



1667 Snelling Avenue North, Suite D300
Saint Paul, MN 55108
P: (651) 631-3672 • F: (651) 631-2955 • www.nylc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 8, 2010

Contact: Tiffany Eckberg
National Youth Leadership Council
(651) 999-7360
nslc@nylc.org

High School Students from Niobrara Receive National Award

St. Paul, Minn. — Students from Niobrara High School in Niobrara, Neb., have been selected as winners of a national award recognizing their work to eradicate the invasive species purple loosestrife from area wetlands. The 2010 State Farm Youth Leadership for Service-Learning Award will be given by the National Youth Leadership Council and the State Farm® Companies Foundation during the Annual National Service-Learning Conference to be held in San Jose, Calif., March 26.

The award recognizes kindergarten through 12th-grade service-learning projects that demonstrate outstanding youth leadership in all areas of planning, including identifying community needs, planning the service, and putting plans into action.

Four years ago the Niobrara biology class observed a state park conservation activity on the banks of the Missouri River, and recognized that they had something to contribute. Today each class partners with state and federal agencies to control the invasive plant that threatens the wetlands. Students are working to preserve the environment and in turn preserve the livelihood of their hometown, which is reliant on tourism and recreation.

These students also host other biology classes from area schools and teach field techniques to document invasive species. The guest students also met agency professionals and made a commitment to continue the project work throughout the year.

The award, which carries a \$1,000 prize, will be presented to project advisor Sharla Hanzlik and youth participants Brittany Sage, Kim Proctor, Laci Tuttle, Robyn Klug, Shayna Bivens, David Johnson, Alex Sternberg, Ramon Gonzalez, Cedric Denney, Michael Kotrous, Tyler Stark, James LaPointe, Dustin Crosley, Marissa Stark, and Chelsey Thomson to support their future work.

State Farm and the National Youth Leadership Council support service-learning programs that provide opportunities for students to have a direct impact on their communities by applying their academic skills to real-world issues.

###

About Service-Learning

Service-learning is a teaching method that enriches learning by engaging students in meaningful service to their schools and communities, and integrating the service with established learning objectives. It emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving, and tackles real issues such as hunger, ecological concerns and diversity.

About NYLC

NYLC has been at the center of community service and service-learning programs and policy development since 1983. It annually convenes The National Service-Learning Conference, which included representatives from all 50 states and 41 countries in 2008. NYLC also offers adult and youth trainings, runs model programs and develops service-learning curricula.

About State Farm

State Farm® insures more cars than any other insurer in North America and is the leading U.S. home insurer. State Farm's 17,000 agents and 68,000 employees serve more than 74 million auto, fire, life and health policies in the United States and Canada. State Farm also offers financial services products through State Farm Bank®. State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company is the parent of the State Farm family of companies. For more information, please visit statefarm.com® or in Canada statefarm.ca™.