



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development

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GRANT FUNDS AWARDED TO DASEF

SMYRNA, Del., October 3, 2011 – Since its formation in 1989, the Delaware AeroSpace Education Foundation (DASEF) has grown by leaps and bounds. Today, federal, state and local officials gathered at the 40,000 square foot DASEF Innovation Technology Exploration Center (ITEC) to announce funding for the purchase and installation of a geothermal system. The \$515,000 project consists of eighty 400 ft. deep wells that will provide heating and cooling to the ITEC building.

“This investment made in clean energy was made possible by both federal and state grants,” said Senator Carper. “This geothermal project at the Delaware AeroSpace Education Foundation, combined with its solar panel project installed in 2010, is another step toward reducing our dependence on foreign oil, cleaning the air we breathe, and addressing the threat of climate change.”

"Educating our kids in science and technology is a critical part of keeping our state and our nation competitive," Senator Coons said. "The Delaware AeroSpace Education Foundation has such an important and innovative mandate, so it's no wonder that it would turn to such an innovative alternative solution for climate control at the learning center. I congratulate the foundation on raising the funds needed to install its geothermal system, and look forward to coming back to see it in action."

“The Delaware AeroSpace Education Foundation is a tremendous community resource that helps students of all ages understand the importance of science, mathematics, and technology,” said Congressman Carney. “The Foundation is also a state leader in sustainable development, and I’m excited that the funding announced today will help DASEF become an example of the benefits and possibilities of green, renewable energy.”

DASEF is located on the grounds of Big Oak Park and consists of Phase I Environmental Outpost and Phase II ITEC. The Environmental Outpost has been fully operational since January 2007 and has reached some 50,000 students, teachers and the general public learning about nature, the environment, science and astronomical studies. This facility is centrally located in Smyrna, but serves the entire state of Delaware. ITEC is currently in construction phase and this latest award of funds will help them move closer to their goal.

The geothermal system project is receiving a \$50,000 USDA Rural Development grant and \$30,000 from DNREC’s Delaware Alternative Energy Rebate Program. DASEF plans to cover the balance of the project costs while seeking additional public and private funding.

(MORE)

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“Melding science, mathematics and technology with environmental stewardship into innovative educational programs is what the Delaware Aerospace Education Foundation is all about, and we are glad to help support them in building a clean energy campus that fits perfectly with their mission,” said DNREC Secretary Collin O’Mara.

USDA Rural Development assists rural communities with building basic infrastructure, from electricity to public water and sewer to community facility projects. According to USDA Rural Development State Director, Jack Tarburton the agency has more than 40 programs. “I always tell people that if they have a project in mind to contact us; with more than 40 programs in our portfolio one of them has to fit. Helping to create and retain jobs is an important part of President Obama’s jobs plan, and many of the projects that we fund are for construction; that means jobs and the continuation of work for many in the mechanical, electrical and building trades’ fields.”

Additional information on USDA Rural Development programs is available by calling the Delaware state office at (302) 857-3580 or by visiting www.rurdev.usda.gov. You can learn more about DASEF by visiting their website at www.dasef.org.

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