

Water Resources Education Network (WREN)
 A project of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund (LWVPA CEF)

GRANT APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Projects spanning time period July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002

Project and Applicant Information:	
Lead Organization:	<u>AMD&ART, Inc. N.P.</u>
Project Title:	<u>Vintondale AMD Education Center</u>
Organization type (check one):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-profit[501(c)(3)] <input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation District <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Community Water System (PWSID# _____) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) <u>Watershed Protection / Education</u>
Will your project implement recommendations of an existing watershed or river conservation plan? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, identify the plan and responsible organization: <u>South Branch Blacklick Creek Restoration Plan – SBBC Watershed Association, PaDEP</u>	
Is your project consistent with a municipal or county comprehensive land use of local watershed protection plan? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, explain why not: _____	
Project Leader: <u>Shannon Peterson –</u> <u>AMD&ART Education Coordinator</u> Street Address: <u>411 Third Avenue</u> City, State, Zip: <u>Johnstown, PA 15906</u> Telephone: <u>814-539-5357</u> Fax: <u>814-539-4345</u> Proj. Leader email: <u>amdart@gte.net</u> Lead Org. website: <u>www.amdandart.org</u> Organization with fiscal responsibility for project: <u>AMD&ART, Inc. N.P.</u>	Coalition Partners (Organization Name only): <u>Vintondale Municipal Authority</u> <u>Blacklick Valley High School</u> _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Check preferred category: **Watershed Protection Project** **Drinking Water Source Water Protection Project**
 If the project meets the criteria of either type of project, it may be funded under the category not checked, depending on the funding that is available.

Name of watershed/stream/river on which project focuses: South Branch Blacklick Creek

Geographic location of waters (Township(s) and Count(ies): Cambria, Blacklick, Jackson Twps in Cambria County

Name of drinking water supplier(s) and area(s) served: Blacklick Valley Municipal Authority, Blacklick Twp and Vintondale Borough

Funding Requested: \$ 5,000 Project Summary (Attach this cover page to the complete project description): _____

For the past six years, AMD&ART has been working closely with the community of Vintondale, Cambria County, to transform an abandoned mine drainage discharge and 35 acres of abandoned mine land from environmental liabilities into community assets. The Vintondale AMD Treatment System and Community Park is now under construction, and the 35-acre wasteland will soon host a passive AMD treatment system, 12 acres of habitat rich wetlands, and recreational areas; with an array of historical and environmental interpretive elements. This site provides the perfect opportunity to increase AMD awareness in our region. Various school and educational groups have already been using the site as an outdoor classroom for the past 2 years. AMD&ART, the Vintondale Community, and the local high school would like to exploit this opportunity to have the maximum possible effect. With a local church donating their building to be transformed into an educational center, and the Rockefeller Foundation providing support for the next 3 years, the stage is set to develop and run educational programming from the site.

Water Resources Education Network Watershed Protection Grant Program

AMD&ART, Inc. 411 Third Avenue, Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15906 phone: 814•539•5357 fax: 814•539•4345 email:amdart@gte.net

The Coalition

AMD&ART, Inc. N.P. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1994 and incorporated in 1999. AMD&ART is a sequential, three-site project creating models for Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) impacted communities to use. AMD&ART's work is based on the revolutionary concept of AMD as a social issue, not simply an environmental one. The AMD&ART remediation sites show that community participation and multi-disciplinary cooperation can heal not only the poisoned streams, but also the economic and social scars that AMD leaves upon society, artfully transforming these environmental liabilities into community assets. One of the main missions of AMD&ART is to raise public awareness of AMD and empower the public with the skills necessary to collectively act for change. In a region crippled by the shifting fortunes of coal in a global economy, AMD&ART helps communities to work together toward a stronger future, reclaiming a heritage that orange streams have long stained. *(For a deeper understanding of AMD&ART in Vintondale, please refer to attached documents)*

Shannon Peterson, Education Coordinator, is the contact person for AMD&ART, as well as a leader for this project. AMD&ART will serve as the primary organizer, providing the main structure, finding necessary materials, designing programs and materials, running the programs, leading the evaluations, and sharing information with all involved parties as well as AMD&ART's regional partners.

Vintondale Municipal Authority (VMA) is a borough authority charged with the administration of the recreational areas in town. The VMA has been a leading local partner throughout the planning, design, and construction of the AMD Treatment System and Community Park. They are responsible for the recreational areas of the community park, and are working towards holding responsibility for the environmental education center.

