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Water Environment Federation Honors the Public Education Work of Water Professionals, Organizations

ALEXANDRIA, Va.— The Water Environment Federation (WEF) proudly announces the 2019 WEF Awards recipients for education. The WEF Education Awards recognize WEF members for significant accomplishments in promoting awareness and understanding of water environment issues through the development and execution of academic research, curricula and public education programs. “The Water Environment Federation is extremely proud to honor these individuals and organizations for their work to educate and inform the general public about one of the world’s most valuable resources,” said Eileen O’Neill, WEF Executive Director.

The 2019 recipients for Education are:

WEF Canham Graduate Studies Scholarship: Shilva Shrestha, University of Michigan—Ann Arbor

This scholarship, honoring former WEF Executive Director Robert Canham, provides \$25,000 for a post-baccalaureate student in the water environment field. Shilva Shrestha is pursuing a Ph.D. in environmental engineering and her research involves the recovery of medium chain carboxylic acids (MCCAs) from diverse organic waste streams such as food waste, with heavy emphasis on brewery waste. She is developing technology that uses anaerobic fermentation by a mixed culture microbial community to recover the MCCAs from the waste. Because MCCAs are produced from non-renewable fossil sources or food crops, MCCA production from waste streams has the potential to address resource depletion concerns while simultaneously treating waste. Following the completion of her degree, Shrestha plans to pursue a career in research and continue working on innovative projects that enable sustainable practices of recovering bioenergy and biochemicals from waste.

Fair Distinguished Engineering Educator Medal: Dr. Michael Stenstrom, University of California, Los Angeles

The Fair Medal recognizes accomplishments in the education and development of future engineers. This award honors Gordon Maskew Fair, a professor of sanitary engineering at Harvard University. This year’s recipient, Dr. Michael Stenstrom, teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in water and wastewater treatment, mathematical modeling of environmental systems and laboratory analysis. During his career at UCLA he has served in several university administrative assignments, including chair of the Civil and Environmental Engineering department, and director of the Institute of the Environment. He holds a Ph.D. in environmental systems engineering from Clemson University, and while there, taught courses in biological process design and operator training. Dr. Stenstrom has performed and published research in several areas of environmental engineering while encouraging his students to do the same.

Public Communication and Outreach Program Awards | Individual Category: Meg Tabacsko

For 30 years, Meg Tabacsko has created, spearheaded, and developed wastewater education programs that reach more than 10,000 students each year. She has developed and shared an imaginative array of effective curricular programs targeting every grade level with engaging and participatory elements. In addition to a highly successful Massachusetts Water Resources Authority wastewater education program, in her many volunteer roles in the New England WEA she has conducted regional teacher training workshops, a New England-wide curriculum sharing program, and dozens of conference sessions promoting and sharing

educational techniques to bring the clean water message to students throughout New England and beyond. She is a member of the Massachusetts Marine Educators and serves on the Boston Harbor Educators' Conference Planning Committee and the Waterworks Museum Education Committee.

Public Communication and Outreach Program Awards | Member Association Category: Clean Water Professionals of Kentucky and Tennessee

Water for Life began at the 2014 Water Professionals Conference in Chattanooga, Tenn., and has grown each year. In 2017, the event featured more than 40 booths that illustrated various aspects of water, including water quality, water and wastewater treatment, and the benefits of green infrastructure. Hosted by the young professionals committee of the Clean Water Professionals of Kentucky and Tennessee and the Kentucky-Tennessee section of the American Water Works Association, Water for Life also gives Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts an opportunity to work toward various badges, including environmental science, plumbing and animal habitats.

Public Communication and Outreach Program Awards | Other Category: Roseville (CA) Utility Exploration Center

The Roseville Utility Exploration Center is focused on inspiring resource stewardship every day. An extension of Roseville's community-owned utilities, the center promotes education about water and energy conservation, wastewater management, watershed protection and waste reduction. The center combines all the city's utility stories under one roof and provides education about all water programs, including drinking water, stormwater, recycled water and wastewater, helping to increase the community's understanding of all water environment issues. The center—the first of its kind on the West Coast— educates visitors about wastewater treatment and delves deep into a utility's day-to-day operations, inspiring participants to think about what happens when wastewater gets sent down the drain and to take action to be good stewards of the environment.

These awards will be presented during WEFTEC® 2019, the Federation's 92nd Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference, September 21-25 in Chicago. For more information about the WEF Awards, visit <https://www.wef.org/awards>.

About WEF

The Water Environment Federation is a not-for-profit technical and educational organization of 35,000 individual members and 75 affiliated Member Associations representing water quality professionals around the world. Since 1928, WEF and its members have protected public health and the environment. As a global water sector leader, our mission is to connect water professionals, enrich the expertise of water professionals, increase the awareness of the impact and value of water, and provide a platform for water sector innovation. To learn more, visit www.wef.org.