



2025 Sustainable Jersey Grants Program Funded by the PSEG Foundation

Quotes from \$20,000 Grant Recipients (Listed alphabetically by county)

"This \$20,000 grant will make a substantial contribution to the removal of approximately 60,000 square feet of invasive bamboo that threatens to spread in our Creek Turn Park, home to the Big Rusty troll statue created by Thomas Dambo. This will also be a great opportunity for residents from teens up to volunteer with the Green Team and Environmental Commission, and to learn about best sustainable practices for planting native species. We are honored and grateful to Sustainable Jersey and the PSEG Foundation for choosing our project." – *Leila Gilmore, Mayor, Hainesport Township, Burlington County*

"We hear about the effects of climate change and its resulting weather extremes nearly every day. Lambertville has experienced devastating floods, drought, record high temperatures, and poor air quality from both local and western wildfires. In the past 50 years there have been dramatic losses of wildlife populations, including bees, butterflies, birds, and many more. In Lambertville, we believe that each of us can take action to help reverse these trends. One such action is to replace some or all of our lawn with native plants. Deep-rooted native plants help the soil to absorb stormwater. This reduces runoff, flooding, and erosion, replenishes groundwater for wells, and removes pollutants from our water supply. Plants remove carbon dioxide and other pollutants from the atmosphere, produce the oxygen we need to survive, and reduce air temperatures. At the same time, native plants provide essential habitat for birds, butterflies, bees, and other wildlife. Typical lawn grass is not much better than pavement at absorbing, slowing, and purifying stormwater, and provides none of the other benefits of a native plant garden. Lambertville is certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a community wildlife habitat, thanks to the efforts of Lambertville Goes Wild and the many residents who have embraced native plants and stopped using pesticides. We have also introduced native plant gardens in a number of city properties. This grant from Sustainable Jersey and PSEG enables us to go a step further. We will encourage essential culture change by offering rebates to residents who replace some or all of their lawn with any combination of a rain garden, a perennial garden, shrubs, or trees, and by providing education about why this change is essential for a livable future for all. This action will achieve real benefits not just for the residents who plant these gardens, but for everyone around them. We couldn't be more grateful to Sustainable Jersey and PSEG for this wonderful opportunity and for their continued partnership." – *Andrew J. Nowick, Mayor, City of Lambertville, Hunterdon County*

"The \$20,000 PSEG Grant will provide crucial support for the Howell Township Green Infrastructure Detention Basin Retrofit project, funding key phases such as engineering, site evaluation, plantings, and community outreach. Building on the Howell Green Team's successful partnerships with Howell Community Development and the Department of Public Works on previous Rain Garden projects, this grant will help us improve stormwater management and engage the community in fostering a more sustainable and resilient environment." – *John Leggio, Mayor, Howell Township, Monmouth County*

"Congratulations to the Somerville Environmental Commission on receiving this well-deserved grant! The Borough's environmental team, consisting of various volunteer committees that support the Environmental Commission continues to make a meaningful impact on our community. We also extend our sincere thanks to Sustainable Jersey for their continued outstanding work in supporting local environmental initiatives." – *Brian Gallagher, Mayor, Somerville Borough, Somerset County*

"The Somerville Environmental Commission is so excited to have the opportunity to restore vital riparian habitat along Peters Brook. This project will help strengthen the connection between our community and the natural environment that runs through it. By replacing turf grass with diverse native plantings, we can reduce erosion,

support pollinators and wildlife, and create a more resilient and vibrant greenway. We're especially proud that this will be a volunteer-driven effort, engaging the public in meaningful environmental stewardship while reconnecting our community to this often-overlooked natural resource." – *Timarie Diehl, Environmental Commission Chair, Somerville Borough, Somerset County*

Quotes from \$10,000 Grant Recipients (Listed alphabetically by county)

"This sustainability grant will transform how students at Hillers learn by turning environmental challenges into classroom opportunities. The funding allows us to create hands-on experiences where students can see the direct connection between their education and solving real-world problems. When Hackensack schools operate sustainably, we demonstrate to all of our students that they can be part of building a healthier future for their community." – *Dr. Thomas McBryde, Jr. Superintendent Hackensack Public Schools, Bergen County*

