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New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences Receives Major Funding

The New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences was recently awarded \$2.5 million over five years in grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for a brand new program, *CLUES - Community of Learning for Urban Environments and Science*. The Philadelphia and Camden Informal Science Education Collaborative (PISEC) consists of the New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences, the Franklin Institute, the Philadelphia Zoo and the Academy of Natural Sciences as well as eight local community based organizations. The collaborative group will be designing and providing science workshops and experiences at the local museums and Adventure Aquarium for underserved families throughout the Delaware Valley.

CLUES is the fourth grant received by the PISEC collaborative over the last fifteen years to promote informal science education for disadvantaged/underserved children and their families in Camden and Philadelphia. The program will train and support local educators from community-based organizations to develop and deliver science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) experiences that underserved families can enjoy at the participating museums and the aquarium. The overall theme is global climate change and many of the activities will give children and their families an understanding of the need for conservation and behavioral changes they can make themselves to have impact locally. CLUES will reach out to approximately 16,000 people in local family groups with hands-on events at the museums, local parks, green spaces, and playgrounds. “The goal is to have underserved families enjoy and build an awareness of science learning as an enjoyable experience for the whole family, and as an added benefit to help the local environment,” said Angela Wenger, Executive Vice President and COO of the New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences.

The New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences is celebrating 20 years of furthering its mission “to promote the understanding, appreciation, and protection of aquatic life and habitats through research, education and youth development programs.” In performing this mission, the Academy strives to be a responsible member of the community, assisting in its economic and social redevelopment by providing opportunities for education, enrichment and employment. Visit the Academy’s website at www.njaas.org for more.