

Loving Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Reaps Big Rewards -- Ninth Annual Lexus Eco Challenge Kicks off With a Chance to Win \$500,000 in Grants and Scholarships

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TORRANCE, Calif., Aug. 17, 2015 –Students with a passion for science, technology, engineering and math are a breath of fresh air! And the Lexus Eco Challenge is an excellent opportunity for middle and high school students across the U.S. to help clean the air, water, and land in their neighborhoods and beyond.

Through the Lexus Eco Challenge, students will learn about the environment, team work and how they can take steps to make their communities better. More than 27,000 middle and high school students have earned over \$5 million for themselves, their teachers, and their schools through the [Lexus Eco Challenge](#).

“All of my students participate in the Eco Challenge, and I am continually impressed at how their leadership, teamwork, research, and communication skills develop during the process,” said Ashlie Arkwright, eighth grade

teacher at SCAPA Bluegrass, Lexington, Ky. and teacher advisor for 2014-2015 Lexus Eco Challenge first place middle school team “No Heat Ninjas.”

The program is now open for registration and students are invited to participate for a chance to win part of \$500,000 in grants and scholarships. [Lexus](#) and [Scholastic](#), the world’s largest publisher and distributor of children’s books and leading provider of print and digital instructional materials for pre-K–12 grade, have joined together to create the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) educational program.

In its ninth year, the Lexus Eco Challenge is an educational program and contest for teens across the U.S. in grades 6-12 that inspires and empowers young people to learn about the environment and take action to improve it.

Teams of students can enter both of the first two challenges, which are focused on Land & Water and Air & Climate. This year, the Land & Water Challenge will run first, Aug. 17-Oct. 16, followed by the Air & Climate Challenge, Oct. 17-Dec. 11. Winners from each challenge are then invited to go on to participate in the Final Challenge, Jan. 11 to Feb. 19, 2016 with a top prize of \$30,000 for both the winning middle and high school teams.

The Challenge Elements

1. The Lexus Eco Challenge also includes supplemental educational materials created and distributed by Scholastic that support Common Core skills and encourage teachers to integrate creative lesson plans about the environment into their classrooms. For each challenge, the website (www.scholastic.com/lexus) has lesson plans and teacher instructions, including questions to help guide a discussion about the current challenge topic, facts about the topic and guidelines for a specific classroom project.
2. Competition to reward environmental action helps young people apply what they’ve learned in class through the program and empowers them to make improvements in their community by participating in the eco-focused team challenges.

The Challenge Rewards

The Lexus Eco Challenge registration is open now for the Land & Water Challenge and will conclude on Oct. 16, 2015. Middle and high school teams, comprised of five to ten students and one to two teacher advisor(s), are invited to define an environmental issue that is important to them, develop an action plan to address the issue, implement the plan, and report on the results. The first-place and grand-prize-winning teams will be announced in November 2015 for the Land & Water Challenge, while Air & Climate Challenge winners will be announced in January 2016.

Each of the challenges will have 16 winning teams – eight middle school and eight high school teams. The winning teams will each receive a total of \$10,000 in scholarships and grants to be shared among the students, teacher and school. In addition, the winning action plans will be featured on a special webpage to inspire other students to take action in their communities.

The winning teams from the first two challenges will be invited to participate in the Final Challenge. Teams will be asked to reach beyond the local community and inspire environmental action around the world through innovative ideas that are communicated to a wide audience.

From the Final Challenge entries, eight first-place teams and two grand-prize-winning teams will be selected. Each of the eight first-place teams will receive a total of \$15,000 in grants and scholarships, and the two grand-prize-winning teams will each receive \$30,000. The money will be shared by the students, their teacher advisors and their schools.

Teachers are encouraged to visit <http://www.scholastic.com/lexus> to learn how they can take part and to review the Official Rules. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Void where prohibited.

Lexus' Environmental Efforts

Lexus is the luxury hybrid leader with six low-emission hybrid vehicles available. When Lexus began selling hybrids in 2005, it helped advance the concept of sustainability without sacrifice. The Lexus Eco Challenge is part of The Lexus Pursuit of Potential, a philanthropic initiative that generates up to \$3 million in donations each year for organizations that help build, shape and improve children's lives.