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CITY PARKS FOUNDATION LAUNCHES REGISTRATION FOR FIRST GREEN GIRLS EMPOWERED BY ING NATIONAL CURRICULUM TRAINING COURSE

**Award-Winning NYC Youth STEM Curriculum Now Available Digitally
For Free To Educators Nationwide**

November 18, 2020 - New York, NY - City Parks Foundation has launched registration for the first session of the **CityParks Green Girls Empowered by ING National Curriculum Training**. This national rollout offers educators digital access to the award-winning Green Girls STEM curriculum, which has been adapted from its local, New York City focus, to have a broader, national emphasis on climate change and environmental stewardship through experiential learning in parks and other open spaces. The curriculum is available for use by formal and informal educators. Training will be required in this pilot year and offered online during the spring and summer of 2021 in two sessions; pre-registration is required.

Recently awarded the inaugural [Climate Change Award](#) by the National Summer Learning Association, the Green Girls program uses experiential learning in parks, forests and waterways to offer New York City adolescent girls after-school and summer programming that focuses on environmental science, encouraging girls to recognize their potential as scientists and stewards of natural resources. With support from ING, the Green Girls national curriculum will be available for use free of charge, as both an after-school and a summer program. The curriculum focuses on climate change, urban water bodies and forests, and strategies for stewarding and advocating for our essential resources. Also integrated are youth development concepts of self and social awareness encouraging young women to build healthy relationships with each other and their mentors.

Applications are open at cityparksfoundation.org/green-girls-training until December 18, 2020. Applicants will be informed of acceptance into the training program no later than January 15, 2021. The first training session will begin on February 5, 2021. A second session will be held in May 2021.

Educators interested in using the digital curriculum in this pilot year will be required to participate in a two-hour online learning session with City Parks Foundation educators beforehand, as well as a one-on-one consulting session. Participants will also be asked to conduct and share results from a program assessment at the end of the program year. The training will include suggested lesson plans, tips on establishing partnerships, peer mentorship, and advocacy tools to help educators learn how to run a successful program.

Nearly 20 years ago, City Parks Foundation created Green Girls to excite young women in 6th-8th grades about STEM learning. The program transforms local public parklands, forests and waterways into learning laboratories, as Green Girls engage in hands-on experiments and community service. Students learn about a variety of potential careers in the sciences - an industry where over 75% of the workforce is male, and the program also facilitates social-emotional learning at this critical time in a young woman's development, through discussions, team-building activities focused on female empowerment, individual voice, and self-awareness, aiming to foster healthy relationship development between students.

"We are so thrilled to launch this national training program, particularly now, during a challenging time that demands creative ways to teach our next generation of environmental leaders," said **Chrissy Word, Director of Education at City Parks Foundation**. "The goal of this curriculum is to help educate young women to become environmental changemakers, as well as to provide educators innovative tools that will result in meaningful science lessons using parks and open spaces for experiential learning as outdoor classrooms as well as advocacy for and restoration of our natural areas by young women, particularly young women of color."

"We are very excited to be able to support the Green Girls team in making their award-winning New York program available to educators across the US for the first time," said **Ana Carolina Oliveira, head of sustainable finance, ING Americas**. "I've had the opportunity to experience the Green Girls program first hand and have seen how it inspires and educates young women to understand our natural environment through an engaging, hands-on curriculum. Opening up this program is an essential step in providing more girls with that opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to contribute to the empowerment of the next generation of female leaders and such knowledge will help make impactful change in areas of sustainability and environmental science."

Committing to providing enriching opportunities for the Green Girls, ING will not only support the program financially, but will offer mentoring workshops and career development insights for program participants. Through one-on-one sessions with ING's women leaders across the organization, ING aims to show program participants they can turn their passion for science, math, and the environment into a career in the emerging sustainable and green economy.

About City Parks Foundation

At City Parks Foundation, we are dedicated to invigorating and transforming parks into dynamic, vibrant centers of urban life through sports, arts, community building and education programs for all New Yorkers. Our programs -- located in more than 400 parks, recreation centers and public schools across New York City -- reach 310,000 people each year. Our ethos is simple: thriving parks mean thriving communities.

About CityParks Learn

CityParks Learn, our standards-aligned environmental education programs, helps students experience the fun of science, while learning about their relationship to the natural world and the ways in which they can protect our environment. We provide STEM-based environmental science programs for 5,000 elementary, middle, and high school students throughout New York City, through school-day, after school, and summer programming. Also offered are credit-bearing training and paid internships for teenagers as well as teacher training in conducting science lessons using parks as outdoor classrooms.

About ING Americas

ING Americas is the brand name of ING's wholesale business in the Americas region, and a part of ING Group N.V. ("ING"), a global financial services company of Dutch origin with a network spanning 40 countries. ING has more than 54,000 employees offer financial services to customers in over 40 countries. Sustainability forms an integral part of ING's strategy, evidenced by ING's ranking as Leader in the banks industry group by Sustainalytics and 'A' rating in MSCI's ratings universe. ING Group shares are included in major sustainability and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) index products of leading providers STOXX, Morningstar and FTSE Russell. ING Americas offers a full array of wholesale financial products, such as commercial lending, corporate finance and a full range of financial markets, products and services.