Jane Marines, President, is the contact person for the VMA, as well as the other leader for this project. The VMA will be involved in the design of the educational programs, responsible for running some of the programs, and the link to community involvement in this project, especially for the community workshops.

Blacklick Valley High School (BVHS) teachers Frank Pironish and Dave Conrad have been using the Vintondale site as an outdoor classroom to teach their students about the past, present, and possible futures of AMD for the past two years. They recognize the value of an environmental education center in this region, as well as effective AMD related educational programming that could be shared with teachers and watershed groups. Frank and Dave will play a major role in the design and use of educational programming, including using the programs with their classes throughout the coming school year.

The Problem and Solution

Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) is Appalachia's largest environmental obstacle. Ironically, there is a prominent absence of AMD-education and outreach to people of this region. Contact with other organizations concerned with AMD education across Appalachia gave rise to a revelation - the weakest link in the struggle against the debilitating environmental and social effects of AMD may very well be the lack of and poor distribution of effective, quality AMD educational materials, especially those that approach AMD education from a multi-disciplinary perspective. In Western Pennsylvania, teenagers who have AMD discharges in their own backyards (literally!) do not know what AMD is, its causes, effects, or solutions. AMD is viewed as a part of life, not a problem that needs to be addressed. Since generations have grown up with this same view of AMD, quality educational resources regarding the issue are few and far between. Without educational resources, AMD

awareness will not increase. The Vintondale AMD Treatment System and Community Park is the perfect foundation for raising AMD awareness in our region.

Over the past few years Vintondale community awareness of water issues and use has increased dramatically. Two years ago the drinking water source was a number of different wells that regularly became contaminated, so the population switched to drinking bottled water. When poor water quality had such a direct, visible effect on the community, they began to mobilize. Last year a public water system was brought on line. In addition, there is no sewage system in the town of Vintondale. Raw sewage is straight-piped directly into the South Branch of Blacklick Creek. The increased awareness of water quality issues has led to the construction of an area sewage treatment plant, and all sewage will be treated beginning spring 2002. There is also increased attention paid to AMD, which completely kills the South Branch of Blacklick Creek. The South Branch of Blacklick Creek Watershed Association completed a restoration plan in the year 2000. As suggested by the plan, two major discharges above Vintondale are being treated, and the Vintondale project is the next one downstream. For the past few years the community has been working closely with AMD&ART to develop a plan to treat the discharge that runs through their town, as well as restore the 35-acre abandoned industrial site, which once sprouted coke ovens, machine shops, and processing plants. The site will be used for a passive AMD treatment system, 12 acres of habitat rich wetlands, and a community recreational park.

In 1998, when the AMD&ART/Vintondale partnership was just beginning, a survey was conducted to gather baseline data on community perceptions of environmental and quality of life issues, as well as levels of involvement in community activities regarding those issues. That survey was repeated in February 2001, and will be repeated again at the completion of the AMD&ART project in Vintondale. Survey results have shown that awareness and activity with water issues has risen greatly since AMD&ART began working with Vintondale, as has understanding of the connection between water quality and quality of life. The increased activity in water issues mirrors increased activity in other areas as well, from town beautification to heritage preservation. The third survey, at the completion of the project, will reflect the impact of the educational programming.

AMD&ART recognizes the link between environment and community qualities. Our experience and surveys have shown that we are making a difference. Successes and branching out to our project to the Dark Shade Creek Watershed has attracted wide respect and audience. The proposed environmental education project already has an indoor and outdoor classroom, interested educators, a strong community support, and staff and maintenance funding for at least the next three years from the Rockefeller Foundation. This will effectively address the issue of AMD awareness as a key tool in the struggle against its adverse affects on communities, as well as educate them about the ways that they can improve and protect their water resources, and the importance and value of a clean watershed.

Objectives and Methods

Objectives

- Provide quality, effective, multi-disciplinary AMD educational programming, consistent with PA Education Standards, for an audience of all ages.
- Provide effective educational materials to be used with these programs, in the Vintondale educational center and elsewhere.
- Bring these programs to local schools and other groups, as well as share them with contacts across Appalachia.
- Build the VMA capacity to take responsibility for the educational center
- Increase communication between organizations concerned with AMD education.

