

CONGRATULATIONS

**North Carolina
Certified
Environmental
Educators!**



My depth of knowledge about wildlife, geography and history grew abundantly as we were immersed in the sites and sounds of our own state. These experiences **built my confidence and gave me strategies that I can use with my own students.**

I am so grateful for this program, and hope that I can continue to inspire my students to explore the outdoors.

CHERYL MICHALEC

Durham Public Schools





I've been an environmental educator since 2004, but I was new to North Carolina as of 2015. The certification program provided me a wonderful opportunity to become acquainted with **the people and the wild places** that make being an environmental educator in North Carolina so special.

PAUL MAZZEI

NC Aquarium on Roanoke Island

I've **seen, traveled, and discovered** more of our state during this program than I have in my 30+ years of living here. Everything I've learned and all the resources I've gained have tremendously improved my teaching and allowed me to spread awareness of environmental education to children and adults alike.



REBECCA MASTERS

Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools

The best part of earning my certification was learning how

to fish—in the surf, from a pier,

and from a kayak. Thank you very much to Becky Skiba from

the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and Gerald Klauss

from the John E. Pechmann Fishing Education Center.

JULIA LITTLE

Westover High School Science



The NC Environmental Education Certification program offered me inspiration and many wonderful learning experiences. The program **challenged me to keep learning and expanding my horizons** on topics I otherwise may not have encountered.

EMILEE MORRISON

NC Cooperative Extension





I have been a school counselor for the last 40 years. **Combining these skills with my newly acquired Environmental Education Certification** allowed me to engage the students who were struggling to learn in the traditional classroom by taking them outside.

KIM KELLEHER

Orange County Schools

With gratitude and enthusiasm I teach our youngest explorers about the wonders of our natural world.

Completing my Environmental Education Certification has **sparked a new flame, a new passion to travel, to share, to question and to wonder** alongside my kindergarten students. The environment is my co-teacher.



RENEE PAGOOTA-WIGHT

Catawba County Schools

Thank you so much for offering this opportunity for me to continue **sharing nature education with students**. I have thoroughly enjoyed the journey.

TRACEY DRANTTEL

Wake County Public Schools



The Environmental Education Certification program has definitely given me more confidence to teach environmental education.

I have learned to make it fun as well as informative.

GRETTA STEFFENS

Sampson Soil and Water Conservation District



I take my volunteer job as citizen scientist and outreach educator very seriously – it is the most fun I have ever had! Thank you for providing **knowledge, experience and confidence.**

