



2012 Jeske Award

The highest honor NAAEE each year bestows is the Walter E. Jeske Award. The award is given to recognize outstanding leadership and service to both NAAEE and the environmental education field.

Walt Jeske was Chief of the Education and Publications Unit with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. Among his many contributions to environmental education, Jeske was a founder of the Alliance for Environmental Education (1973), chair of the Subcommittee on Environmental Education for the Federal Interagency Committee on Education (1977–1981), and a delegate to the UNESCO-United Nations Environment Program Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education held in Tbilisi, Soviet Union (1977).

Walt was also a dedicated member of the then National Association for Environmental Education Board of Directors, and, until his untimely death in 1981, a great champion of young leaders in the field.

NAAEE established the Walt Jeske award for distinguished service in 1982 as a mark of the great esteem in which Walt was held. The list of 30 winners to date is a chronicle of NAAEE's proud heritage and a great honor for all those who have earned a place there.

And joining that list this year is Karen Hollweg. Karen has been a member of NAAEE since 1977 and served as president in 2007 and 2008. It's difficult to characterize Karen's long and varied career in environmental education in a few paragraphs because it has included everything from teaching biology and physical sciences in public schools to being a Fulbright Scholar in the Indo-American Environmental Leadership Program.

These few highlights mark just a few of the contributions Karen made to the field of environmental education early on in her career:

- Serving as an environmental resource specialist and primary manager of the integrated curriculum program for a major urban school district in Colorado
- Lobbying at the state and national levels on behalf of the Central Midwest Region of the National Audubon Society
- Directing the Urban Education Project and Volunteer-led Investigations in Neighborhood Ecology (VINE) first for Denver Audubon and then as NAAEE's Urban Program Manager
- Advising the ERIC Clearinghouse on such programs as WREEC's Wild in the City curriculum, Cornell's In-Touch Science project, and 4-H's Wildlife Stewards

Like Walt Jeske, Karen has encouraged and supported emerging leaders in the field. She's led innovative sessions at NAAEE and other conferences, and she chaired NAAEE's Governance, Nominations, EE Advocacy, and Executive Director Search Committees. She has served on numerous advisory boards and helped guide many significant projects. Most recently, Karen was Principal Investigator for NAAEE's "Framework for Assessing Environmental Literacy." She is on leadership team for EECapacity and facilitates the Climate Change Education Professional Learning Community.