"The Tree Tenders Program will help us grow a network of trained volunteers dedicated to preserving Chesterfield's tree canopy and promoting long-term sustainability in our community. With the support of this grant, we plan to offer certified training workshops for volunteers, provide essential tools and materials, and host community planting and care events to ensure the health and longevity of our township's trees." – *Suruchi Batra, Chesterfield Township Committeewoman, Chesterfield Township, Burlington County*

"Building off our commitment to the environment and making Cherry Hill a more vibrant community, we are excited to receive a grant from Sustainable Jersey to fund our pilot program to rollout an Eco Grounds Crew. Following our recent successful deployment of 2 fully electric mowers, we look to outfit a whole grounds crew with fully electric landscaping equipment. The conversion of the crew's equipment from gas to electric, will improve air quality, lower operating costs and reduce noise pollution. We hope a successful pilot program will serve as a model for other municipalities and commercial landscapers to emulate." – *David Fleisher, Mayor, Cherry Hill Township, Camden County*

"Thanks to Sustainable Jersey for Schools and a generous grant from the PSEG Foundation, Rosa International Middle School is creating a Climate and Sustainability Research Center that will transform our school library into a hub for student sustainability research and content creation in our school district. Our students will develop presentations through our eco-production team, "Blue Dot Ed" to build digi-tal media content and create original graphics and printed materials for communicating their research findings to the larger community. Mentored by local experts in sustainability and climate solutions who will serve as our guest speakers and workshop leaders, students will develop environmental stewardship through real-world sustainability solutions in our community. This work also includes expanding our sustainability partnership with the Cherry Hill Environmental Board, as our students take a leadership role in our community's environmental progress through ecosystem restoration at native habitats in Cherry Hill. The new Sustainability and Climate Research Center will become a cen-tral research location for students throughout the district and will help build on our teachers' evolving climate education work, as well as the work of our school and district green teams known as Climate Action and Sustainability Team (CAST)." – *Dr. John Cafagna, Principal, Rosa International Middle School, Cherry Hill School District, Camden County*

"The Township of Belleville is proud to accept the 2025 Sustainable Jersey Grant. Fostering healthy lifestyles has been a priority in Belleville, as evidenced by the town's participation in the Mayors Wellness Campaign and other programs. However, this Sustainable Jersey Grant will allow us to take the next step. The grant will be used to conduct a community health assessment. The data gleaned from this assessment will inform our future township-wide initiatives." – *Michael Melham, Mayor, Belleville Township, Essex County*

"We are honored to be selected for the 2025 Sustainable Jersey Grant, funded by the PSEG Foundation. This support reinforces our commitment to sustainability and helps us continue building a greener, more resilient South Orange Village." – *Olivia Lewis-Chang, Councilperson and Environmental Commission liaison, South Orange Village, Essex County*

"The West Orange Public School District deeply appreciates the Hazel Elementary School PTA's hard work, and we are very proud of their success in securing this grant. The greenhouse will be a tremendous asset to our students, providing a valuable living classroom that underscores the importance of nature and the environment." – *Hayden Moore, Superintendent of Schools, Hazel Avenue Elementary School, West Orange Public School District, Essex County*

"Hazel Avenue elementary school is a Title One school serving a culturally and economically diverse population in West Orange. Building a greenhouse on campus will provide year-round growing projects; arts, science and social studies classroom education; social-emotional learning; after school activities; community engagement; and help supply our in-house food pantry with fresh food that may be otherwise out of reach for many in our community. Involving children in the journey from seed to plate is a deeply enriching experience that will inform their worldview for the rest of their lives. We are so grateful to Sustainable Jersey for Schools and the PSEG Foundation for giving us the opportunity to expand our students' experience in such a community-driven way." – *Jamie Hardy, Project Coordinator, Hazel Avenue Elementary School, West Orange Public School District, Essex County*