SANDY DURSO

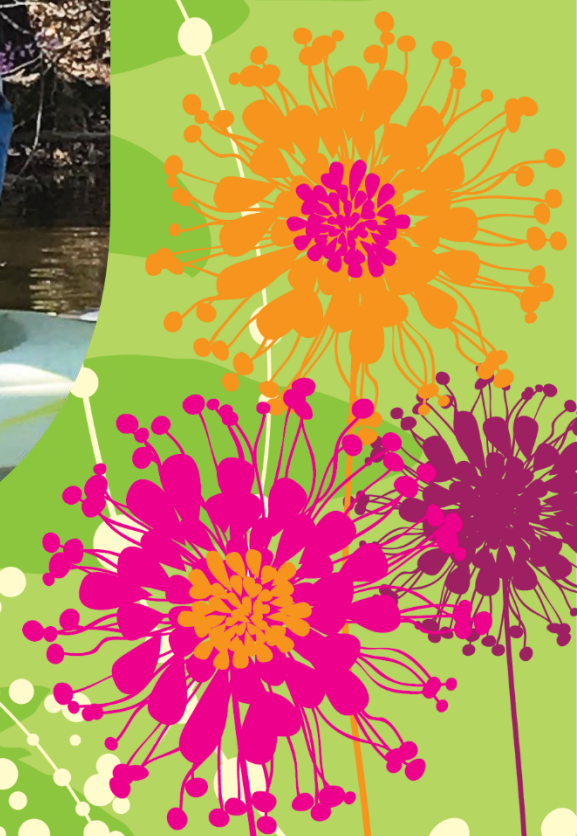
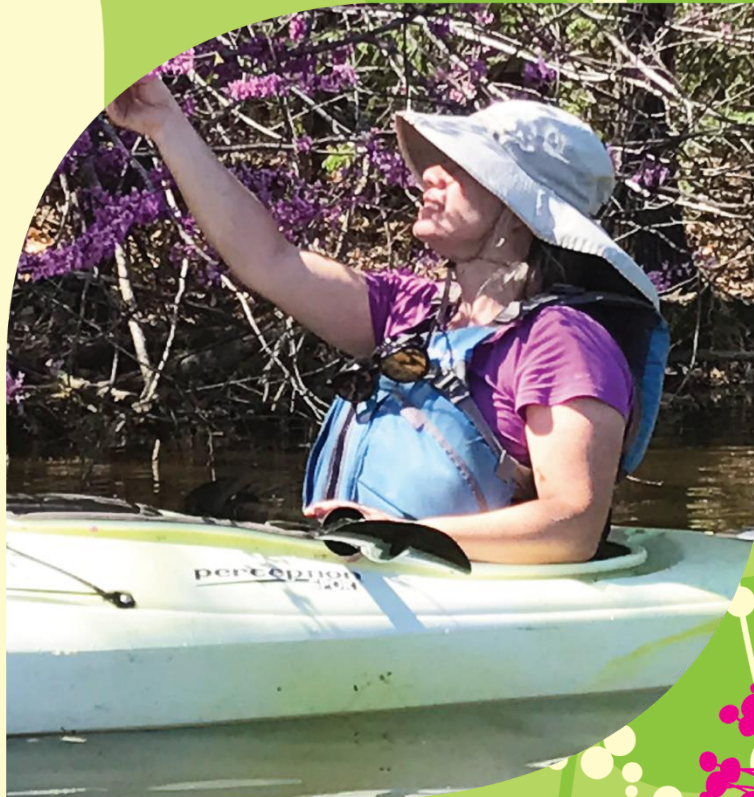
*NC Museum of Natural Sciences
NC Herp Society*



It was **inspiring to meet the passionate and dedicated people** who share their knowledge and expertise every day to educate people about North Carolina's unique environment.

DALE MORGAN

Chapel Hill Public Library





This program is amazing! I enjoyed all aspects of the certification program, it got me all over the state **visiting places I may never have visited on my own.** The variety of topics to choose from was wonderful and I learned so much and had fun doing it!

NICOLE PETERSEN

North Carolina Zoo

Learning the various flora and fauna, and visiting parks and nature centers throughout the state of North Carolina has **expanded my knowledge and encouraged me to continue exploring** these subjects.



BRAD WILLIAMS

*River Park North
Walter L. Stasavich Science &
Nature Center*



The more hours I spent attending environmental education coursework, the more I realized how much I did not know about my environment. **The knowledge is never ending and continually evolving.** Comprehending how nature is interconnected between plant phenology, animal life cycles, insects, bats, snakes and tidal waves was so eye opening.

KELLI SULLIVAN

Volunteer

The certification program **provided a platform for collegial conversations** in respect to environmental stewardship and student engagement. I am so appreciative to the staff who assisted me in finding coursework in my area so I could complete my certification. I am proud and honored to be a part of the environmental education community in North Carolina!



BEVERLY OWENS

Kings Mountain Middle School

Becoming a certified environmental educator gave me the knowledge and experience to better **integrate environmental literacy and ecological stewardship into my traditional science classroom.** Completing the community project for my certification inspired me to develop a pollinator garden at my high school.



LILY DANCY-JONES

Erwin High School

Earning my certification helped to **change the way I view many environmental issues.** There are a myriad of sides to every issue and going through this certification process helps you to understand the science content behind the issue and then helps develop the people skills to be able to talk about varying viewpoints.



LINDSEY BAKER

Raven Rock State Park

This program helped me gain confidence in my teaching, **helped me grow professionally and personally**, and guided me as I moved from environmental regulation into environmental education.



