



Community Ecology Institute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Ecology Institute Awards to Be Presented at Howard County GreenFest

The Community Ecology Institute's environmental leadership awards will be presented on Earth Day.

Columbia, MD—On Saturday, April 22, 2017, the Community Ecology Institute (CEI) will present its first annual awards to local environmental leaders. According to CEI President Chiara D'Amore, "These awards honor some of the most creative people in our community, all dedicated to fostering human connections with the natural world. CEI is delighted to recognize their important achievements."

Awards for 2017 will be conferred in five categories. The **Lifetime Achievement Award** will go to **Elizabeth Bobo** for her distinguished advocacy for the protection of the natural environment during her political service as the Howard County Executive and in the Maryland House of Delegates. The **Experiential Education Award** will go to **Akiima Price** for her work developing a national platform for emerging environmental educators and creation of cutting edge guidelines for Community Environmental Education in which nature is used as a medium to create social change in urban communities of color. The **Community Outreach Award** will go to **Jodi Rose** for her work on watershed restoration action in Maryland in her role as the Executive Director of Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, in particular engaging communities of faith to plant trees as a way to engage individuals in environmental stewardship while benefiting the Chesapeake Bay. The **Ecosystem Restoration Award** will go to the **Cunningham Family of Mary's Land Farm** for their work to go beyond organic farming on their 160 acre property by viewing their farm as a system of interlinking ecological relationships, using permaculture practices to create sustainable agricultural ecosystems, and educating eaters on those practices through tours. The **Youth Leadership Award** will go to **Katherine Elicker** for her work as the student member of Howard County's Environmental Sustainability Board and three years spent working with the Restoring the Environment and Developing Youth (READY) program to improve watershed health through the reduction of stormwater runoff.

The awards will be presented at a public ceremony at Howard County GreenFest on April 22 from 12:30 to 1:30. GreenFest, to be held at Howard Community College, is Howard County's premier environmental event each year. The theme for 2017 is "Earth Day Every Day." Activities will include a natural play space sponsored by the Community Ecology Institute, as well as a rain barrel workshop, native plant sales, and information booths of green vendors from throughout the area.

The awards will be presented by Chiara D'Amore, founder and president of CEI. Dr. D'Amore will speak briefly on the importance of building healthy communities through outdoor play and nature stewardship, and will introduce short talks by each of the award recipients.

The Community Ecology Institute

CEI is a 501(c) (3) organization, established in 2016 in Columbia, Maryland, with a mission to foster and ecological health and well-being through research and programs that strengthen diverse connections between people and the natural world. <https://www.communityecologyinstitute.org/home.html>

GreenFest Information

Saturday, April 22, 2017, 12:30 to 1:30pm CEI Awards presentation; 10am – 4 pm, CEI outdoor play space

Howard County GreenFest

Howard Community College, 10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia, MD 21044

GreenFest is free and open to the public, no registration required

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/County-Administration/Community-Sustainability/GreenFest>