

2010-2011 Conservation Teachers of the Year

The Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is proud to announce the 2010-2011 Conservation Teachers of the Year. Individuals are chosen in each category (elementary and secondary) for their exemplary efforts and commitment to conservation education. This year **Chris Kostiha of Burton Elementary** was named the **2010-2011 Elementary Conservation Teacher of the Year** and **Cheri Goggin of Berkshire Junior/Senior High School** received the **2010-2011 Secondary Conservation Teacher of the Year** award. Both teachers will be recognized at the Geauga SWCD Annual Meeting and are being nominated for the Ohio Teacher of the Year through the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (OFSWCD).

Chris Kostiha teaches 6th grade science for the Berkshire School District at Burton Elementary. Through his interactive lessons, Chris strives to make learning fun, engaging, and memorable. His very busy 2010-2011 school year included assisting with the Sixth Grade Outdoor Education Program at Hiram House Camp, teaching a science program to under privileged inner city children, writing education programs for the Geauga Park District's new Observatory Park, building weather stations for the international GLOBE program, and leading inner city youth on field trips to the community gardens at Dunham Tavern, a historic stagecoach stop. Chris is currently pursuing a degree in horticulture and has involved his students in the cultivation of the Paw Paw Tree. Chris believes in the importance of partnering with community organizations and exposing students to nature and conservation as much as possible.



Cheri Goggin teaches environmental science at Berkshire Junior/Senior High School. Cheri believes that using the outdoors as a classroom accommodates all styles of learning, as does making learning fun! Through the years, Cheri has nurtured a partnership with Geauga SWCD and takes advantage of the programs offered. Her students participate in Geauga SWCD's annual poster contests and she was instrumental in getting the art teacher and students involved in painting barrels for the annual Rain Barrel Yard Art Campaign. Cheri even offers extra credit opportunities for students who attend a Geauga SWCD adult education program. In the 2010-2011 school year, Cheri empowered her students to write and submit two grants (Project Learning Tree Pollinator LIVE Green Works grant and an ODNR Division of Wildlife Wild School Sites grant) ... both of which were awarded! This funding is going toward the construction of a rain garden and outdoor learning stations. In addition, she was asked to assist with developing a high school level watershed program with the Cuyahoga Valley National Park's Environmental Education Center. Through student-led projects and involvement, Cheri connects her students to the outdoors and encourages them to give back to their communities.



Both Chris Kostiha and Cheri Goggin are passionate educators, lifelong learners, and past participants of Geauga SWCD's Wonders of Watersheds teacher workshops. Congratulations to Chris and Cheri for being chosen as Geauga SWCD's Conservation Education Teachers of the Year.