

PA Environment Digest

An Update On Environmental Issues In PA

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White House Honors Champions Of Greening Cities, Towns, Including 2 From PA

The White House honored nine individuals on April 25 as [Champions of Change](#) for Greening our Cities and Towns as part of President Obama's "Winning the Future" initiative. Two of the nine individuals recognized were from Pennsylvania-- Marian Robidas, principal of Jonestown Elementary School in the Northern Lebanon School District, and Lindsay Baxter, Project Manager for the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

Champions of Change were recognized because they demonstrated a commitment to advancing innovative approaches to promote energy efficiency, revitalize outdoor spaces and waterways and adopt transportation solutions that conserve natural resources, improve walkability and improve other quality of life aspects of towns and cities.

"These Americans are helping our country rise to the many challenges of the 21st century," said Valerie Jarrett, senior advisor to President Obama. "The White House is proud to feature the stories of these Americans who are doing extraordinary things in their communities to out-innovate, out-educate and to out-build the rest of the world."

Marian Robidas has been the principal of [Jonestown Elementary School](#) in the Northern Lebanon School District since 2005. Throughout her twenty-two years in education, she has been a strong proponent for active and authentic real-world learning, and for creating opportunities that allow students to do their own problem solving.

Mrs. Robidas believes that a school cannot reach its maximum potential in educating students without the help of the community and that it is never too early for students to begin learning about their community and how to best serve it.

She is being honored as a Champion of Change for her innovative energy priorities and sustainable living practices making a greener community a possibility in any American city or town.

Lindsay Baxter is a Project Manager for the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#). In this role she works with communities ranging in population from 75 to over 300,000, to implement sustainability efforts that reduce environmental impact and climate change, help local governments save money, and improve quality of life for local residents.

Key programs she works on include: the Pittsburgh Climate Initiative and the Mon River Town Program, a community and economic development initiative along the Monongahela River in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Prior to joining the PEC, Baxter served as the first sustainability coordinator for the City of Pittsburgh, in the Office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl. Lindsay Baxter is being honored as a Champion of Change for her innovative energy priorities and sustainable living practices making a greener community a possibility in any American city or town.

Champions spoke passionately about the work happening throughout their communities and among the various organizations and agencies they represent.

Lindsay Baxter, project manager for PEC spoke about the leadership of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl in establishing the first Office of Sustainability for the city, the value of taking an integrated approach to the issues and leading by example.

For more information, visit the [Champions Of Change](#) webpage.