

## Chair's Message

### Cheers to EEAC!

Let us celebrate 50 golden years of effecting positive change in environmental education. As we mark this special milestone, we recognize the bridge between the past, present, and future of EEAC has been the enduring commitment of its members to building a legacy of conservation and education in New York City.

From its inception at the 1974 Mohonk Conference, EEAC has championed initiatives that link environmental education with social and cultural awareness. Through the participation of its members and their development of strong partnerships, EEAC has leveraged community-based knowledge-sharing, youth engagement, and capacity-building for educators into substantial

policy and reform that has impacted how New Yorkers learn and build environmental stewardship.

Our city and our world have endured many challenges over the past 50 years. The environmental impact of climate change has created both physical and mental distress and awareness of the growing problem of more frequent storms, coastal flooding and sea level rise. As we look forward to the future, EEAC remains a crucial advocate for environmental education and will continue to support and engage the next generation to navigate and make them more resilient to the inevitable impacts of climate change. From our strong foundation we will continue to create innovative ways to engage youth in the environment and expand the scope of knowledge and accessibility for all learners.

As we embark on the wonder of the seasons, I encourage our members to build deeper connections with nature by getting out and celebrating all that is golden!

Amanda Levy, Ed.D, MS, MPH

Join us to celebrate

**EEAC'S 50TH  
ANNIVERSARY**

12.04.24 • 5:30 PM • Kimball Hall (NYU)

# **EEAC's 50th Anniversary Timeline: Greatest Hits**

## **1974 EEAC Founded**

EEAC was founded at the Mohonk Conference, organized by Dr. Eugene Ezersky, Coordinator of Outdoor Education, School Camping, and Environmental Education for the Bureau for Health and Physical Education at the NYC Board of Education,

## **1982 Statewide Environmental Education Initiative Coordination**

EEAC collaborated with the Council on the Environment of NYC and the Environmental Action Coalition to coordinate the Statewide Environmental Education Initiative. A talent bank of environmental educators was developed to infuse environmental concepts into the NY State Syllabus.

## **1990 Chancellor's Environmental Education Task Force Formed**

The Chancellor's Environmental Education Task Force, which included several EEAC steering committee members, was formed.

## **2000 Teacher Environmental Education Preparation (TEEP) Initiative Began**

The Teacher Environmental Education Preparation initiative was created to work with colleges of education to infuse more environmental education into teacher preparation programs.

## **2019 TEEP Evolved into Environmental Education Projects Forum**

After four workshops TEEP evolved into the Environmental Education Projects Forum.

## **2024 First "How Things Work" Conference Hosted**

The first "How Things Work" conference is generated by the Forum; sixteen exhibitors demonstrate how environmental systems from a solar collector to a windmill work, to 200 students (grades 6-12) and their teachers in the Great Hall at City College.

**To learn more and read about EEAC's other accomplishments over the past 50 years, check out the full timeline on EEAC's website.**

### EEAC Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the Environmental Education Advisory Council (EEAC), a voluntary organization of educators, classroom teachers, administrators, and other professionals in active support of quality environmental education.

### Newsletter Deadlines

If you would like to submit an article or event for the newsletter, please email it as a Microsoft Word attachment to [quinhrick@nyu.edu](mailto:quinhrick@nyu.edu). The newsletter deadline is the first Monday of February, May, August, and November. We would love your ideas!

### Newsletter Committee

Tania Goicoechea    Quin Hricik

### EEAC Officers

Amanda Levy, Chairperson  
Robin Sanchez, Vice Chairperson & Program Chairperson  
Fran Agnone, Membership Secretary & Treasurer

### EEAC Steering Committee Members

Fran Agnone, Sanitation Foundation  
Jessica Bonamusa, NYC Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene  
Elisa Caref, Billion Oyster Project  
Tania Goicoechea, New York University  
Quin Hricik, New York University  
Bethany Kogut, City of Bellevue, WA  
Amanda Levy, NYC Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene  
Shig Matsukawa, Food Waste Recycler  
Ray Pultinas, James Baldwin Outdoor Learning Center  
Robin Sanchez, NYC Dept of Environmental Protection  
Daniel Tainow, NYC Parks, Urban Park Rangers  
Adam Walker, The Battery Conservancy  
Robert Wallace, New York University  
Ilana Weinstein, Wave Hill  
Mike Zamm, EEPF/TEEP, a project of EEAC

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### Stay in Touch

Members, keep up with the latest EEAC news on our listserv. If you would like to join the listserv click [this link](#) to join the Google Group. You can find us on social media too!

