

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Marks 35 Years of Impact at Annual Statewide Conference



Phoebe Coles-Wetzel, KPB Board Chair; Shannon Reiter, KPB Executive Director; Ryan McLoughlin, KPB Young Ambassador; Nathaniel Carso, KPB Young Ambassador; Kylie McCutcheon, KPB Young Ambassador Coordinator; Mariya Hoja, Young Ambassador; Logan Thompson, Young Ambassador; and Secretary Jessica Shirley, PA Department of Environmental Protection.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (KPB) proudly announces the resounding success of its Annual Conference held last week in State College, PA drawing environmental leaders, volunteers, educators, and policymakers from across the Commonwealth.

The two-day event, themed “35 years of Stewardship, Sustainability, and Environmental Education,” featured workshops and community engagement sessions focused on solar energy, second-hand markets and recycling, programming and education that encourage waste minimization and inspires the next generation, leveraging corporate partnerships to advance your mission and more!

“This year’s conference was a powerful reminder of what we can accomplish when we come together,” said Shannon Reiter, Executive Director of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. “From grassroots volunteers to government officials, every participant plays a role in shaping a cleaner, greener Pennsylvania.”

Highlights from the conference included:

- Inspiring Keynote: A keynote address by Dr. Lara Fowler, Penn State Dickenson Law, emphasizing the power of community in fostering local resilience and economic well-being.
- Youth Engagement: Four enthusiastic Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Young Ambassadors representing Erie, Pike and Chester Counties brought fresh perspectives and energy to the event.
- Affiliate Innovation – Shark Tank Style hosted by DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley: Four KPB affiliates showcased their most innovative and impactful community improvement ideas in a Shark Tank-style competition. Scranton Tomorrow took home the \$3,500 grant from MPLX to help bring their visionary project to life. Scranton Tomorrow will expand its collaboration with Marywood STARS, an after-school mentoring program for junior and senior high school students. The initiative aims to cultivate knowledge in native sustainable horticulture, foster civic engagement, and instill community pride. The program will culminate in a student-designed landscape planting at the Scranton Courthouse, a hands-on project that brings their learning and leadership to life in a meaningful public space.

“Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful extends its gratitude to Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority, Ezra Nanes, Mayor of State College Borough, KPB Board of Directors, DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley and all sponsors, speakers, and attendees who made the event possible,” expressed Reiter.

The conference was sponsored in part by the PA Department of Environmental Protection. Other sponsors include Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau, Centre County Recycling and Refuse Authority, Hershey, Republic Services, Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds, The GIANT Company, Goodwill Keystone and The Hartman Group.

For more information about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and upcoming initiatives, visit www.keeppabeautiful.org.

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About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 162 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania’s roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our

goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation's largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keeppabeautiful.org.