

National Hispanic Environmental Council



FACT SHEET

THE 8th ANNUAL MINORITY YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING INSTITUTE “8 Days of Learning, A Lifetime of Experience” September 19–26, 2009 • Glorieta, New Mexico

SUMMARY

The **National Hispanic Environmental Council (NHEC)** is **accepting applications** from teens, aged 16–19 from across the country, to attend its upcoming “8th Annual Minority Youth Environmental Training Institute”. The Institute is an intensive, science-based, residential, and highly educational 8 day program to be held in Northern New Mexico this September.

Using classroom and outdoor settings, the Institute is designed to help create the environmental leaders of tomorrow by introducing, educating, and inspiring youth, especially Latinos and other minorities, to a range of environmental, natural resource and energy topics. It is also designed to provide information on the many college and career opportunities in the environment, and to strongly urge students to pursue these careers in the future.

Students should note that if selected, NHEC will provide a full scholarship that will cover all your major costs to attend the 8 day program, including airfare and housing. There is no fee to apply, and only a \$25 registration fee if you are selected.

The Institute will be held at the Glorieta Lifeway Conference Center, located 18 miles east of Santa Fe, NM. All students will be housed at Glorieta. Glorieta is in a beautiful area, with mountains, trails, and national parks and forests nearby, and where much of the Institute’s coursework will be taught. NHEC instructors will teach the Institute, with active assistance from our sponsors, the National Park Service, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the National Park Trust, who are funding the Institute, and whose staff will play a key role. Also present at the Institute will be Latino/minority “role models”, who are minority environmental professionals from every discipline, volunteering their time, knowledge, and heritage to help students learn the curriculum.

APPLICATION PROCESS, SELECTION, AND THE INSTITUTE SCHOLARSHIP

The Institute is open to all students aged 16–19, from the 50 states and Puerto Rico. Latino youth are especially urged to apply, given the severe under-representation of Latinos in environmental fields. Applications will be evaluated as they are received, **so applying as soon as possible is strongly encouraged**. See the attached “Application Form” and other materials on how to apply. Students can also call or write NHEC for application materials, or go to our web page at: www.nheec.org. However, while students can obtain application forms from our web page, **you cannot apply on-line**. Completed applications must be mailed to NHEC.

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Applicants from across the nation will be competitively selected for the Institute scholarship, based on a variety of criteria. Selection criteria includes (but is not limited to): 1. students' maturity and seriousness of intentions; 2. students' academic background; including GPA; 3. ability to show a strong and genuine interest in the environment, especially as a future career; 4. proven experience in some environmental activity or job (especially if with one of our federal sponsors); 5. extracurricular and/or community activities; and 6. diversity by age, gender, race, ethnicity, geography, environmental experience, and other factors.

A one page essay is also required, where applicants in their own words describe their qualifications, their interest in the environment, their future career goals, and how they can make a difference to our environment now and in the future. **This essay will be especially important in selecting students for the Institute.**

If selected, students will have all major Institute costs covered by NHEC, through a full scholarship. **NHEC will pay for students' round-trip airfare, housing, all meals, educational materials, local transportation in New Mexico, related on-site equipment, and most other costs during the 8 day Institute.** There are some minor costs NHEC will not cover, and these are described in other materials. NHEC will also waive the \$25 registration fee for any student who is accepted into the Institute, but is unable to pay the fee due to proven financial hardship.

CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION

The Institute will begin on Saturday, September 19 and end on Saturday, September 26. There will be approximately 25–30 students in the Institute. Once accepted, students will receive materials before they arrive at Glorieta to help them better prepare for the Institute.

The curriculum, to be taught by paid, skilled environmental educators, will begin by covering basic principles in environmental/conservation and energy topics, and then progress to more advanced concepts, as each day builds on the day before. There is classroom instruction every morning and night, coupled with science-based field work that complements the class work. Since a major Institute goal is to introduce Latino/other minority students to nature, students will spend much of their time outdoors, in closely supervised field activities at Glorieta and nearby national parks, forests, and laboratories.