- Share our successes with other interested groups working with AMD

Audience

Our main audience is the general population across our region, most directly the community of Vintondale, area schools, organized groups (scouts, etc...) and educators. In addition, the site and educational center is located alongside the Ghost Town Rail Trail, so 75,000 bikers, hikers, and out of town visitors could stop in and visit each year.

Our extended audience is AMD affected populations and concerned groups across Appalachia. AMD&ART is a recognized presenter at national conferences and symposiums, and are scheduled to share our methods at the Eastern Coal Country Regional Roundtable and the National Watershed Forum, and is showcased in the EPA's Clean Water Action Plan. AMD&ART's extensive and open communication throughout the region will allow us to share all that we discover and create with others who may use it to strengthen their awareness efforts.

Methods and Timeline

Action	Responsible party	Dates
• Research and gather existing AMD educational materials	AMD&ART (with OSM Watershed Intern), VMA, BVHS Teachers	Spring 2001 (pre-WREN funding)
• Adapt existing materials to our needs, create anew when necessary	AMD&ART (with OSM Watershed Intern), VMA, BVHS Teachers	Summer 2001
• Identify necessary and useful materials needed (chemistry kits, books, videos, etc...) for our programs and as supplemental materials for community residents and educational groups	AMD&ART (with OSM Watershed Intern), VMA, BVHS Teachers	Summer 2001
• Hold community workshops, work with other educational groups to test and refine programming (with evaluation)	AMD&ART (with OSM Watershed Intern) and VMA	Summer and Fall, 2001
• Conduct school programming at a variety of age levels, to test and refine programs (with evaluation)	AMD&ART and BVHS Teachers	School year, 2001-2002
• Conduct community and educational group programs (with evaluation)	VMA	Spring and Summer, 2002
• Conduct school programming (with evaluation)	BVHS Teachers	School year 2002-2003
• Share materials, experience, and suggestions with other AMD concerned groups across Appalachia	AMD&ART	Throughout entire project

Additional Resources

There are a number of additional resources that we will draw upon to assure a worthwhile, successful project. AMD&ART's strong connection with the Vintondale community, who alone know their own history and the story of the site, will guarantee an honest and accurate portrayal of the past. AMD&ART is made up of a team of scientists, historians, designers, and landscape architects. This multi-disciplinary expertise will also make certain that everything we do is worthwhile, correct, and well designed. A valuable educational programming partner is the Stream Team, an award-winning volunteer watershed monitoring and educational program. AMD&ART led the establishment of this program and both groups continue to work side-by-side. AMD&ART is also in continuous contact with other AMD concerned groups across Appalachia, and they will assist with the research into educational materials, as well as share their ideas and experiences. Any work that we do with WREN funding will be shared with them as well.

EVALUATION

There are a number of different aspects of our project that will allow for solid evaluation and adaptation as a result of the evaluation. The BVHS teachers, who are playing the main role in the

development of the programming, will evaluate everything we do to assure that it will be an effective teaching tool. After every educational program led we will pass out evaluation form to all participants, and use their evaluations to adapt future programs. In addition, we will develop a basic AMD 'quiz' to be taken by the participants at the end of relevant programs. These will demonstrate the teaching effectiveness of our programs. The basic popularity of the educational center, spreading interest and growing use of our programs, will show that the general populace feels that it is worthwhile and successful. In addition, the third community survey (previously explained) will reflect the effects of the entire AMD&ART project, including the educational components.

Our audience will recognize our evaluations through the adaptations that are made to the programming. In addition, everything that we learn from the evaluations, our successes and failures, will be shared with all of our partners, as well as AMD&ART's connections across Appalachia.

Long-term Continuance

Our proposed project with WREN funding is to set up educational programming in the Environmental Education Center alongside the Vintondale AMD Treatment System and Community Park. This is one (exceedingly important!) aspect of a much larger project. Provisions have been made to care for the Vintondale site itself throughout the future. The Southern Alleghenies Conservancy will be responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of the treatment system and wetlands, and a trust fund has been established to provide additional funding for any system needs. In the center itself, Rockefeller funding has guaranteed staffing and maintenance for at least the next three years. AMD&ART's work with the VMA assures that they will be capable to run the center for years to come.

One of the main goals of the AMD&ART project in Vintondale is to have a long-term impact. Our aim is to raise awareness of AMD and watershed issues, and we believe that the Vintondale site can be used as both an educational center and a model for other communities to follow. There are already many Appalachian eyes on Vintondale, learning how a community itself can improve their quality of life by improving the quality of their environment. The educational center on the site will provide the deeper understanding necessary for other AMD impacted Western Pennsylvanian communities to recognize the link between the natural and social environments, and take their destiny into their own hands.

