



School District of Sevastopol

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www.sevastopol.k12.wi.us

September 3, 2020

Contact: Kyle Luedtke
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4550 Highway 57
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For Immediate Release-----

Brooke Tanck, Sevastopol Presented with Wisconsin School Forest Award

Educator Brooke Tanck, has been recognized with a School Forest Award by the LEAF Program for her contributions to the Pioneer Ecological Reserve, Sevastopol's School Forest.

Brooke Tanck has led the initiative to rejuvenate our Sevastopol Eco-Lab property for the past few years. She has gone out with her chainsaw and trimmer to open our trails back up a few times each year. She has made it a priority to publicize that the property is open and increase its usage among the community and within the district as an outdoor learning space. Brooke's lofty five-year plan for improvement and usage goals is right on track to continue improvements into the future. Already accomplished includes working with local naturalists to learn more about how teachers and students can make better use of the property, placement of a shed on the property to store materials, installed benches, developed and posted maps, fund/create/and install signage to improve navigation of the property, organize a boot drive with her students so classes can utilize the property in wet conditions, writing articles to inform the public about the history of the property, and work with local businesses to build walkways over our wettest trails to improve accessibility. To accomplish this work, her natural leadership shared her passion and rallied up staff, community volunteers, and students to give back to our community by making our school Eco Lab accessible once again to Sevastopol.

Wisconsin's school forest program was created more than 90 years ago to allow schools to own property for forestry programs. The primary focus was to engage students in replanting our forests. Since those early days, the program has grown and evolved considerably due to the efforts of many individuals and organizations. Today over 400 school forests are available to integrate environmental education into schools' curriculum, provide experiential learning for students, teachers, and the public, meet state-mandated education standards, demonstrate sustainable natural resource management, strengthen school-community partnerships, and provide income for education activities.

The current strength of the school forest program would not have been possible without contributions from educators like Ms. Tanck, community members, resource personnel, students, and school administrators that help their school forests "reach new heights." The award will be presented to Brooke



Pioneering the Next Generation

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at a ceremony on **Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 2 pm**. The ceremony will be at the school's Eco Lab weather permitting. The alternate site will be at the school.

For more information about the School Forest Awards or the statewide school forest program, contact Gretchen Marshall, Wisconsin School Forest Coordinator, at (715) 346-2633 or Gretchen.Marshall@uwsp.edu or visit www.leafprogram.org.