SUSAN LICHER

*Central Midlands Council
of Governments*

As a non-formal educator the Methods of Teaching Environmental Education class was the most impactful experience. This helped me strategize my communication and educational approach, which can be summed up in this haiku-inspired poem:

Start with awareness

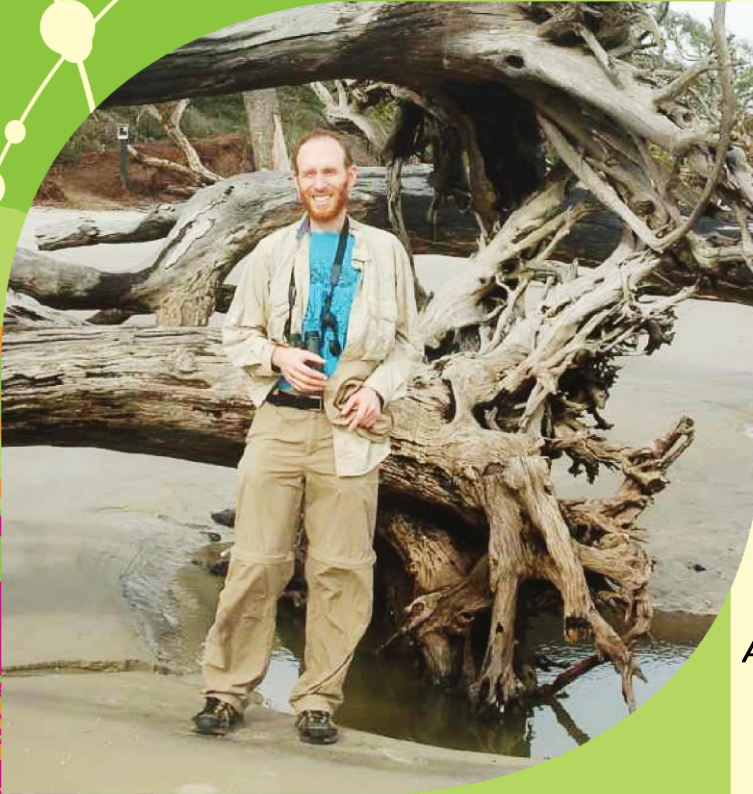
Move with curiosity

To experience wonder.



THOMAS SLUSSER

*NC Department of Environmental
Quality*



During each of the workshops and field experiences, it was amazing to spend time outside, **learning ways to share the natural world** with like-minded people who love sharing it. I couldn't think of a better way to spend my time.

TRACY FELDMAN

*St. Andrews University,
A Branch of Webber International University*

I have so enjoyed **opening up my mind to new ways of learning** and seeing the natural world from these certification workshops...as well as learning from the people attending along with me. There are always little pearls of knowledge to be plucked from each person you meet!

WENDY FOLEY

North Carolina Zoo





It's nice to **see other people just as passionate about providing a quality education program**, and to brainstorm about the program evaluation process for program offerings.

AMY KINSELLA

NC Forest Service

The certification program allowed me to grow personally and professionally. The program gave me the opportunity to travel the state, gain new skills as an educator, and **meet a wonderful community of fellow nature nerds!**

ASHLEY HAMLET

Sylvan Heights Bird Park





As a formal educator, being able to model the facilitators at different workshops and educational experiences has **improved my lesson planning and delivery**. The opportunity to visit so many parts of the state and network with other educators was also valuable.

DIANE FOLK

*Horizons Unlimited/
Rowan-Salisbury Schools*

It has been very interesting and gratifying to help educate the public on our native plants and to care for and then release turtles back to the ocean. Both activities are opportunities to teach the public. I enjoy **raising awareness and appreciation of nature.** The certification program has helped me do this.



ALICE ELAINE MCKEOWN

*North Carolina Aquarium on
Roanoke Island*



Traveling from the mountains to the sea attending certification programs and site visits was the best! Interacting with formal and informal educators during workshops and site visits provided **a solid background to launch a second career in nonformal environmental education.**

KAREN DUNN

Carolina Ocean Studies

This journey has been remarkably rewarding on so many levels, not the least of which was **meeting all the wonderful educators** at the various workshops and classes.