### Steering Committee Meetings

Please visit the EEAC website at [www.eeac-nyc.org](http://www.eeac-nyc.org) for meeting locations or contact an EEAC Steering Committee member. Steering committee meetings are open to anyone interested in learning about environmental education in New York City and sharing information about special programs and projects.

**The Environmental Education Advisory Council of New York City, EEAC-NYC, is the only nonprofit organization with the sole purpose of promoting and supporting outstanding environmental education in New York City schools and other centers for learning.**

# Book Buzz!



Last Fall, EEAC organized a ‘no shame’ book group where we came together to discuss *All We Can Save*. This book is an anthology of poems and essays that help us determine how we can take action during the climate crisis. In our book group we worked through discussion questions, creative prompts, and calls to action.

We are so excited to launch our next book group series starting in February where we will dive into a new book called *What If We Get It Right?* by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson. This book follows a similar format and includes conversations, essays, art, and poems that help us to imagine and speculate what climate futures could be.

Below is a “save the date” for our winter book club which will start in February, feel free to share with the Eventbrite which will be updated with dates and such soon!



Join us to speculate, dream, and imagine

## EEAC's Winter Book Group

Save the Date: February-June 2025



EEAC will be organizing a ‘no-shame’ book club from February-June. Together we will be working through *What IF We Get It Right?* by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson. This book is a series of interviews, essays, and poems that will allow us to speculate what a climate future might look, feel, and be like.

## Wander & Wonder

Join EEAC at Fort Tryon Park in the Spring for a casual walk to enjoy the spring leaf out and emerging animals. Some ID guides will be available.

We will meet at Margaret Corbin Plaza next to the Head House for the 190th St A train entrance. Our first walk will not include steps or hills and our second will include some moderate hills and steps.

More details will be sent in Spring through the EEAC listserv.



# Lunch & Learn

On May 21, 2024, the EEAC hosted a “Lunch and Learn” session focusing on integrating learning standards into environmental education (EE) programming. This initiative stemmed from a discussion on the EEAC listserv about the relevance and benefits of aligning field trip programs with state learning standards. Educators from various organizations expressed a shared curiosity and concern about the evolving role of standards in informal education settings. The event provided a platform for further exploration and collaboration, highlighting key themes and actionable recommendations.

A major takeaway was the lack of a unified approach to standards alignment among NYC’s EE programs. Participants emphasized the need for clearer guidance and training on effectively

integrating standards into informal settings. To address this, EEAC recommended enhanced training programs, potentially facilitated by the NYCPS Science Department, to support both new and experienced educators. Additionally, understanding widely used curricula like Amplify Science could help EE organizations better align their programs with classroom learning units, making field trips more relevant and accessible to schools.

Peer-to-peer learning emerged as a critical strategy for enhancing EE practices. Collaborating with other informal education fields, such as STEM and museum education, can provide valuable insights into standard alignment. Strengthening connections between classroom teachers and informal educators through joint professional development sessions can foster mutual learning and community building. These efforts aim to ensure that EE programs remain valuable resources for NYC schools by aligning more closely with classroom needs. For more details and a comprehensive look at our findings, [click here](#) to view the full report.

# Green Scene

The New York Botanical Garden’s Steere Herbarium is the largest herbarium (collection of dried plant specimens) in the Western Hemisphere. While in-person visits to the herbarium are typically limited to researchers, nearly 60% of the Steere Herbarium collection has been digitized in to the [C. V. Starr Virtual Herbarium](#). That’s over 4 million specimens! These digitized specimens are a great resource for educational materials, presentations, and more.

In addition to their botanical specimens, the NYBG Herbarium also publishes a blog titled, [The Hand Lens](#), which explores the stories behind each specimen. Some themes include “Shapes and Patterns”, “Black Botany”, “Invasive Species”, and “Women in Science”. Check out these resources at the embedded links.



Photos of *Cyrtomium fortunei* J.Sm., *Crocus flavus* Weston  
©The New York Botanical Garden Herbarium