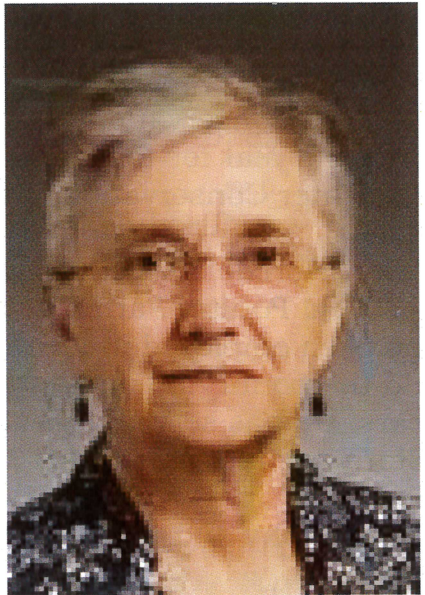


2013 Conservation Educator of the Year

Our 2013 Conservation Educator of the Year is Sister Marya Czech, SND. Sister Marya received her BA in Social Sciences from Mary Manse College and her MA in Biology from Ball State University, and ABD from the University of Toledo with a Major in Higher Education and a Minor in Biology.

Sister Marya is an Assistant Professor of Biology at Lourdes University. She has served as Chair of the Biology Department for two separate terms totaling 11 years and served on many faculty and curriculum committees. She is a former Adjunct Instructor for Notre Dame College, and taught middle school classes at schools such as Notre Dame Academy, St. Joseph Central Catholic High School, and within the Catholic Diocese of Toledo.



Currently, Sister Marya is investing her time in assisting in the development of the Wingspread Biological Field Station at Keweenaw Bay in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. She hopes to develop a field station that will be used by a consortium of several four-year and community colleges located in the Great Lakes Basin. Ecology and natural resources students will work with faculty and other experts to develop skills, acquire knowledge needed and gain an appreciation for environmental research. Sister Marya wants students to experience the larger Great Lakes picture. Sister Marya also adds, "The UT and OSU field stations concentrate more on graduate level research and training," she said. "We need such facilities for undergraduate students as well since these represent a larger number of 'feet on the ground' for monitoring and gathering data, especially in under-researched areas of the upper Great Lakes.

Sister Marya is a true leader in the field and in her encouragement of study in others in the field of environmental responsibility and conservation efforts and for this we are truly happy to honor her with this award.