"We are thrilled and honored to be the recipients of 2025 Sustainable Jersey Grant. Our students and staff have contributed to our urban oasis. Our students and staff have contributed in countless ways bringing our dormant space to life with vibrant plants and art work. We are overwhelmed with the opportunities the additional funding will provide." – *Joseph Apruzzese, Principal, Jotham W. Wakeman PS 6, Jersey City Public Schools, Hudson County*

"The Princeton Microforest project will turn 5,000 square feet of underutilized lawn-covered parkland into a natural ecosystem. The planting of 1,500 trees and shrubs will improve carbon sequestration and water absorption and enhance the biodiversity of the park. The Microforest will be located near the center of the town and more than a mile away from any forested open space preserves. This location was selected to address the Municipality's key priorities of equity and environmental justice by providing a walkable connection to nature for people within the neighborhood of the park, which is particularly important for the residents of the adjacent Lloyd Terrace senior/disabled community, many of whom do not have access to a car. A communal planting event and continued maintenance requirements during the first years of forest establishment will offer opportunities for collaboration between residents, town officials and members of the Environmental and Shade Tree commissions and will thus strengthen the local community. The Microforest also provides a unique learning experience for the nearby schools and any interested visitor." – *Inga Reich, Open Space Manager, Princeton, Mercer County*

"Our school and community face a critical need for sustainable education and hands-on learning opportunities. With this grant, we plan to purchase a greenhouse that will provide students in underserved communities a unique chance to explore agriculture and environmental stewardship. By partnering with local schools and nonprofit organizations, we aim to inspire future leaders, promote sustainability, and foster stronger community connections." – *Warren Rotella, Principal, Ross Street School #11, Woodbridge Township School District, Middlesex County*

"We're grateful to Sustainable Jersey and the PSEG Foundation for supporting Madison's efforts to phase in electric landscaping equipment. This grant will help us reduce emissions and noise, starting with a summer gas leaf blower moratorium, and lead by example toward a cleaner, quieter community." – *Robert H. Conley, Mayor, Borough of Madison, Morris County*

"The "Green Synergy" initiative marks an important step forward for Pinelands Regional School District in expanding our commitment to environmental education, community outreach, and sustainability. This grant will support the creation of Lil' Labs—public science hubs, modeled after Little Free Libraries, that highlight the many sustainability projects happening across campus. These hands-on stations will make sustainability visible and accessible to all. A dedicated Sustainability and Community Outreach Coordinator will unite students, families, and community partners to promote environmental stewardship and a shared responsibility for our natural resources. Together, we're building a greener future through education and action." –*Dr. Kimberly Clark, Director of Research, Planning & Evaluation, Pinelands Regional School District, Ocean County*

"Dedicated bike lanes that run from our transit area through to our County park are much-anticipated additions to our Borough. This grant from Sustainable Jersey and the PSE&G Foundation will allow us to finally achieve this sustainability goal!" –*Jen Blumenstock, Mayor, Borough of Garwood, Union County*

Quotes from Select \$2,000 Grant Recipients (Listed alphabetically by county)

"Many thanks to Sustainable Jersey for the latest grant. Galloway has been at the forefront of sustainability in New Jersey for decades and this \$2000 will surely help our latest endeavor. To further enhance the Glenn By the Bay experience at Veterans Memorial Park. This project keeps Galloway Township at the leading edge of nature education and recreational fun along the way for our residents and visitors. I am proud of our administration's partnership with Go Green Galloway. Their organizational structure, professionalism and effectiveness have inspired other towns in southern New Jersey to adopt sustainable coalitions. They are an asset to our community and any assistance we can get from Sustainable Jersey to help them further their mission is greatly appreciated. Please feel free to reach out for any clarification" –*Anthony Coppola, Mayor, Galloway Township, Atlantic County*

"We are so excited to be able to use our greenhouse this offseason now we have money to get the equipment needed to get built and up and running. We spent all we had on the greenhouse, so we couldn't have made it viable this season without the support of Sustainable Jersey and the grant program." –*Jenn Lucas, Community Garden Organizer and Sustainable Maple Shade chair, Maple Shade Township, Burlington County*