The Institute will also include sessions on the many different careers in the environment, and provide students with opportunities to see up-close—through interaction with the National Park Service, NRC, DOE, NRCS, and others—how these jobs are performed in the real world.

Students will also explore the many environmental programs that exist at colleges across America, plus learn where these schools are, how to apply, and most importantly, what teens need to know to gain admittance to these colleges. And, since students will be taught to learn and work in teams, leadership skills will also be developed during the Institute.

Helping to teach the curriculum will be many Hispanic/minority “role models”, and their participation is a key element of the Institute. These “role models” are working environmental professionals from many different fields—park rangers, wildlife biologists, environmental engineers, foresters, scientists, lawyers, administrators, geologists, and more—who are each volunteering to spend several days at the Institute to share their knowledge, their life experiences, and their heritage with students. Several role models a day will participate in the Institute and help teach the students.

Currently, many environmental education programs for minority youth do not include minority role models. The NHEC Institute seeks to correct this omission by having role models whom Latino and other minority youth can relate to. Students will have their “own” to interact with, to be inspired by, to learn from, and who have a success story to tell. In this way, the message to the students will not only be clear, but believable—**“I made it in this field, and so can you”**.

The coursework will be rigorous, hands-on and science-based, as well as multicultural. It will emphasize team building and leadership skills, through group challenges and individual responsibility. It will also be fun.

We wish to be clear with students thinking about applying for the Institute: this is not an 8 day free vacation, and it is not summer camp. **The Institute is a rigorous, academically challenging, intellectually serious program for mature students** with a deep and genuine interest in the environment. You will have fun, but you will have work to do too.

But for those students seriously interested in learning about the environment, we promise you will have one of the best experiences of your life. All of our students in past Institutes will tell you that it is truly “8 dDays of Learning, A Lifetime of Experience”.

Through closely supervised field trips to cities like Santa Fe, as well as hikes to streams, trails, canyons, and parks and forests, students will experience the excitement of the “great outdoors”, and see first-hand the natural beauty of America. The curriculum is also designed to explore environmental issues specifically affecting Latinos and other minorities, and to examine the often unique environmental perspectives of minority Americans. **Fundamentally however, the Institute is designed to foster in students the belief that our natural heritage belongs to all Americans—including minorities—and therefore we all share a duty to help protect our environment.**

During the Institute, students will encounter a diversity of views and experiences. This diversity will ensure—especially since students come from all across the nation—that they learn as much from each other as from the coursework.

POST INSTITUTE CONTACT AND FOLLOW-UP WITH STUDENTS:

NHEC, and our Institute, are about building the next generation of minority environmental leaders and professionals. To do this, NHEC must contact students after the Institute. Thus, there is a post-Institute component to the Institute, **and you need to know—and agree to—this component, before you apply.**

Post Institute follow-up will take the form of occasional emails (or, if necessary, a phone call) from NHEC that will ask you to fill out a short questionnaire that relates to the questions, above. We ask for your cooperation in this tracking process. It will help us, help you, and help students that follow you in future Institutes.

NHEC will also keep you informed, by email, of other opportunities for Institute graduates. This includes information on a variety of federal and other environmental programs, as well as scholarships to such NHEC programs as our annual Conference and Career Fair, our High School Environmental Career Awareness Program, and our other Regional Institutes. We hope information on all these opportunities will help you with your future education and career.

SAFETY FIRST – ALWAYS

The Institute is designed to not only be highly educational and enjoyable, but also safe. **NHEC has a “safety first” ethic, and safety considerations will be paramount throughout the Institute.** And, because the Institute is being co-sponsored by other federal agencies, and has their full support, parents and students can be assured that NHEC has and will take every precaution to protect the health and safety of students.