Budget **see attached budget summary for WREN funding breakdown*

MATCH FUNDING BREAKDOWN	Rockefeller Foundation	Office of Surface Mining	AmeriCorps	Hungarian Reformed Church	Blacklick Valley High School	Vintondale Municipal Authority	TOTAL
Printing/Copying	\$ 2,000						\$2,000
Travel	\$ 1,500						\$1,500
Office Supplies	\$ 2,000						\$2,000
Postage/Distribution	\$ 1,500						\$1,500
Advertising	\$ 2,000						\$2,000
Workshops/Meetings							\$0
Personnel	\$ 4,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 5,100				\$11,600
Educational Programming	\$ 5,000				5 hrs/mo x 12 mo X \$20/hr = \$1,200	20hrs/mo x 12 mo x \$10/hr = \$2,400	\$8,600
Educational Materials							\$0
Office Equipment	\$4,000						\$4,000
Utilities	\$ 2,500						\$2,500
Building	\$20,800			\$300/mo x 12 mo = \$3,600			\$24,400
TOTAL	\$45,300	\$2,500	\$5,100	\$3,600	\$1,200	\$2,400	\$60,100

July 1, 2000 - June 30, 2002 Budget Summary

Project Name: Vintondale AMD Education Center

Project Leader: AMD&ART Education Coordinator, Shannon Peterson

Organization with fiscal responsibility: AMD&ART, Inc. N.P.

Expenditure Categories for Water Resources Education Network Funded Grant				
	Total Budget:	LWVPA CEF Funds	Other Funds:	In Kind Contributions (Match):
Printing/copying	\$ 2,500	\$ 500	\$2,000	\$
Travel (\$.25 per mile)	\$ 1,900	\$ 400	\$1,500	\$
Office supplies	\$ 2,000	\$	\$ 2,000	\$
Postage/Distribution	\$ 2,000	\$ 500	\$ 1,500	\$
Advertising	\$ 2,500	\$ 500	\$ 2,000	\$
Workshops/Meetings	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$	\$
Personnel	\$11,600	\$	\$ 4,000	\$ 7,600
Educational Programming (planning, testing, etc...)	\$ 8,600	\$	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,600
Educational materials	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500		
Office Equipment	\$ 4,000	\$	\$ 4,000	\$
Utilities	\$ 2,500	\$	\$ 2,500	\$
Building (renovation, exhibit, etc..)	\$ 23,200	\$	\$20,800	\$ 3,600
TOTAL BUDGET:	\$ 65,100	\$ 5,000	\$ 45,300	\$ 14,800

The Vintondale AMD Education Center

The Vintondale Hungarian Reformed Church donated the building. It is now in the process of being transformed into an environmental education center. The signed agreement stipulated that the building would be used for community purposes, and that it would be maintained as if it were on the National Register of Historic Places.





**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS**
OF PENNSYLVANIA
CITIZEN EDUCATION FUND



Sherene Hess, Project Director
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Indiana, PA 15701
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fax: (724) 465-4953
email: sherenehess@yourinter.net
website: <http://pa.lwv.org/wren>

Re: League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund Water Resources
Education Network Grant Award

Shannon Peterson, Project Leader
AMD & ART, Inc. NP
AMD & ART Education Coordinator
411 Third Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15906

May 17, 2001

Dear Shannon,

I am pleased to inform you that the proposal submitted by AMD & ART, Inc. NP to the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund (LWVPA-CEF)'s Water Resources Education Network (WREN) has been selected to be funded under the Watershed Protection grant category in the amount of \$5,000. The Selection Committee, comprised of ten individuals from statewide agencies and organizations, thanks you for your proposal and WREN looks forward to hearing more about the Vintondale AMD Education Center Project described in the proposal over the next year.

As you know, in order to familiarize you with the guidelines for managing the grant and with other projects being funded under the same program, an Orientation Meeting, which must be attended by at least one person from your coalition, has been arranged. The Orientation Meeting for the 2001 grantees officially begins on **Thursday, June 14, 2001** with check-in at the Allenberry Resort in Boiling Springs, Cumberland County, at 11:00 am. On Thursday afternoon, you will meet other WREN project leaders, both from this year's grant awards and from last year's awards. Project Leaders from last year are wrapping up their project and will be sharing their successes and challenges they have experienced over the past twelve months.