"We are so proud of all those who helped us achieve a Silver Certificate from Sustainable Jersey for Runnemede and our Green Team. We are also so happy to accept the \$2000 grant from PSE&G to continue our work making Runnemede sustainable in the future." –*Nick Kappatos, Mayor, Runnemede Borough, Camden County*

"We are extremely grateful to have been awarded a grant this year! While we have had a garden previously, it did not quite meet our vision. This generous grant will enable us to create a Harmony Garden, which will be a beautiful space for everyone to enjoy. The new garden will be accessible to all students, with a particular emphasis on providing a welcoming environment for our special education students. This serene area will allow them to come, sit, and immerse themselves in the beauty of nature, fostering a sense of peace and connection with the outdoors. We are excited about the possibilities this garden will bring to our school community!" –*Nicole Cooper, Special Education Teacher, Cape May City Elementary School, Cape May City School District, Cape May County*

"We're excited to receive this Sustainable Jersey grant because it allows us to build on the environmental awareness our students are already developing in the classroom. We've been working to create learning experiences that are both engaging and rooted in real-world responsibility at South Mountain Elementary School. This funding helps us take that further by supporting a project that ties sustainability to student voice and daily school life." –*Kevin Mason, Principal of South Mountain Elementary School, South Orange & Maplewood School District, Essex County*

"We are honored to be selected for the 2025 Sustainable Jersey Grant, funded by the PSEG Foundation. This support reinforces our commitment to sustainability and helps us continue building a greener, more resilient South Orange Village." – *Olivia Lewis-Chang, Councilperson and Environmental Commission liaison, South Orange Village, Essex County*

"We're excited to enhance the entrance of Pitman Junior/Senior High School with vibrant native pollinator displays that support both beauty and biodiversity. This project addresses a clear community need by creating an inviting, eco-friendly space through large planters filled with native perennials that welcome NJ pollinators like Milkweed, Yarrow, Aster, Black-Eyed Susan, and Wild Bergamot, along with nectar plants and hardy grasses such as blue grama and sea oats. With this grant, we aim to inspire environmental stewardship, grow our Environmental Science Club, and spark future student-led green initiatives in partnership with teachers who are passionate about ecology and nature." – *Vicki Palaganas, Environmental Science Teacher & Club Advisor, Pitman High School, Pitman Borough School District, Gloucester County*

"Thanks to this grant Reading Fleming Intermediate School will be introducing the Trout in the Classroom program to our 5th and 6th grade school. Sustainable Jersey has been an integral part of our school's efforts to support sustainability, biodiversity, and clean water initiatives. Our hope is that by caring for and learning from the trout that our students will gain yet another hands-on learning experience to make them better environmentally conscious stewards." – *Lisa Coster, Teacher, Reading Fleming Intermediate School, Flemington Raritan School District, Hunterdon County*

"At Carroll Robbins, we are committed to building a community of young people who recognize that every small act in caring for the environment has a great impact on our planet." – *Zebbie Belton, Principal, Carol Robbins Elementary School, Trenton Public School District, Mercer County*

"Middlesex Boro is excited to receive this grant, which will support the growth of our newly formed Green Team and enhance community engagement through educational programs, outreach events, and workshops. These initiatives will promote environmental awareness, encourage resident participation, and create momentum for future sustainability projects, thereby strengthening the Green Team's role in the community." – *Clare Levourne, Green Team Chairperson, Middlesex Borough, Middlesex County*

"In Middle School North's, The Ignite Institute, students will get fired up about science as educators transform hands-on learning into accessible experiences. We will connect students with field experts, simulate real-world scenarios, and personalize learning to accommodate diverse styles and needs." – *Josephine Schneider, Educational Media Specialist, Middle School North, Howell Township School District, Monmouth County*

"We're incredibly grateful to Sustainable Jersey for awarding the Borough of Sea Bright a grant to install two water bottle refilling stations. This project directly addresses our community's need for more sustainable, accessible hydration options, especially during the busy summer months when our public spaces see the highest use. By encouraging residents and visitors to refill rather than rely on single-use plastics, we hope to reduce litter, promote public health, and take another step toward making Sea Bright a more environmentally responsible community." – *Brian P. Kelly, Mayor, Borough of Sea Bright, Monmouth County*

