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## **VALLEY FORWARD EARTHFEST EDUCATION GRANTS PRESENTED TO FOUR VALLEY SCHOOLS**

**PHOENIX, Ariz.** (February 9, 2007) – Funding to support environmental education efforts in four Arizona schools was awarded this January in the amount of \$5,000 through Valley Forward’s EarthFest Education Grant program, made possible by STMicroelectronics.

More than 1,370 students in grades K-3 and 6-12 from Phoenix, Gilbert, Morrystown and Tolleson will benefit from the grants, which will support environmental education projects at their schools or in their community. The projects focus on such topics as: water, air, land, plants and animals, recycling, transportation or energy.

“We received about 30 applications for funding from K-12 teachers throughout the state,” said Diane Brossart, president of Valley Forward. “Our evaluation committee was extremely impressed with the overall scope and caliber of all the projects proposed, making the selection process extra challenging.”

The grant opportunity was announced last fall at Valley Forward’s third annual EarthFest Educators Night, an event designed to provide teachers with environmental education resources, held in partnership with Freescale Semiconductor and in conjunction with the Arizona Science Teachers Association.

Recipients of Valley Forward’s 2007 EarthFest Education Grants include:

- **Arcadia High School (Phoenix): \$900** – Awarded to Eric Bodznick, an honors and advanced placement biology teacher of students in grades 9-12, for a project titled, “*Pieris rapa* & *Brassica rapa* – A Symbiotic Relationship.” Approximately 1,175 of his students in all grades will investigate the life cycle of these butterflies from egg to caterpillar and chrysalis to adult. They will apply scientific methods to design and conduct controlled experiments that will determine the effect of environmental and manmade variables on the stages of a butterfly’s life cycle. Bodznick will also present a workshop to nearby middle school teachers on how to implement the project in their classrooms.
- **Highland High School (Gilbert): \$500** – Awarded to Shiloh Carroll, a ninth grade science teacher, for a project titled, “Pit Fall Traps – Looking at Invertebrate Biodiversity.” Approximately 100 students will develop pit fall traps to sample the invertebrate biodiversity of the schoolyard ecosystem for identification, study and recording. They will submit the data to Arizona State University’s CAP L.T. E.R. study.

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- **Morristown Elementary School (Morristown): \$1,500** – Awarded to Lowanna Perry, a K-3 teacher, for a project titled, “Our School Garden: Making it Personal.” Approximately 75 students in those grades will participate in extending the school’s gardening project to include a home planting kit. They will also create a desert tortoise habitat, toad abodes and butterfly garden. This is the second phase of work on this project. Valley Forward aided in funding phase one through a 2006 EarthFest Education Grant in the amount of \$1,500.
- **Tolleson Union High School (Tolleson): \$2,100** – Awarded to Parvona Ulrich, sponsor of the Tolleson Union High School Activists Club, for a project titled, “Garbage vs. Recycling.” Approximately 20 students in grades 9-12 will help facilitate education and outreach on the effects of littering and benefits of recycling. They will develop and implement user-friendlier recycling procedures on campus and provide appropriate containers for recycling materials.

All grant projects must be completed by May 18, 2007 and recipients must provide a summary of their work with photos to Valley Forward.

In addition to its grant program, Valley Forward’s Online Environmental Resource Directory at [www.valleyforward.org](http://www.valleyforward.org) offers a comprehensive list of resources for teachers, including field trip opportunities, curriculum, classroom speakers and related materials.

For more than 38 years, Valley Forward has brought business and civic leaders together to convene thoughtful public dialogue on regional issues and promote cooperative efforts to improve the environment and livability of Valley communities.