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1,000 Hours a Year Initiative Set to Return in 2020

Grant seeks to protect where children in our region grow, learn, and play

[PITTSBURGH, PA, January 17, 2020]: Women for a Healthy Environment (WHE) and Green Building Alliance (GBA) are re-launching the 1,000 Hours a Year Initiative for schools and licensed child-care centers across Southwestern PA thanks to a generous grant from the Heinz Endowments.

Grants from the 1,000 Hours a Year Initiative will be used to address critical environmental health hazards such as air quality, lead, and radon. The Initiative also provides technical assistance with online and in-person trainings. Grants will be offered to schools and child-care centers across the 10 counties in Southwestern PA.

Kara Rubio, the Healthy Schools Coordinator with Women for a Healthy Environment, says “Children spend approximately 1,000 hours a year in their school buildings, so it is vital that we work together to ensure that the spaces where children grow, learn, and play are safe and healthy.”

One of the main functions of the Initiative is the detection and removal of both lead and radon.

In its first grant cycle, from 2017 – 2019, the Initiative found levels of lead above 5 ppb in at least 1 school building in every school district that tested in Allegheny county. Remediation was conducted in each of the participating school districts, early learning centers, or charter schools where lead and radon were found.

The program has already helped test and remediate these hazards in 40% of all public-school districts in Allegheny County.

According to Katie Lockley, Green and Healthy Schools Director with Green Building Alliance, “Lead, radon, and poor indoor air quality are all known hazards that can negatively impact student and staff health. Our solutions-based initiative provides the support – financial and technical – to ensure that environmental hazards are eliminated from our school and childcare buildings so that all students can thrive.”

In total, WHE and GBA provided direct financial and technical support for lead and radon remediation in 177 buildings throughout 30 school districts, 25 early learning centers, and 10 independent or charter schools between 2017-2019.

Submissions for the 2020 1,000 Hours a Year Initiative will open in January 2020 to public and private schools and licensed child-care centers. Visit 1000hoursayear.org for more information.

About Women for a Healthy Environment

- Women for a Healthy Environment is a nonprofit based in Pittsburgh that educates and empowers community members about environmental risks that impact public health. Through community programming, technical assistance and advocacy WHE creates healthy spaces for children to live, learn and play. Learn more at www.WomenForAHealthyEnvironment.org.

ABOUT GREEN BUILDING ALLIANCE

Green Building Alliance (GBA) advances innovation in the built environment by empowering people to create environmentally, economically, and socially vibrant places. As Greater Pittsburgh's authority on sustainable design, GBA drives the market for healthy communities while equipping designers, manufacturers, developers, and policymakers to catalyze systemic change. GBA manages the largest 2030 District in North America, and in 2019, established Pittsburgh as the 4th United Nations Center for Excellence on High Performance Building in the world. GBA partners across Western Pennsylvania, with strategic alliances including the United Nations, the International Living Future Institute, and the Green Schools National Network.