

# 2010 Eco CEO Winner has a message for Smart-CEOs



My name is Joe Richardson, I am the owner of Bar-T and Founder of Mountainside Education and Enrichment, a non profit environmental education organization.

I want to begin by applauding Smart-Ceo Magazine for recognizing businesses that place environmental stewardship as a core mission in their daily operations. Fundamental change in our society has always come from the private sector and our ability to innovate, create and network.

Since April of 2009 Mountainside, located in Urbana Maryland, has been the recipient of over \$400,000.00 in grants with the help of The Potomac Conservancy, The Frederick County Department of Public Works in conjunction with the EPA, The Farm Services Agency and The Chesapeake Bay Trust. These grants are being used for restoration projects on our land, but in recent years most of the projects that these organizations have funded have been constructed on public lands because the agencies and entities that initiate the grants are unable to connect with private land owners.



On September 25th the Potomac Conservancy in cooperation with Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin offered a rain garden and pollinating garden workshop at Mountainside. The workshops were free to the public and the knowledge one could glean was invaluable. We had hoped to have more than 30 participants attend the workshop, we had 10 participants, none were business owners, and only one of

the two proposed gardens were planted.

At the ECO-CEO awards last year I was impressed by the strong desire private industry has to improve the health of the planet. I was surprised that "Going Green" remains difficult to define. For many, the questions "what do we do?" "how do we do it?" and "how much is this going to cost?" are fundamentally unanswered. I would like to offer a few suggestions.

Too often we look to others to do the dirty work and delegate responsibility to school groups and scout troops. A great leader does not say, "the battle is over there, fight bravely", a great leader says, "the fight is this way, follow me"! Let us as executives, land owners and community leaders become personally engaged in the greening of our world and literally go outside, plant trees, and take action. Make the hands in this picture your hands. We MUST lead by example!



With these thoughts in mind, I invite you to our first Environmental Stewardship Executive Retreat, hosted by Bar-T at our Mountainside facility in on April 14th and 15th

Come learn how to:

- install a Riparian Buffer
- identify and eliminate invasive vegetation
- mow less and plant native
- small stream management
- wetlands restoration
- install rain gardens and pollinating gardens
- fund projects in your community and get the experts to help facilitate the successful implementation of your project.

Attendees will also see our plans for the Third Living Building Certified Structure in North America.

Then take what you learn and apply it to your own property, your business or home owners associations. Together we can truly begin to make the substantive changes necessary to protect the environment and save the planet.

For more information on our environmental efforts visit [www.meegreen.org](http://www.meegreen.org). For more information on this event e-mail Matthew Gearhart at [mgearhart@bar-t.com](mailto:mgearhart@bar-t.com) or call 240-388-5360.

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