



## Project Polar Bear A Teen Challenge (ages 14-18)



As part of Year of the Polar Bear, The Tulsa Zoo has partnered with Polar Bears International (PBI) to serve as an Arctic Ambassador Center. Project Polar Bear is a national teen challenge program sponsored by PBI. The Tulsa Zoo is holding a local teen contest. The local winning team will go on to the semi-finals. The nationwide final winning team will fly to Churchill, Manitoba, Canada to experience polar bears in the wild on board a Tundra Buggy Adventures tour!

Project Polar Bear is a way for small groups of young people to make a big difference! Project Polar Bear challenges teens to develop community projects that will reduce the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) load in the atmosphere. It will be critical that your team figure out a way to measure the impact of your project.

Project Polar Bear projects can be focused on one of the following categories:

- 1) **POWER DOWN** - Medium to large-scale reduction in consumption of fossil fuels  
Here medium to large scale means more than just the Project Polar Bear team engaging in this effort. Medium scale could be the size of your school, for example. Large scale could be your whole town!
- 2) **MAKE IT BETTER or DO IT BETTER** - Bring about an innovative change to an existing policy, process, or product that results in reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, or reduced use of resources.  
This category is wide open ... facilitating a policy for a community-wide "ride your bike to work or school day;" a school-district wide process that brings about trash free cafeterias because all of the products are recycled or composted.  
This is also the category for you inventor-types to build the better CO<sub>2</sub> trap. Tinker with something that emits CO<sub>2</sub> and reduce or capture the emissions. Make sure you calculate a way to measure the changes you bring about.
- 3) **BUY RECYCLED** – This category is ideal for the shoppers among you! In this category, we want you to find ways to increase the use and purchase of recycled materials by manufacturers and consumers, so we can close the loop. Do whatever it is teenagers do to make it cool to buy recycled stuff. Get your crafty friends together and start a group that makes usable, cool stuff from old stuff. Sell it all on e-bay! We can't wait to see what you come up with.
- 4) **INCREASE THE GREEN TO SUCK UP THE CO<sub>2</sub>**  
By increasing our natural carbon grabbers, those nice green things called plants, communities around the world can help decrease CO<sub>2</sub> levels. This category is for those groups with a green thumb. Possible projects in this category include: Tree planting campaigns, community gardens, patio plant sales, contests to see how long teens can keep a pet plant alive, or teach little kids to grow their own food and help them fall in love with gardens.

### What are the criteria for determining the winners?

These are the criteria established by Polar Bears International:

- Effort and teamwork – 10% (determined by the nature of the project, size and scope, and how the teamwork is depicted in the Web page updates and Success Report)
- Data collection and reporting – 15% (determined by how clearly and accurately did the team define their measurement tools and report the data)
- Quality of work on Web page/ Success report – 25%  
Impact of the project – 25%
- Creativity – 25%

Each participating zoo will choose one winning project from their community. Local judging will begin January 2, 2009 and the winners who will advance to the semi-finals will be determined by February 2, 2009. That team will advance to the semi-finals where their project will be in the running to become a finalist and go to San

Diego, CA for the Awards Ceremony. Finalists will be determined by February 28, 2009. Finalists will be notified by email and telephone by March 5, 2009.

Runners-up and other local awards will be recognized and prizes at the local level will vary from zoo to zoo. The runner up in the At-Large category will win a year's membership to Polar Bears International for each team member; \$50 per team member; and a prize package with polar bear merchandise from Polar Bears International.

### **Finalists**

The winning team from each zoo will be entered into the semi-finals.

A winner from each Project Polar Bear Category will be determined by the Polar Bears International judging panel. The chosen team from each category will become the Finalists.

Finalists' projects will be featured on the Polar Bears International Web site. Your work will inspire others to do the same kind of things in their communities!

The Finalist teams will be flown to San Diego, CA in Spring 2009 where they will be recognized in a ceremony at the Polar Bear Plunge exhibit at the San Diego Zoo. The Best Overall prize will be awarded at the ceremony.

The Best Overall Prize is \$500 per team member (including the adult advisor) and a day at Sea World San Diego where you will play in the water with beluga whales, and have a safe, behind the scenes encounter with polar bears and beluga whales during your Wild Arctic Interaction Experience. In October of 2009, the Best Overall team will fly to Churchill, Manitoba, Canada to experience polar bears in the wild on board a Tundra Buggy Adventures tour.

### **How does this contest help polar bears?**

The categories for the Project Polar Bear contest were chosen because the outcomes of these projects will result in reduction of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, the leading greenhouse gas, which has already caused marked climate change in the Arctic region. Over the past 30 years, the rise in the global temperature has resulted in a reduction in Arctic ice floes by 90 percent. This means that polar bears, which need the ice floes to reach their primary food source, ring seals, have had less and less time each year to "fill up" before the ice floes break up and the polar bears have to come onto land for the summer. Less food for the female bears means they give birth to fewer cubs or, if they do have two cubs, they may not have enough stored fat to make enough milk to feed two babies.

### **How does participation in Project Polar Bear help the supporting zoos?**

Polar Bears International's Year of the Polar Bear is an international, high profile, yearlong effort that will have good press coverage. PBI is glad to recognize its education partners and we are glad to support any local media efforts you engage in. Zoos will be recognized on the PBI web site as a participating zoo in this contest.

### **So How Do You Participate?**

1. Get a team together: 2 or 3 teens ages 14-18.
2. Find an adult advisor who will be able to guide you but not do your project. Need help finding an advisor? Contact the zoo education department at 669-6220.
3. Set a meeting schedule for your group
4. Decide what your project is going to be (choosing from one of the four topics outlined above)
5. Register your team by *June 1<sup>st</sup>* and outline your project online at [www.PolarBearsInternational.org](http://www.PolarBearsInternational.org)
6. Contact the Tulsa Zoo Education Department by *June 1<sup>st</sup>* and give them a copy of your project outline. 669-6220.
7. Measure your impact
8. Update your Project Polar Bear webpage
9. Complete the Project Polar Bear Success Report on the polarbearsinternational.org website and submit it by the deadline of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009, 11:59 pm Pacific Time.