Glorieta security personnel are present 24 hours a day, and they possess emergency medical training. The Pecos Valley Medical Center is located 6 miles from Glorieta, and this Center offers ambulance service, a fully staffed medical team, and complete primary care facilities, including dental care. For more serious situations, St. Vincent’s Hospital is located 18 miles from Glorieta, just outside Santa Fe. And, because Glorieta is located just off a major interstate highway (I-25), any emergency can be handled swiftly and safely.

When students are on federal land (such as national parks and forests) they will also have access to the Forest and Park Services’ medical and safety system available to all visitors. Further, NHEC will coordinate with the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service to ensure that a qualified “safety officer” is present when students are conducting activities on federal land.

GLORIETA, A LIFEWAY CONFERENCE CENTER

Glorieta is located 18 miles east of Santa Fe, NM, just off Interstate 25 (exit 299). It is 70 miles north of Albuquerque, where students arriving by plane will land. It takes about 1 hour and 10 minutes to drive from Albuquerque Airport to Glorieta. (NHEC will provide bus transportation for all students from the airport to Glorieta at the beginning of the Institute, and also take students by bus to the airport at the end of the Institute).

The Glorieta Conference Center, built in 1952 and periodically updated since, is a rustic conference center with modern amenities. Most facilities have handicapped access.

Glorieta is owned and operated by the Southern Baptist Convention, and is used frequently by churches—especially their youth chapters—from all across America. Although owned by the Southern Baptists, Glorieta is used by many church **and** non-church groups, due to the quality and location of its facilities. However, no religious teaching or proselytizing of any kind occurs at Glorieta, unless a group itself undertakes it. NHEC conducts no religious activities of any kind during the Institute.

Glorieta is located near the beautiful Sangre de Cristo mountains, and was designed to be a “retreat”, and is so used by most visitors. Glorieta is at an elevation of 7,100 feet, which sometimes requires a day or so to become used to. Institute activities for the first few days provide for this, enabling students to acclimate gradually to the higher elevation.

Glorieta offers a full range of sleeping accommodations and conference services, including meeting rooms, audiovisual, and more. All sleeping rooms (which can be either single or double) are modern and comfortable, and have a clean private bath. There is a phone in each room, but no television, in keeping with Glorieta’s orientation as a retreat center. There is usually a television in the lobby of most buildings.

All meals are served buffet-style in the central Dining Hall, and there is ample quantity and variety at each meal. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served at pre-set times during the day. NHEC will provide sack lunches, through Glorieta, to students, role models, etc. on those days when students are off-site.

Other amenities at Glorieta include a book store/gift shop, where students can purchase books, magazines, stamps, film, toiletries, beverages, candy, clothing, local crafts, and more; a church; a coin-operated laundromat; postal services; public phones; fax and xerox machines; and an ATM machine.

Absolutely no alcohol is sold or available anywhere at Glorieta, and smoking is not permitted inside buildings. And, there are no stores (even gas stations) within at least 6 miles of Glorieta where students can purchase alcohol, drugs, liquor or other illegal substances.

Security guards are on-site 24 hours a day at Glorieta, and they patrol all areas of the campus regularly, including the grounds and dormitories. Glorieta also has a main front gate, which is staffed by security, and access to the campus is monitored. This gate is the only road and pedestrian access into Glorieta. There is a “quiet time” policy at Glorieta (from 11 pm to 6:30 am), which means all activities must cease, and students must be in their rooms.

All students will be housed two to a room, in a separate student building. Room assignments are made by NHEC and cannot be changed by students. All adults—role models, instructors, NHEC staff, etc., will be housed in separate floors apart from students. However, there will be several NHEC adult staff persons in the building where students are housed to ensure students' overnight compliance with the Institute's Code of Conduct. NHEC staff will check on students periodically through the night to ensure that students are safe and in their rooms after "lights out".

Glorieta has nearly 3,000 acres of scenic gardens, woods, trails, ponds, hills, and more. All are available to Institute students, and many of these sites will be used to teach the curriculum. Students will be closely supervised during all outdoor activities at Glorieta.

