



## Arkansas Environmental Education Association

# 2022 Outstanding Environmental Educators

### Formal Educator - Brady Carman

Brady Carman is a Student Support Specialist at Leverett Elementary School in the Fayetteville Public School District and has served as an active leader in environmental education, in northwest Arkansas, for nearly a decade. He has accomplished numerous sustainability, bike and outdoor education initiatives, He is also an advocate for environmental education with students, faculty, staff, and administration, as well as within his community. Another role for Brady is that of the Leverett Elementary school garden leader. He works with district officials to renovate and expand their school garden spaces.

As a Student Support Specialist, Brady helps teachers get their students outdoors. He has helped to revitalize the bicycle education program and began implementing outdoor instruction strategies with his students after he attended the Better Environmental Education, Teaching, Learning & Expertise Sharing (BEETLES) Leadership Institute in 2019. The skills and perspective he gained from BEETLES, have led to the creation of a framework that empowers classroom teachers to make learning experiences more engaging and meaningful for their students.

Brady's passion for outdoor education showed early in his career. He was the Green Team Leader at Root Elementary School, also in Fayetteville. He led his school to lower its energy use, increase recycling rates and become involved in community projects focused on sustainability and the environment.

Brady consistently attends national training and conferences to increase his skill set, such as the Green Schools Conference, after which he guided strategic initiatives around Indoor Air Quality and enhancing recycling procedures. Most recently, Brady used his unique perspective as a formal educator to create and present a learning session at the North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE) Conference in 2021.



AEEA Executive Director Sophia Stephenson (left), Brady Carman (center), and AEEA Board President Sim Barrow (right)

### Non-formal Educator - Jane Hurley

Jane Hurley is the Education and Outreach Specialist at Central Arkansas Water (CAW), a position created specifically for her. She develops new and innovative programs that involve learners from many diverse groups.

Jane has a passion for communicating the importance of water education. She obtained rain barrels for community garden projects, coordinated with superintendents and STEM coordinators to build classes focused on certifications in watershed education and worked with STEM clubs regularly providing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education to multiple schools. She created and implemented the first CAW STEM Day Camp. More than 20 students attended this program, where they were introduced to the Forest to Faucet concept. The campers were from two underserved youth organizations in Little Rock (100 Black Men of Little Rock and Ambitious Girls of Sherwood).

She is a peer mentor for classroom teachers, helping to explain and then support implementation of Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Jane, Keith Harris and the UALR STEM Center, developed an immersive week-long professional development for science teachers called "The Power of Water Institute." Teachers spend several days in indoor and outdoor classrooms to learn the science of watershed management, water treatment and

distribution, and take those lessons back to their classrooms to utilize in their course work.

By applying to participate in the US Water Alliance’s first-ever “Water, Arts and Culture Accelerator,” Jane set up CAW as one of five utilities in the country to be selected. She connected with local artist/muralist Tanya Hollifield to identify challenges associated with access to drinking water, which resulted in the Forest to Faucet mural, complete with water bottle filler integrated into the artwork, on Capitol Avenue near the Metro bus terminal.

Jane has improved communication and relationships between state agencies, communities and water utility companies, plus provided many learning opportunities to schools and youth organizations. She continues to teach and inspire.



Jane Hurley (left) and AEEA Board Member Jennifer Rankin (right)

### Robert McAfee Lifetime Service Award - Dot Neely

Dot Neely has enjoyed a lifelong affinity for nature that began in childhood with family canoeing and camping excursions to scenic destinations and youthful devotion to the exploration of the world outside. She built upon that connection by earning a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Science degree in Geology, from the University of Arkansas.

Since 2010, Dot has shared her expertise in water-specific education through her role with Beaver Water District. She provided education and public outreach programs, contributed to the

development and implementation of curriculum and strategies for all public outreach programs including environmental public awareness events and general education for all age groups. Dot's service to the community will be enduring, as she has planted thousands of "seeds" to grow into environmental stewardship. She makes this work fun and exciting. For over a decade, Dot has taught thousands of people about drinking water, watershed management and environmental stewardship. She has designed educational maps for Beaver Water District and Beaver Watershed Alliance, developed K-12 curriculum integrating water quality into classroom education, designed public educational materials including educational-based fun activities for on-site tours at the District facilities and designed the "Beaver Dam Lake, and Water District History" installation at Hobbs State Park, and designed and implemented the Beaver Water District Annual programs on Beaver Lake.

Dot has carved the path for others to follow. She has recently retired, but her legacy will live on through the many lives she has touched. Her positivity and passion for history and education make the future feel bright.



AEEA Board President Sim Barrow (left), AEEA Executive Director Sophia Stephenson, Dot Neely (center), Beaver Water District Director of Public Affairs Trish Ouei, Beaver Water District CEO Lane Crider (right)