"The Madison School District has been studying ways to become more environmentally friendly through the potential use of solar power on our campuses. The solar workstation that will be purchased through this grant will replace one of the existing picnic tables in our Media Center Courtyard. We'd like to thank the efforts of community member Mr. Peter Fried, Board of Education Member Mr. David Duran, and Madison High School's Environmental Club President Aiden Shah for spearheading the effort towards applying for the grant which will benefit the staff

and students at Madison High School for years to come." – *David Drechsel, Principal, Madison High School, Madison Public Schools, Morris County*

"The Marketing / Entrepreneurship and Engineering students at West Morris Central High School are planning a collaborative marketing and sustainable packaging project, from concept to creation, for a local soap vendor. The Marketing / Entrepreneurship students will identify the needs of the local business in terms of product development, marketing, and distribution. The Marketing / Entrepreneurship students will report their findings to the Engineering students and together as a collaborative team. The Marketing / Entrepreneurship students will do the following tasks:

- Develop several soap lines
- Create appropriate names for each soap
- Hand draw each soap shape
- Choose a color palette
- Create a slogan (Vision Statement)
- With the help of AI, utilize your prompt, to create a unique illustrative description of your soap.

The soap will reflect local aspects of Washington Township, Morris County, NJ, as well as Chester Township and Chester Boro, Morris County, NJ. Landmarks, businesses and other local service organizations will also be evidenced in the design of each soap. While the business students work on presenting ideas, the engineering students will perform the following tasks:

- Convert the soap from 2D images to 3D soaps in CAD
- Review and revise their designs in CAD
- 3-D print the soap with PLA filament
- Vacuum form a mold
- Grow mycelium (mushroom packaging)

The mycelium (mushroom packaging) grows around the mold and serves as a means of biodegradable packaging for the new soap designs. This 2025 Sustainability Jersey Grant generously supports our initiative by supplying 3-D printing filament, vacuum forming sheets, mycelium grow packaging, vinyl for labeling, and the use of the vinyl cutter." – *Frances Zegar and Christopher Del Preore, Engineering and Business Educators, West Morris Central High School, West Morris Regional High School District, Morris County*

"Our Courtyard Sustainability Mural Project for the 25-26 school year will build on our previous work we did to revitalize our school courtyard space at the Sampson G. Smith campus of Franklin Middle School. This school year, with our previous grant from Sustainable Jersey, we were able to purchase plants, gardening tools, rain barrels, and other items to make our courtyard space more friendly for our students to use, and raise awareness of sustainability for our students and community. This year with our new Sustainability Mural Project, we will purchase paint and art supplies to allow our art classes to create mural projects in this revitalized space. We are very much looking forward to our students creating artwork to further beautify our courtyard, and have our students thinking about ways to promote sustainability in our school and community." – *Jared Sheffrin, Vice Principal, Sampson G. Smith Middle School, Franklin Township Public Schools, Somerset County*

"On behalf of the Franklin Township Board of Education and staff and students of the Sampson G. Smith Campus of Franklin Middle School (SGS) I would like to express our gratitude to Sustainable Jersey for Schools and the PSEG Foundation for this \$2,000 grant. This award will build on the previous work of the SGS Green Team in their efforts to revitalize the school courtyard space. This portion of the project will focus on a Sustainability Mural Project, allowing the budding artists at SGS to create mural projects which focus on sustainability awareness and will further beautify the space for all students to enjoy. We are very proud of the SGS Green Team and grateful for the

opportunity this grant provides.” – *Dr. John Ravally, Superintendent, Franklin Township Public Schools, Somerset County*

"Washington Borough is registered and working to become a National Wildlife Federation Community Wildlife Habitat. This \$2,000 grant will allow us to plant native perennials and shrubs at the Washington Public Library. The library property will then serve as a demonstration garden to help teach children and adults how they can create sustainable and wildlife-friendly habitats on their properties." – *Louann Cox, Mayor, Washington Borough, Warren County*