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### *“Protecting Public Health and the Environment”*

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## **PVSC Garners Prestigious NJWEA Award**



*Thomas G. Meholic (middle), NJWEA Public Education Committee Chair, presented PVSC with an NJWEA Award that is named after him. PVSC Lab Director Jennifer Marques (left) and PVSC Operations Superintendent II Lisa Oberreiter (right) received the award on behalf of PVSC at a reception in Atlantic City in May.*

Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission “(PVSC)” has once again been recognized by the New Jersey Water Environment Association “(NJWEA)” for strategic excellence in wastewater management. They presented PVSC with their prestigious Thomas G. Meholic Public Education Award during their recent awards reception in Atlantic City.

Through its awards, the NJWEA encourages individuals to aid the environment. The Thomas G. Meholic Public Education Award recognizes significant accomplishments in promoting awareness and understating of water environment issues among the general public through the development or and implementation of public programs. PVSC was honored with this award for the following various initiatives:

- **Passaic River/Newark Bay River Restoration:** The key elements of this program is sponsoring volunteer shoreline cleanups and operating two skimmer vessels for the removal of debris from the surface of these waterways. Since the program was formed in 1998, PVSC has removed more than 13,000 tons of debris from area waterways.
- **Education Outreach:** This program is directed toward elementary school, middle school and high school students across PVSC’s treatment district. It consists of a 50-minute presentation on stormwater pollution prevention and proper disposal of household wastes. Since this program was formed in 2002, approximately 300,000 students have been educated.
- **Green Infrastructure Municipal Outreach:** PVSC, in partnership with Rutgers University, has funded the development of Green Infrastructure Feasibility Plans for 39 district municipalities. Since the program was formed five years ago, 480 individuals have been educated through workshops and seven

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demonstration projects have been constructed. This program also includes recycling pickle barrels into rain barrels.

- **Lower Passaic and Saddle River Alliance:** In this alliance with the National Park Service, PVSC created the Lower Passaic River Blueway Canoe and Kayak Trail. This included installing trail signs and developing access points along the route. The goal is to encourage and enable river restoration, water quality enhancements, and to increase the attractiveness of the entire Passaic River by providing a recreational link.
- **World Lab Day Events:** In this annual event, a local high school spends the day in PVSC’s Laboratory performing analytical procedures and calculations. The event provides students with an opportunity to learn about careers in an Environmental Regulatory Laboratory.
- **CSO Long Term Control Planning Education and Outreach:** PVSC partnered with Rutgers and Stevens Institute of Technology to identify Green Infrastructure solutions for the communities along the Passaic River from Paterson to Newark and to design and evaluate a low cost sewer separation project for East Newark.
- **Science Fairs, Career Day Events and Plant Tours:** PVSC chemists, scientists and engineers frequently participate in local student Science Fairs and Career Day events. In addition, PVSC conducts approximately 15 tours per year for foreign dignitaries, college students, school age students and environmental groups, among others.

“Our agency is operated by a hardworking group of people, who are committed to helping PVSC fulfill its role as a good environmental steward,” said PVSC Chairman Thomas Tucci, Jr. “A big part of that is working with various municipalities to come up with innovative solutions for protecting the environment. It also includes educating the public on how to prevent pollution in our waterways. We are honored that these efforts were recognized by such prestigious organization as the NJWEA.”