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Contact: Holly Thomas-Hilburn – 520.792.2815, hhilburn@cals.arizona.edu

Beyond the Mirage Stack Sharing Event Earth Day 2016

By Arizona Project WET & the Beyond the Mirage Team

Phoenix, Arizona –On Friday, April 22, 2016 approximately 500 6th-8th graders at schools in Pendergast, Peoria, Phoenix, Dysart and Washington School Districts will share and judge each other’s mini-documentaries about water, built through the new Beyond the Mirage web experience <http://beyondthemirage.org/experience/#player>. These students have grappled with understanding complex and interconnected water systems all year through their participation in Arizona Project WET’s Water Investigations Program and now they’ll show what they’ve learned by building their own Beyond the Mirage documentary at the Stack Sharing Event!

Beyond the Mirage is about engaging millennials in the reality of water in the Southwest. On April 22 nearly 500 new mini-documentaries, called stacks, will be generated and shared. They will engage with critical content that affects their future. These students will be empowered to add their voices to the call for action made by water experts such as Kathleen Ferris, who says, “We must demand that our leaders take the bold steps necessary to prevent a water crisis.”

From 10:30 to 11:30 am on Earth Day, Dr. DeBlieux, Superintendent of Pendergast School District and Principal Janine Ambrose will be at Copper King Elementary School (10730 W Campbell Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85037) to celebrate the stack sharing event! After learning about the Beyond the Mirage Experience at the Arizona Town Hall from filmmaker Cody Sheehy, Dr. DeBlieux fully embraced the project and as a result called for the development of a Water STEM Academy to launch next school year. “The Beyond the Mirage web experience, where students engage in online learning and navigate through videos to answer their own questions, is exactly the kind of teaching tool needed to engage today’s learners,” Dr. DeBlieux said, “It will be the cornerstone of Pendergast Water Academy!”

Beyond the Mirage’s innovative digital outreach strategy was chosen over 20 competing proposals as the winner of The New Arizona Prize: Water Consciousness Challenge. The New Arizona Prize brought this College of Agriculture and Life Sciences team together with the Arizona Community Foundation, Republic Media and Arizona State University’s Morrison Institute for Public Policy.

“Partnerships like this, bringing effective new learning strategies into Arizona schools, exemplify the hard work and investment that is needed to develop knowledgeable decision-makers, the only way to secure Arizona’s water future!” APW Director Kerry Schwartz said.

For more information on Arizona Project WET, please visit <https://arizonawet.arizona.edu/> or contact Holly Thomas-Hilburn at 520.792.2815, hhilburn@cals.arizona.edu



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