

PCEE and the sisters of Villa Maria partner for the environment

Slippery Rock, PA – March 28, 2007 – As the environmentally conscious sisters of the Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center toured the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education for the first time, one could almost hear a collective Wow. “This personal contact with another agency with a similar environmental education mission and program will assist us in developing a program that will be more meaningful for our residents and guests,” said Sister Jeanne Thurin, Villa Maria’s Assistant Director of Farm-Based Environmental Education. “We are so grateful to have found a resource like PCEE.”

Members of the New Bedford order visited the PCEE office and toured Slippery Rock University’s Robert A. Macoskey Center for Sustainable Systems Education and Research to gather ideas for improving its own environmental programs. The visitors familiarized themselves with the services of PCEE – including the library, the conference room, and resources available through its Web site – and received a tour of the Macoskey Center.

In addition to helping the visitors from Villa Maria understand and use the many resources available through PCEE, Director Kathleen Paul and SRU graduate assistant Kathy Abramowski also arranged for the group to meet with Thomas Reynolds, Macoskey Center director. The Center offers demonstration gardens on its grounds as well as educational programming about organic gardening, wildlife and other environmentally focused nature and ecology topics.

Villa Maria was founded by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary and has operated a farm to provide food for residents since its founding in 1864. In 1991, a refocus effort led to the farm serving as an ecological model integrating agriculture, education and spirituality. Recently, the organization was able to secure marketing support for their environmental education initiatives, and that’s where PCEE was able to help.

About PCEE: The Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education (PCEE) was created by Executive Order of the Governor in 1997 to “provide an avenue for increased participation by educators, local officials, citizen and non-profit groups, business and industry as partners in the implementation of quality environmental education on a state-wide basis.” Administered by the PA State System of Higher Education, PCEE is housed at Slippery Rock University.

###

Contact:
Kathleen Paul, PCEE (724) 738-9020 ext. 2
<http://www.pcee.org>