BEN WITTENBERG

*Wake County Parks,
Recreation & Open Space*





The various **workshops**
allowed me to meet
many educators
across the state.

CARLA WILLIAMS
Mount Mitchell State Park

The program allowed me to have the opportunity to take various workshops taught by **some of the most knowledgeable and vibrant formal and non-formal educators** in North Carolina.

ANGANETTE BYRD

Mecklenburg Soil and Water Conservation District



The certification program catapulted me into **a world of quality teaching resources for place-based, discovery-based environmental education** for students K through gray. I could not be prouder to call myself a Certified North Carolina Environmental Educator.



MANDY NIX

Stroud Water Research Center

The Environmental Education Certification Program was not only a ton of fun, but also **equipped me with the tools and networking possibilities** I needed to gain advancement in my career.



ASHLEY MARTIN

*Crowder County Park &
Historic Yates Mill County Park*



My favorite part of the certification program is the fact that we are required to cover all three regions: mountains, piedmont and coastal plains. Because of this, I was **granted the opportunity to travel all over North Carolina** to learn more about these ecosystems and spend wonderful days or weekends immersed in them!

AMY LONG

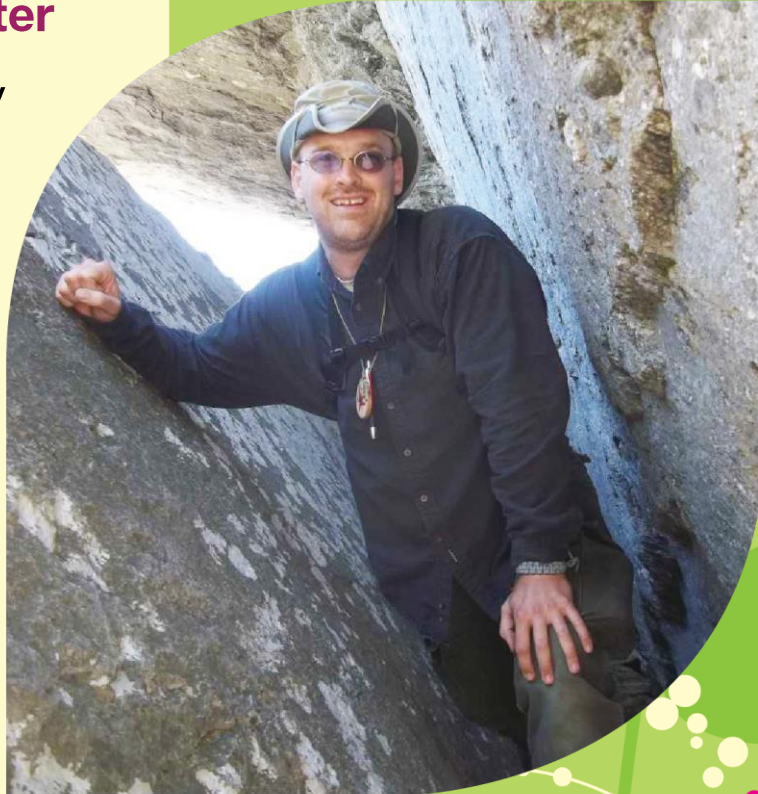
UNC Wilmington

The program **helped me
become a better presenter**

and allowed me to see many different styles of teaching. I enjoyed exploring the other environmental education centers and different programs I might not have seen otherwise.

ANDREW SNYDER

North Carolina Forest Service



I truly enjoyed **the camaraderie of the students who participated in the certification courses.** The

students represent many backgrounds, professions, and personalities, but the common goal of increasing environmental awareness in both children and adults created a quiet but strong bond between environmental education program participants.



