

Elaine Tholen has Bachelors Degree in Science Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and taught middle school and high school field biology, life sciences and physical sciences.

Ms. Tholen is currently driving the FCPS district-wide, preK-12 program (Get2Green) to promote environmental stewardship among students and staff. She is formalizing regional and national partnerships to provide tools to schools to create student driven environmental action around topics such as: energy, waste reduction, transportation, wildlife habitat and sustainable food, etc. The job also includes: coordinating efforts across instruction, facilities, food and nutrition, etc. to streamline procedures and support to schools, developing and implementing professional development programs for teachers and administrators and providing technical assistance to schools. Tholen is participating on regional and state task forces on environmental education. She acted as an environmental education resource teacher for Centreville Elementary School and Marshall High School for two years prior to working for the entire school district where she ran student environmental action teams. Get2Green was formally established in 2010. FCPS currently has over 140 schools engaged in student driven stewardship projects. Fairfax County Public Schools has over 75 registered Eco Schools, five of those being Green Flag schools, the highest honor to achieve in that program.

Tholen is a co-founder and advisory board member of NoVA Outside, a Northern Virginia alliance of environmental educators. NoVA Outside was formed under a grant from Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. She is the co-chair for the organization's signature event, the spring-time School Environmental Action Showcase at George Mason University. This event is attended by 6 school districts and focuses on highlighting student environmental stewardship projects. In addition, over 50 regional partners participate and area political and education leaders attend to support what the students are doing.

Tholen was the recipient of the Fairfax County Citizen Environmental Excellence Award for 2012. She received the 2011 Audubon Naturalist Society Marsha Sward Environmental Educator Award for her efforts with NoVA Outside and Fairfax County Public Schools. She worked as a volunteer for the National Wildlife Federation's schoolyard habitat program earning the 2006 Volunteer of the Year award and spent 10 years in the Fairfax County Master Gardener program focusing on gardening and building wildlife habitat with children.

Prior to her work with FCPS, Tholen received a MBA from the University of Maryland-College Park and worked for a Wall Street firm in Manhattan and Tokyo for several years in systems integration. She then worked for SAIC managing a staff focused on large environmental cleanups for the US Department of Energy. While consulting with the Department of Energy, she managed technical and policy issues related to nuclear facility stabilization and/or deactivation to ensure sound environmental, technical and budgetary

decisions; identified environmental compliance issues and impact on project management schedules and budget; participated in environmental, safety and health audits; monitored environmental, programmatic and budgetary impacts of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards; developed national performance measures for DOE nuclear material and deactivation programs for use in communication of program results to Congressional committees; monitored progress of economic transition activities and solicited community input to Brownfield re-use and restoration activities. Most recently, she assisted the DOE Smart Grid program with budgetary and strategic planning.

Elaine is an avid alpine hiker, backpacker and mountain biker. She has raised two boys on the tributaries of the Potomac and is a firm believer that children need at least an hour a day in outdoor unstructured play to be happy and healthy and that people of all ages need to “get out and get muddy” and really experience and explore in nature as much as possible.