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**Bridgeport Student Receives Soak up the Rain
Scholarship to UConn's Natural Resources Conservation Academy**
Student will focus on sustainable storm water management



From Left: Marissa Westbrook, manager of residential energy services, The United Illuminating Company and Discovery Museum and Planetarium board member; Trish Garrigan, healthy watersheds and green infrastructure coordinator, Environmental Protection Agency New England; Dr. Laura Cisneros, Natural Resources Conservation Academy program coordinator, University of Connecticut; Amanda Hernandez, Soak up the Rain winner; Aris Stalis, ASLA and LEED AP, Aris Land Studio; Lisa Sarubbi, program administrator, The United Illuminating Company.

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. (June 28, 2016) – On Thursday, June 9, 2016, representatives from The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Aris Land Studio, The National Resources Conservation Academy (NRCA) at the University of Connecticut (UConn), Southern Connecticut Gas (SCG) and The United Illuminating Company (UI), all contributing partners in the Soak up the Rain initiative, gathered at the Discovery Museum and Planetarium in Bridgeport to honor Harding High School student Amanda Hernandez with a scholarship to attend the 2016-2017 NRCA program.

The partnership affords a student the opportunity to attend the NRCA and focus on a community project related to sustainable storm water management in their city. The project is in support of the EPA's national Soak up the Rain initiative, a national campaign to educate citizens and municipalities on storm water management through green infrastructure. There was an influx of applications and Hernandez was selected by a panel that consisted of members from each of the contributing partners. For the next year, Hernandez will be formulating and overseeing a project that will help improve the city of Bridgeport's sustainability and green infrastructure.

"Amanda's understanding of the importance of sustainability will undoubtedly ensure that she develops and manages a successful Soak up the Rain project," said Marissa Westbrook, manager of residential energy services, The United Illuminating Company. "Her passion is undeniable and will be a key factor in her ability to create change in Bridgeport, and will serve her well throughout this initiative and beyond."

UI is covering 80 percent of NRCA tuition costs. Aris Land Studio, a member of Connecticut Green Building Council (CTGBC), has collaborated with UI and the EPA to provide guidance and expertise to aid Hernandez as her community partners for the project. The EPA will also be providing educational materials and support.

For more information on the Soak up the Rain project please visit www.epa.gov/soakuptherain.

About Energize Connecticut

Energize Connecticut helps you save money and use clean energy. It is an initiative of the Energy Efficiency Fund, the Connecticut Green Bank, the State, and your local electric and gas utilities, with funding from a charge on customer energy bills. Information on energy-saving programs can be found at energizect.com or by calling 1-877-WISE-USE.

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