
Eugene P. Odum Award Claudia Lewis

Claudia Lewis, this year's winner of the **Odum Education Award**, is Director of Education for Pinellas County, Florida. Ms. Lewis is a multi-lingual conservationist with a long and successful career in environmental education. Her unique set of professional skills has allowed her to effectively reach a wide audience with outstanding education programs and initiatives in sustainable development, conservation and education techniques. During her 20-year career she has developed a multitude of environmental education projects aimed at protecting a variety of species and ecosystems focusing primarily on wetlands and also on wading birds and shorebirds. Her latest focus has also included upland protection and restoration in Central Florida. A variety of innovative materials and approaches have included working with ecotourism operators and recreational wildland users.

Claudia Lewis is a brilliant educator, able to reach all levels of audiences, from small children to professional educators. Her professional work spans the range of the fields of social marketing, environmental education, interpretive program design and development and exhibits design. She has excelled in all of these fields. Much of her work has focused on reaching out to audiences typically not reached by traditional environmental education programs. Major target audiences have included African-American and Latino teenagers, as well as teenagers in the juvenile justice system; entire neighborhoods; realtors and newcomers to the state; and decision-makers and politicians. Ms. Lewis works in a variety of ways. These include net-



working (one of her main foci has been to get a variety of interest groups to the table); knowledge transfer (she brings to her colleagues the latest and most innovative science and techniques in the environmental education field); and conservation work.

One recommender said of her: "Claudia is blessed with the gift of being a truly inspirational speaker, who motivates people to get involved and take action within their communities and local environment. Claudia exudes professional dedication and is highly motivated if not driven. She gives to others, unselfishly, of her time, heart and soul in order to make this a safer, healthier, and more beautiful world to live in. Claudia Lewis is an outstanding environmental educator and leader, deserving of this recognition."