

Thornton Tomasetti

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Thornton Tomasetti Foundation Awards Grant to PLUS Program; Works with Students on Land Planning

(New York, NY – March 21, 2011) – The Thornton Tomasetti Foundation recently awarded a grant to the Planning Land Use with Students Program (PLUS) of the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University's Earth Institute for its ongoing work with students and communities in the New York metropolitan area.

The PLUS program is designed to show students why and how to offer their input in the local planning decision-making process. Students work in teams with students from other schools in their community to address concepts of sustainable planning, examining important environmental, social and economic land planning questions. The PLUS program provides high school and middle school students with decision making skills relating to local planning issues. Two teams consisting of high school and middle school students have been formed in Westchester and Rockland counties.

The Thornton Tomasetti Foundation is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization established in February 2008. One of the Foundation's primary goals is to provide financial support for individuals and organizations pursuing philanthropic activities related to building engineering, design or technology.

Key Points:

- One day symposiums are held in which students are presented with a case-study of a local project, proposed development plans and its range of impacts.
- Students receive information on site history, land resources, local history, and local demographics and ethnography, along with a booklet of source documents linked to the proposed plans for development.
- The symposium challenges students to analyze materials and make informed decisions (about what? Optimal development?). They then map out their own plan for the redevelopment site.
- The Observatory was formerly funded by the Hudson River Estuary Program.

- Margie Turrin, education coordinator of the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, heads the PLUS program.

Executive Quotes

Richard Tomasetti, chairman, Thornton Tomasetti Foundation

“The Thornton Tomasetti Foundation is thrilled to support the PLUS Program. It is wonderful to be able to teach students cost-effective, community sensitive and environmentally sound ways to repair and enhance their communities.”

Supporting Materials

PLUS Program

<http://www.ideo.columbia.edu/research/education/planning-land-use-with-students-plus>

About the Thornton Tomasetti Foundation

www.ThorntonTomasettiFoundation.org

The Thornton Tomasetti Foundation, a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization established in February 2008, has two primary missions including funding fellowships, scholarships and internships for undergraduate students, and those planning to pursue graduate studies in building engineering, design or technology and providing financial support for individuals and organizations pursuing philanthropic activities related to building engineering, design or technology. Key elements of the program are college scholarships, traveling internships, and grants to, and partnerships with nonprofit organizations.

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