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NJ Clean Communities Council Gives “Excellence in Education” Award to East Orange Teacher

EAST ORANGE – June 29, 2015 – Maria Johnson, Literary Coach and Environmental Liaison at Gordon Parks Academy, has received the “Excellence in Education” award from the New Jersey Clean Communities Council (NJCCC) for her participation in the Environmental Student Exchange Program, held in March.

The seventh-annual event allowed students from New Jersey schools to participate in environmental projects and discussions about litter and solid waste. Johnson assisted in the preparation and execution of the event at Waterloo Village in Stanhope.

“The Environmental Student Exchange Program is an incredibly rewarding team-work experience in which the students become the discussion leaders,” Johnson said. “It’s really magical watching these students come together to learn about litter-abatement and preserving our environment.”

The students worked to create solutions to environmental problems, and then presented their findings to the other student groups for discussion. “We had students coming together from all over New Jersey to teach their units of study to other groups, rather than only having the facilitators leading the discussion,” Johnson said.

“Maria has shown her commitment to educating students about various environmental topics, with tremendous enthusiasm and dedication to our program,” said Sandy Huber, executive director of the New Jersey Clean Communities Council. “We are proud of what she has done to allow the Environmental Student Exchange Program to grow and improve. We thank Maria for her help in ensuring another successful event.”

New Jersey Clean Communities Council is a comprehensive, statewide litter-abatement program that has served New Jersey residents and visitors for more than 25 years. Learn more about the New Jersey Clean Communities Council at njclean.org.

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