KAY NICHOLLS

Wilkerson Nature Preserve

Thank you so much to the certified educators who taught the workshops that allowed me to become one of you! This program really **deepened my appreciation for all aspects of North Carolina, its history, its citizens, and its natural wonder.**



DANIEL WHEELER

Morehead Planetarium and Science Center

I really enjoyed taking courses that **gave me new ideas to incorporate into lessons.**

Learning what has worked for other environmental educators helps us all to be more effective in our programming!



APRIL HOYT

*Henderson Soil & Water
Conservation District*

The outdoor experience is always my favorite, but I also enjoyed **learning more about how to effectively implement environmental programs.**

One thing the program changed about my curriculum is that I implemented a nature journaling component into our semester work.

SARAH GOODMAN

Providence Day School





What came out of my decision to enroll was a whole new set of friends, challenging but fun new hobbies, and, in all honesty, a career change that I never would have dreamed possible for myself otherwise. **This community has literally changed my life for the better.** Talk about a program exceeding expectations!

JENNA HARTLEY
NC State University & US EPA

I got the chance to explore so many places in North Carolina, learn a great deal about environmental topics I hadn't been familiar with before, and **networked my way into a number of fruitful opportunities.** I'm very grateful to have enrolled and completed my certification.

CYNELSA BRODERICK
SEEDS



I am so proud to be a Certified Environmental Educator and part of this community in North Carolina.

The certification process added a depth to my work

through the knowledge, experiences and friendships I gained in the programs and workshops along my journey.

ELIZABETH OVERCASH

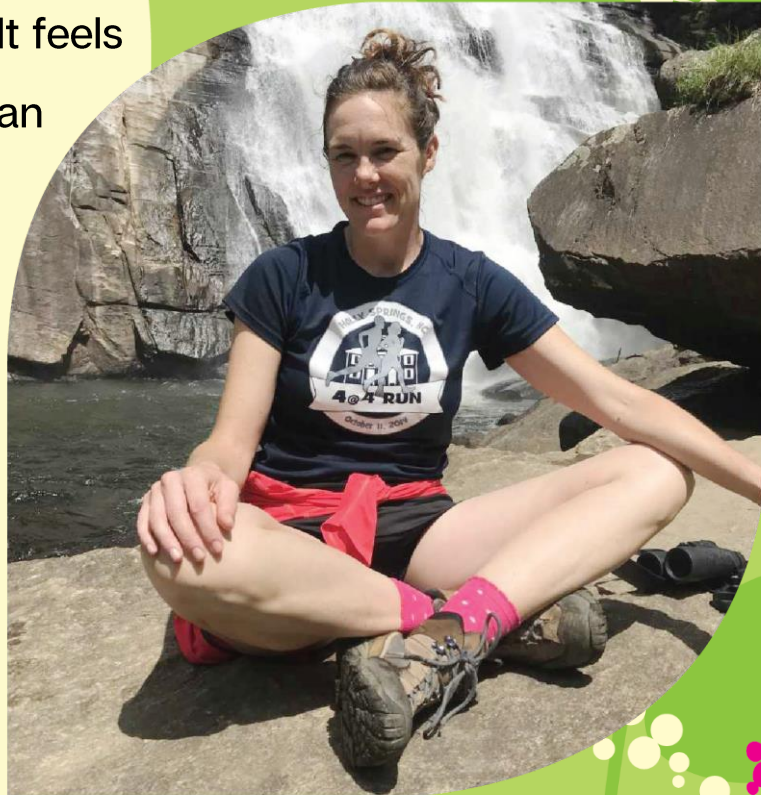
*JC Raulston Arboretum
at NC State University*



This program made me fall in love with North Carolina. It feels more like home to me now than before I traveled all around, learning about its rich resources. Now I get to share that first hand knowledge and love with my students!

