

## Staff Spotlight

### Meet Alle Crampton from TDEC's Office of Policy & Sustainable Practices



Alle started working at TDEC in 2015, after earning a Master's degree in Agriculture from Western Kentucky University. As an environmental scientist for the Office of Policy & Sustainable Practices (OPSP), she serves as her office's primary sustainability contact for K-12 schools in Tennessee.

Alle works to promote sustainability through education and outreach efforts such as giving presentations, working with the Governor's Rural Taskforce to conduct school food waste audits in economically distressed counties, and sharing stories about sustainability. Alle also assists her team with other initiatives such as indoor air quality and radon awareness, composting, and the new [Get Food Smart TN](#) program.

Going forward, Alle will be supporting TDEC's environmental education initiative on behalf of the Bureau of Environment and the Office of Policy & Sustainable Practices.

[Learn more about TDEC's sustainability office](#)

## News

### Food Waste Reduction Grants Announced

TDEC announced \$3.7+ million in grants to support the reduction of food waste and other organic matter from entering landfills.

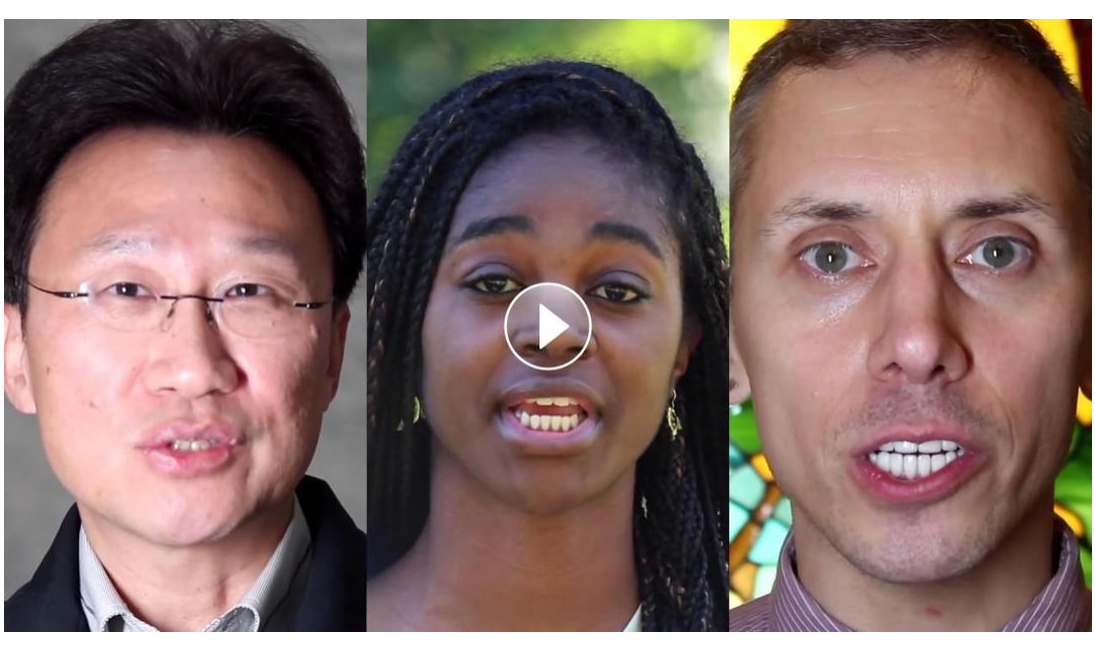
"Food and yard waste currently make up nearly 30 percent of what we throw away," said Commissioner Bob Martineau. "Besides taking up landfill space, organics produce harmful emissions that affect our air quality. These funded projects take direct aim at supporting the beneficial reuse of a common waste stream while protecting Tennessee's clean air."

A total of 13 grants have been awarded to counties, private entities and nonprofit organizations. The majority of the grantees is based in Davidson County and includes the Country Music Foundation, the Nashville Food Project and the Society of Saint Andrew. The largest grant – more than \$1 million – was awarded to Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee to procure a variety of food preservation and packaging equipment.

Grant recipients must use the funds to reduce organic waste through physical services or by other means, including but not limited to: education, food recovery and donation, feeding animals, industrial uses, anaerobic digestion and composting.

[Read more about the grant](#)

### Why #EEMatters



NAAEE asked environmental educators from around the world, "Why does Environmental Education matter?" and this what they had to say.

## Professional Development

### Do You Work with Nature Preschools?

2018 Nature Preschools Conference Call for Proposals



Results from the Natural Start Alliance 2017 survey identified 250+ nature preschools and kindergartens across the country, showing a 66% increase since the previous year.

Join an international lineup of presenters and be a part of the *World of Wonder: An International Nature-Based Early Learning Conference*, taking place on August 1-4, 2018, in Chicago. The Natural Start Alliance is seeking individual or joint proposals on teaching, administration, and research in the nature-based early learning field.

**The deadline to submit proposals is January 12, 2018.**

[Submit proposal](#)

## Resource Highlights



### \$3 million available to support environmental literacy

Help ensure that the next generation understands the socio-environmental challenges and opportunities facing their local communities — and that they have the capacity to address them. The [Gulf Research Program](#) is offering up to \$3 million in grants to support efforts to increase the scientific and environmental literacy and problem-solving skills of children and youth, with a focus on service-, project-, or problem-based learning opportunities in areas relevant to their initiatives. The full details can be found on the Gulf Research Program website.

A letter of intent is required for this opportunity. Submit your letter of intent by **February 14, 2018 by 4:00 p.m. Central Time.**

[Apply for the grant](#)

### Cheekwood Garden to Launch New Programs (Middle TN)

Cheekwood reaches over 12,000 students per year through school field trips—free of charge for Tennessee, Northern Alabama, and Southern Kentucky students—and several outreach programs offered in schools and community centers.

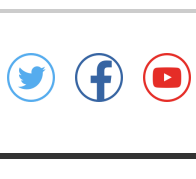


- [Cheekwood Explorations](#) is a science and nature program for students in grades 2 to 4. Admission and bus transportation are free for participating students.
- [Destination Cheekwood](#) will launch in 2018, providing underserved students and their families with transportation to Cheekwood, admission, and on-site activities free of charge.

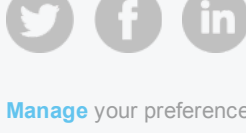
[Learn more about Cheekwood's new program](#)

## Past Newsletters

- [August 2017](#)
- [September 2017](#)
- [October 2017](#)
- [November 2017](#)
- [December 2017](#)



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