The meeting continues on **Friday, June 15, 2001** with sessions that feature excellent speakers who will provide ideas and inspiration that will assist your coalition in reaching the objectives described in your proposal to the LWVPA-CEF. We believe that we have a worthwhile agenda with speakers who are eager to share their knowledge with you and to learn from you as well. And, of course, we know that the combination of 2000 project leaders and 2001 project leaders will guarantee superior networking opportunities for all. Additionally, we will have various written resource materials available.

WREN will cover all of your meeting related expenses, including overnight accommodations, meals, and mileage reimbursement. WREN encourages participation any member of your coalition, so

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please extend an invitation to any of your coalition members as well—WREN will cover all relative costs; The only thing we ask is that attendees share a room (with someone of the same gender.) If you prefer your own room, we ask that you reimburse WREN \$50 to defray the expense. Please complete the attached registration form and mail to Sherene Hess, 145 Apple Lane, Indiana, PA 15701; or fax it to Sherene Hess at 724 465 4953 by May 31, 2001.

SCOPE OF WORK AGREEMENT

A Scope of Work Agreement is attached and should be reviewed, signed and returned to LWVPA-CEF as soon as possible.

➤ About the Scope of Work Agreement:

- In many of the proposals funded by WREN, there are some minor modifications that the LWVPA-CEF believes, if implemented, will benefit your local project in general and also will meet our grant program objectives and our funders' requirements. The funds are to be used for specific activities and LWVPA-CEF is responsible for seeing that the activities are meeting both PA DEP and US EPA requirements.
- The Project Leader should sign both the original Scope of Work Agreement and the photocopy (on colored paper) and return the photocopy in the enclosed self addressed stamped envelope by May 31, 2001.
- Please note that some projects do not need any modifications, but the Project Leader should still sign and return the Scope of Work Agreement on colored paper.

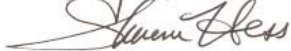
A few final notes:

- ◆ Your coalition's fiscally responsible agency can receive the first half of the grant award in the form of a check at the Orientation Meeting by completing the attached form and returning in the self addressed stamped envelope by May 31, 2001.
- ◆ The LWVPA-CEF Guidelines for Conducting 2001 Projects are included in this packet for your review. While the Guidelines will be discussed at the June meeting, if you have any questions prior to the meeting please do not hesitate to contact me at 724 465-4978 or email at sherenehess@yourinter.net.
- ◆ The Water Resources Education Network will be updating the website (<http://pa.lwv.org/wren>) to include a short description of your project. Would you please review the attached description and make any changes that you think will describe your project better. Please fax or mail it back in the envelope included.
- ◆ Please feel free to use the sample press release for your local media if you wish. If you do decide to use the press release, please review it carefully to be sure that it characterized your project objectives and other information accurately. If there are any mistakes in the press release, please let me know so that I can correct my records.
- ◆ Enclosed is the most recent printing (2000) of the LWVPA-CEF publication, "Groundwater: A Primer for Pennsylvanians." We will have large quantities of these available at the Orientation Meeting for you to take home for your organization or any of your partner organizations to use. If you would like a quantity of more than 100 copies, please let me know in advance if possible and we will be sure to provide you with as many as you need at the meeting.

Please feel free to place my name on your mailing list for any upcoming public events related to your project; if my schedule permits it, I will attend and lend support where I am able. Edie Stevens, WREN's Communications Director, would also like to be notified, if possible, of any upcoming events so that an announcement of your event can be made in the Water Policy News newsletter. Mailing labels of our addresses are included.

Congratulations on the success of your proposal. If you have any questions, or concerns, please call me at (724) 465-4978 or email me at sherenehess@yourinter.net. I look forward to meeting you and any other members of your coalition at the meeting in June.

Very sincerely yours,



Sherene Hess, Project Director
Water Resources Education Network
a project of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund

Attachments

- ✓ Orientation Meeting Agenda & Allenberry Resort directions
- ✓ Scope of Work Agreement (colored copy to be completed and returned by May 31)
- ✓ June 14-15, 2001 Meeting Registration Form (to be completed and returned May 31)
- ✓ Disbursement #1 Form (to be completed and returned May 31)
- ✓ Project description (to be completed and returned May 31)
- ✓ Publication & Localized Press Release
- ✓ Self addressed stamped envelope