RACHEL WOODS

Dragonfly Nature Programs LLC



The North Carolina Environmental Education Certification program has been invaluable to me both professionally and personally. The knowledge and experience I gathered as an educator and the connections I made across the state have **helped me tremendously in my career.**

ERIN APPLE

NC Museum of Natural Sciences



Earning the North Carolina Environmental Education Certification has been one of the most rewarding accomplishments of my life. I grew as an environmental educator, met incredible people, and **got to know North Carolina in a whole new way.**

JESSICA JANC

Blue Ridge RC&D



I am very proud to now be able to call myself a North Carolina Certified Environmental Educator because it highlights the importance and value of what I truly believe in as an educator. I am grateful for the certification process because it has **connected me with a wealth of resources across the state.**



MOLLY GILLESPIE

Muddy Sneakers

The North Carolina Environmental Education Certification is truly life-changing. **It gives you the tools, knowledge, and resources you need to turn what you love into a career** and build your network, all while having a blast and experiencing the beautiful places North Carolina has to offer.



CHELSEA SLOGGY

*Union County Soil & Water
Conservation District*



My favorite part of the certification program has been meeting and **networking with many like-minded people** from all across the state.

CAITLIN WILLIAMS

*University of North Carolina
Wilmington*

The North Carolina Environmental Education Certification program has

allowed me to create a 4-H

program that instills

environmental literacy by

fostering observation,

investigation, experimentation,

and innovation.

WHITNEY GREENE

*Wilkes County Cooperative
Extension*



During my experience I **have learned new ways of sharing my passion for the great outdoors with others.** I

am thankful for this opportunity to share environmental education with the students and visitors at Jordan Lake Educational State Forest.



CARLA HUNT

North Carolina Forest Service

My favorite thing was working on my Tree ID project and talking with park patrons as I studied the trees and took pictures of them. Each person I talked with asked different questions and expressed both interest and excitement for the project.

JANET HARRISON

Town of Cary Parks and Recreation



My favorite part of the program was traveling to all of the beautiful places around the state where the workshops were held and **the sheer joy of discovery** as I moved through the program. It brought back all the excitement I used to experience when I was a child playing in the woods.

JULIA ALISON-SOTO

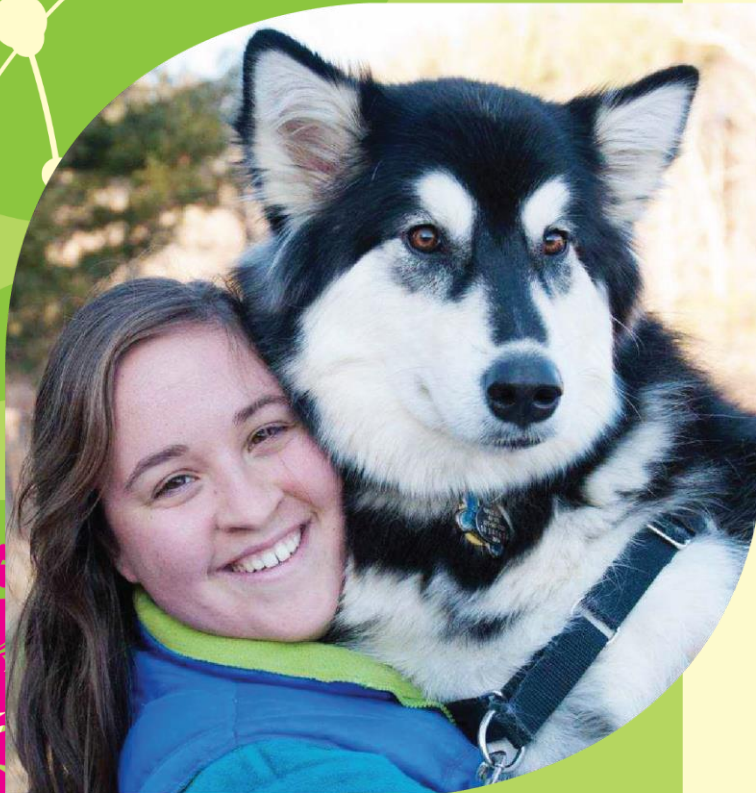
Girl Scouts



Obtaining my certification was a valuable experience for me because I expanded my knowledge of North Carolina ecosystems, learned new activities to teach and different methods of teaching them, and **became friends with other educators in the field.** It was truly a wonderful experience!

