylvania Envirothon Scholarship program!

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## Volunteers Needed for the 2017 Pennsylvania Envirothon

### State Competition!

The Envirothon seeks volunteers to help with the 34th annual Pennsylvania Envirothon state competition being held on May 23 and 24, 2017. We invite all conservation districts, partners, sponsors, agencies, organizations, and friends to volunteer.

Over 100 volunteers are needed to assist with the oral presentation component and the station testing competition. Volunteers serve as oral component presentation judges, team escorts, station judges, score runners, lunch deliverers, social media coordinators, and other tasks.

According to Pennsylvania's state law, volunteers who are responsible for the welfare of children are required to obtain child abuse and criminal history certifications. Copies of your cleared certifications must be provided to the Pennsylvania Envirothon along with your volunteer registration forms. Volunteer certifications will be kept on file and will be good for a period of five (5) years. Information on how to obtain your Child Abuse certification may be found on the [PA Child Welfare Information Solution \(Compass\)](#) website and Criminal History certification may be found on the [PA State Police Criminal History](#) website.

To receive information on how you can volunteer for the 2017 Pennsylvania Envirothon, please contact your county conservation district or Lorelle Steach, Pennsylvania Envirothon Executive Director.

We hope to see you at the 2017 Pennsylvania Envirothon.

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## 2017 NCF-Envirothon North American Event

[NCF-Envirothon and Maryland Envirothon](#) will welcome teams from across Canada and the United States as they embark upon Mount St. Mary's University located in Emmitsburg, Maryland to compete in the 29<sup>th</sup> annual North American Envirothon. The competition will take place during the week of July 23 – 29, 2017. Approximately fifty-five teams will compete in the weeklong event for cash awards sponsored by Smithfield Foods and the National Conservation Foundation (NCF).