

Cary student leader awarded for helping environment

Cornelia Harris, Education Program Leader at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, has been named a recipient of the 2011 Barnabas McHenry Hudson River Valley Awards.

Sponsored by the Open Space Institute, the McHenry Awards are given annually to four college or graduate students, who receive \$5,000 grants to complete their projects with regional nonprofits. The projects focus on environmental conservation, historic preservation, the arts, or tourism and are selected for their contribution to strengthening the future health of the Hudson River Valley.

Harris is partnering with—the Walkway Over the Hudson and the Hudson River Environmental Conditions Observing System (HRECOS)—to recruit and train 15 students in grades 5-12 from the Poughkeepsie city school district to be stewards in a new Walkway Ecology Team.

HRECOS is a network of environmental monitoring stations located from Schodack Island to Castle Point in the NYC harbor. The HRECOS kiosk, reports real-time data on river conditions—such as water temperature, salinity, clarity, and elevation—taken from instruments upstream at the Marist College waterfront.

“OSI President and CEO Kim Elliman made the awards. He said, “Harris’s dedication to working with students and expanding the outreach of environmental education represents the type of commitment that the McHenry Awards seek to recognize. We are confident that her efforts with the Cary Institute will increase younger students’ understanding of the ecology and importance of a healthy Hudson River.”

Harris is working on her masters degree in biodiversity and conservation biology at SUNY-Albany. She already holds a Masters degree in education and has worked at the Cary Institute for five years.