You can obtain more information on Glorieta by calling them toll free at 505-757-6161. Or write to them at P.O. Box 8, Glorieta, NM, 87535-0008. Or you can go to their web page at: www.glorieta.com

WEATHER CONDITIONS AT GLORIETA IN SEPTEMBER/CONTACT WITH BUGS, ANIMALS, ETC.

Northern New Mexico has fine weather during the summer and early fall. The days are warm, typically in the 70's, with lots of sunshine under very bright blue skies. **However, the mornings and evenings are cool**, especially since Glorieta is at 7,100 feet elevation in low mountains. Typically, evenings are in the 50's or 60's. Sometimes there are rain showers or thunderstorms in the afternoon, especially during late summer. NHEC will plan rain activities for students should this occur.

Because Glorieta is in a natural setting, and a goal of the Institute is to introduce students to the outdoors, students will inevitably encounter a variety of flying, swimming, and crawling creatures, such as mosquitoes, bees, insects, fish, reptiles, plus animals such as deer, cattle, birds and more. There is also the possibility of encountering poison ivy, poison oak, and other irritating plants. Students and parents should understand that these plants, insects and wildlife are inevitable in the outdoors, and, while NHEC will take all reasonable measures to protect students, contact with nature, in all its forms, is a key element of the Institute.

WHAT TO WEAR AND WHAT TO PACK

Because of the range of temperatures (warm days, cool nights), students should bring clothing that can be layered. This means shorts, jeans, tee shirts, and especially sweat shirts and light jackets for the mornings and evenings. Students should plan on bringing sneakers, or hiking boots if they have them. However, it is not necessary to buy any expensive footwear or special clothing to participate in the Institute. NHEC will provide detailed information regarding clothing once a student is accepted into the Institute.

INSTITUTE CODE OF CONDUCT

Once accepted into the Institute, all students must follow the Institute "Code of Conduct". This code will describe, in detail, the Institute's rules and regulations, including those governing student behavior with Instructors, Role Models and with fellow students. NHEC requires appropriate behavior at all times, and the Code of Conduct is strictly enforced. **All students (and their parents) must read and sign the Code prior to the Institute, and agree in writing to abide by its terms.**

Failure of a student to follow the Code can result in a number of penalties, including ultimately, being dismissed from the Institute and sent home. Should a student be dismissed from the Institute, they (or their parents) must pay for that student to return home. NHEC will not pay any extra costs for airfare should a student be dismissed. Students and parents should also know that when on federal land (such as national parks and forests), students are governed by federal law, and can also be prosecuted for any violations of civil and/or criminal law, should that agency choose to do so.

We wish to be clear—NHEC has created the code of Conduct because it is necessary to have this when working with teens. We absolutely use it, enforce it, and require students to follow it. If you have a problem following reasonable rules, then the Institute is not for you, and you should not apply.

NHEC IN BRIEF

The National Hispanic Environmental Council (NHEC) is a national, non-profit, membership-based organization founded in 1997, and headquartered in Alexandria, VA (just outside Washington, D.C.). NHEC is the only national Latino environmental and natural resource organization in the country, and runs several programs, like the Institute, that furthers its mission.

NHEC seeks to educate, unite, and engage our community on environmental and sustainable development issues; provide a national voice for Hispanics before federal, state, and non-profit environmental decision-makers; and actively assist Latinos and other minorities to pursue the many career, business, educational, and policy opportunities in the environmental and natural resources field. We develop and run programs—in partnership with the environmental movement—that accomplish this mission, and furthers our guiding credo: **"because it's our environment too."**

For more information on NHEC, call or write us at:

National Hispanic Environmental Council
Att: Minority Youth Environmental Training Institute
106 N. Fayette Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Telephone: 703-683-3956

Fax: 703-256-8288

Or go to our web page at: www.nheec.org

For more Institute questions, contact the NHEC Programs Coordinator, Juan Rodriguez, at jrodriguez@nheec.org