New Hope Academy (NHA) was granted an award in 2015 to carry out the design and implementation of two rain gardens on the parking lot of its school grounds. This project was designed to treat the stormwater runoff that flows across the parking lot, as well as to educate and engage the NHA community.

NHA partnered with the University of Maryland (UMD) for technical assistance in the design and construction of the rain gardens. During construction, UMD brought several college classes to the NHA property to study the practices.

NHA is planning to incorporate the rain gardens into outdoor lesson plans, to study pollinators and native plant species.

The two rain gardens span over 250 sq. ft. and were planted with native plants and trees that will provide habitat and food sources for native species. Signage was also installed for each rain garden, which will help educate future visitors on the function and benefits of rain gardens as stormwater management practices.