

Lewis and Clark Community College's NGRRECsm awarded grant, named Swarovski Waterschool site

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GODFREY – Lewis and Clark Community College’s National Great Rivers Research and Education Center will be home to the newest Swarovski Waterschool, the first and only one located on the Mississippi River and the first in the United States, at the confluence of three great rivers.

Swarovski set up its first Waterschool nearly 16 years ago along the Danube River in Austria to teach children and local communities about safe hygiene practices and the importance of freshwater conservation. Water and water preservation have been integral to the company since its beginning more than 120 years ago.

“Water continues to be fundamental to our company, and more than ever we understand its place as the source of all life on the planet,” said Nadja Swarovski, Member of the Swarovski Executive Board. “This is why, in everything we do to give back to the wider world, we choose to put water first.”

The Swarovski Waterschool program educates children and communities about the ecological, economic, social and cultural issues that affect water use on a local and global level, and provides clean drinking water and sanitation in schools and communities. The program now has footholds situated along many great rivers of the world—the Danube (Austria), Ganges (India), Yangtze (China), Nile (Uganda), Amazon (Brazil) and now the Mississippi (United States). Working with local partners, NGOs, schools and government partners around three pillars—access to safe water, water education and water, sanitation and hygiene—the Waterschools serve children ages 8-15.

NGRRECsm seeks to accomplish similar goals, connecting the Metro East community with the Mississippi River through varied educational programming, including the annual Water Fest, which is geared toward area fifth graders.

“Partnering with Swarovski to develop a Swarovski Waterschool on the Mississippi River is an exciting way to further our educational mission,” said Natalie Marioni, NGRREC Director of Environmental Education and Citizen Science. “This program will empower students to become stewards of change within their river communities while connecting them with Swarovski Waterschool students along other major rivers of the world to provide a global perspective.”

This initial phase includes a collaboration with the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville STEM Center and Goshen Education Consulting, Inc.

L&C President and NGRREC Chair Dale Chapman said the partnership will help expand current programming as well as introduce new educational programming to align with ongoing research taking place at NGRREC.

“Lewis and Clark is defined by its ability to create strategic partnerships and align itself with the world’s great brands,” Chapman said. “We are very proud of our association with Swarovski Waterschool and the corporate culture the company represents,

emphasizing values associated with global water issues. They see the importance of educating the next generation and creating a 21st Century consciousness about the conservation of water as a critical resource.”

NGRREC’s Jerry F. Costello Confluence Field Station will be the headquarters of the Swarovski Waterschool along the Mississippi River. This partnership is just one example of NGRREC’s collaborative efforts to create sustainable value at a local and global scale.

“The Swarovski Waterschool is an invaluable opportunity for NGRREC to expand its education and outreach efforts along the Mississippi Watershed,” said NGRREC Executive Director Gary Rolfe. “It is important to reconnect citizens, especially the next generation of citizens, with the river, which sustains our communities.”

Learn more about the Swarovski Waterschool at www.swarovskiwaterschool.com. For more info on NGRREC’s educational programming, visit and www.ngrrrec.org/education.

Swarovski

Swarovski delivers a diverse portfolio of unmatched quality, craftsmanship, and creativity.

Founded in 1895 in Austria, Swarovski designs, manufactures and markets high-quality crystals, genuine gemstones and created stones as well as finished products such as jewelry, accessories and lighting. Run by the fifth generation of family members, Swarovski Crystal Business has a global reach with approximately 2,680 stores in around 170 countries, more than 26,000 employees, and revenue of about 2.6 billion euros in 2015. Together with its sister companies Swarovski Optik (optical devices) and Tyrolit (abrasives), Swarovski Crystal Business forms the Swarovski Group. In 2015, the Group generated revenue of about 3.37 billion euros and employed more than 30,000 people. The Swarovski Foundation was set up in 2012 to honor the philanthropic spirit of founder Daniel Swarovski. Its mission is to support creativity and culture, promote wellbeing, and conserve natural resources.

www.swarovskigroup.com

National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC)

Founded in 2002 as a collaborative partnership between the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Lewis and Clark Community College, NGRREC is dedicated to the study of great river systems and the communities that use them. The center aspires to

be a leader in scholarly research, education, and outreach related to the interconnectedness of large rivers, their floodplains, watersheds, and their associated communities. To learn more about NGRREC, visit www.ngrrec.org.

Lewis and Clark Community College

Lewis and Clark Community College, founded in 1970, is a two-year higher education institution with multiple campuses, a river research center, Community Education Centers and training centers located throughout its more than 220,000-person college district. In addition to offering associate degrees and certificates in more than 40 career programs and numerous transfer options, the college also boasts a popular College for Kids program, a nationally accredited dual credit program for high school students, GED completion and the largest Workforce Training program in the state of Illinois. L&C serves approximately 20,000 students annually and is a national and state award-winning standout among Illinois community colleges. The college also employs more than 600 people, and adds \$338.5 million in regional income annually, which represents 4.6 percent of the regional economy. Learn more at www.lc.edu.