TARA WHICKER
Fort Caswell





The environmental education certification program has allowed me to make valuable connections with fellow environmental educators, obtain essential skills in the field and **gain access to resources**; all of which I utilize often in my programming and summer camp on Beech Mountain!

MARISA SEDLAK

Beech Mountain Parks and Recreation

I enjoy the continuing education opportunities because it's a fun gathering for educators to play outside, sharpen our environmental education skills, and **share ideas and experiences that may enrich each others' programs.**

MISTY VARNELL

*N.C. Cooperative Extension,
Edgecombe County Center*



The certificate program **redefined** the way I will use my **leadership and teaching skill set**. I became more engaged and participated in more action oriented community programs that bring about awareness and education for North Carolinians.

MOLLY NELMS

Self-Employed



I could not have hoped for more insightful workshops, skill-building opportunities, or interdisciplinary collaboration through this program. Not only did I glean practical skills and knowledge, but **the confidence I found in myself now allows me to mentor others in the field.**



BETHANY SHEFFER

HIGHTS, Inc.

I learned a lot about **inquiry-based teaching, group facilitation, and group management** while teaching in the field. I enjoyed the diversity of workshops and getting to meet a diversity of instructors, educators and others who I might otherwise never have run into.

GRETCHEN STOKES
Graduate Research Fellow



My favorite part of earning my certification was working on my community partnership project as it involved a combination of several things I like to do, including creating new nature guides, designing datasheets, **getting people involved in citizen science**, and teaching people about insects.



CHRIS GOFORTH

NC Museum of Natural Sciences



Before this program, I didn't give myself enough opportunities to teach. I believe I now have **a broader understanding of how to approach and learn about environmental issues.** I pay more attention to species, habitats, and changes happening in our environment.

LEAH FARR

Jordan Lake State Recreational Area

I have been teaching lessons outdoors for over 20 years but by completing the environmental education certification **program I have a more structured idea of how to package and direct these lessons** on the key characteristics of environmental education.



AMY TAYLOR

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Earning my certification has allowed me to network with other educators, **learn new teaching skills**, and gain more knowledge of the environment in North Carolina. My favorite experience was finding a crown snake during a reptile workshop!

KRISTIN GIBSON

Fulbright Austria



My favorite part of earning my certification was **working with the students during my community project.** It was great building the pine cone bird feeders with them and seeing how interested they were in birds.

APRIL BOGGS

The Nature Conservancy





I loved the certification program because it **gave me the perfect job.** I love teaching, but I wanted to be outside the classroom. I was driven to complete the whole certification in a few months and was able to make my dream a reality.

PAULA SMRCINA

Wild About Nature

Obtaining my certificate has helped me become more aware of the resources and able to articulate why those resources are important, and that they are available to all. The program continues to be **a source of great colleagues and collaborators for future programs.** Environmental educators are the best!



MEGAN CHESSER DAVIS
NC Museum of Natural Sciences

This program is a credit to the state of North Carolina. Everything I've learned I've tried to incorporate into my eco-tours. I meet people from all over the country and the world who have different interests. **This program has allowed me to reach and educate a broader group of people.**



JAMES MOORE

Outer Banks Adventures

The environmental education certification program helped me to learn, grow and refine my skills and **understanding on how to better connect children to nature.**

CATHLEEN REAS

The Nature Conservancy



I've learned to think about formal and informal education experiences in different ways.

I've also learned **how to remove obstacles to participating in environmental education** not just for students, but for teachers as well.

AARON SEBENS

Central Park School for Children



Through the certification program, I met lots of other professionals from a wide array of backgrounds. Hearing their points of view made me think about or pay attention to issues that I normally don't think about. It also **taught me to be a better listener in order to be a better teacher.**



LYNN LAMBERT

*Harnett Soil and Water
Conservation District*

Participating in the certification program has **helped me become a more engaging, interactive**

educator. Learning about methods and best practices in environmental education and applying these principles to my teaching has resulted in more impactful, memorable programs for my audiences.



MARISSA BLACKBURN

North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher