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Phipps Conservatory Presents Week of Scientific Engagement for Students

Events challenge students with inquisitive minds to think creatively and make positive environmental change.

Pittsburgh, Pa. — [Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens](#) is excited to present a week of events geared toward engaging kids in scientific discovery for the benefit of the planet. The Eco Challenge, Fairchild Challenge and Botany in Action Science Engagement programs offer exciting opportunities for students to delve into the world of scientific innovation.

The week begins Tues., Sept. 22, as Phipps partners with the [Allegheny Intermediate Unit](#) to host Eco Challenge, an event that allows up to 200 middle and high school students to investigate environmental issues in teams and develop their own original solutions. This multidisciplinary, interactive outreach event presents three challenges that teach students about upcycling, greenhouses, sustainability and more. Students in grades 6 – 8 are participating.

Then on Fri., Sept. 25, Eco Challenge continues as students in grades 6 – 12 participate in the same challenges and interview the [Botany in Action](#) fellows – a group of graduate students whose research on environmental topics from all across the globe is supported by Phipps for one year. Eco Challenge, a favorite event each year, inspires young minds by giving students the opportunity to visit Phipps and engage with real, passionate scientists to learn about their international work.

Registration is required for Eco Challenge. Teachers who want to register their students can email Susan Kennedy at susan.kennedy@aiu3.net or call 412/394-5818.

Meanwhile, the Botany in Action fellows are participating in the Botany in Action Science Engagement program Thurs., Sept 24 – Sun., Sept. 27. During the Science Engagement program, Phipps staff will train the fellows to effectively share their scientific research with the general public. On Sat., Sept. 26, their skills will be put to the test during the “Meet a Scientist” public program at the [Tropical Forest Congo Festival](#). In addition to the other activities offered at the Festival, the fellows will engage with guests and explain their diverse research topics from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Eco Challenge also kicks off the [Fairchild Challenge](#), a year-long environmental education outreach program sponsored through the [Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden](#) in Miami, Florida. The Fairchild Challenge encourages middle and high school students to creatively consider environmental issues, offer innovative solutions and put those solutions into practice. Experts in the arts and sciences volunteer to judge the contestants, and winners are announced in May 2016.

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About Phipps: Founded in 1893, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh, Pa. is a green leader among public gardens with a mission to inspire and educate all with the beauty and importance

of plants; to advance sustainability and promote human and environmental well-being through action and research; and to celebrate its historic glasshouse. Learn more: phipps.conservatory.org.

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