

2014 Earth Heroes at School



King County
Department of
Natural Resources and Parks
Solid Waste Division

Awards Presentation — May 1, 2014

PROGRAMS/SCHOOLS

Cleveland High School Recycling Club – Seattle School District

After doing a waste audit, the recycling club, led by students Jennifer Williams, Carmen Berrysmith, Izet Mendoza, and Ayan Mohammed, created a food-scrap collection program. The club, consisting of more than 30 volunteers, educated their peers about the value of composting and helped them sort their waste at lunchtime. Cleveland High School is diverting one ton of food scraps per month, which is turned into usable, nutrient-rich compost.

Enumclaw Middle School Leadership Program – Enumclaw School District

Leadership classes, consisting of about 50 students, use their lunch period to monitor the recycling and composting stations, ensuring that food scraps are properly sorted from recyclable items and garbage. Due to this project, the school has eliminated one of its garbage dumpsters. This spring, the school completed Level One of the King County Green Schools Program.

Fairwood Elementary School – Kent School District

Through multiple projects, students and staff have reduced waste, increased the recycling rate, and improved energy conservation as they worked their way to Levels One and Two of the King County Green Schools Program. The school recycling rate went from 30 percent in 2011 to 45 percent in 2013. The school downsized from an eight-yard to a six-yard garbage dumpster.

Hazen High School Earth Corps – Renton School District

Students meet weekly to collect recyclables and put them in the proper dumpsters. Through fundraising, they've improved the appearance of the indoor recycling bins which has encouraged participation in the program. They've sold reusable water bottles to promote the club and its environmental purpose and to reduce waste from disposable bottles.

Lakeland Hills Elementary Green Team – Auburn School District

All students participate in the school's Green Team as part of Lakeland's conservation program. In addition to overseeing a lunchroom recycling program, the Green Team promotes energy conservation. Green Team members have served as spokespersons for district conservation initiatives and as ambassadors at a community event. They volunteer their recess time to educate their peers on waste reduction.

STAFF

Wes Buchanan, Skyline High School – Issaquah School District

A valued member of the school's Green Team and lead custodian, Wes researched and designed a recycling station to meet the needs of the school's recycling and food-scrap collection program in the lunchroom. With the help of students, he built the stations and constructed signs to accompany them. Wes is now working on extending the program to the staff office pods.



Margaret Mead Elementary students

STUDENTS

Jessie Dirks, Chief Sealth International High School – Seattle School District

As president of the school Green Team, Jessie has led the small club in habitat restoration, the month-long Projects for Puget Sound competition, a trash clean-up on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, a campaign to reduce the use of paper towels, and water quality testing of Longfellow Creek. She also helped to revive interest and participation in the lunchroom food-scrap collection program.

Green Team Captains, Margaret Mead Elementary – Lake Washington School District

Blaise Rettig, Cate Smith, Sam Tischafer, and Audrey Wright lead four student-run green teams. The teams rotate among three jobs: lunchroom recycling monitors, outdoor trash busters, and weed whackers. Through responsibility, commitment, and leadership, these team captains have contributed to cleaner playgrounds, a weed-free garden, and lower garbage volumes.

Waste Watcher Captains, Creekside Elementary School – Issaquah School District

Fifth-grade Waste Watcher captains Maxim Chu, Eli Rubenstein, Lily Scott, Justin Tran, and Jocelyn Xie have taken leadership roles in the school's food-scrap collection program. They go above and beyond their responsibilities of helping their peers sort their lunch waste into compostable food scraps, recyclables, and garbage by being proactive in seeking ways to improve and sustain the program.

Waste Watchers, Challenger Elementary School – Issaquah School District

Over two hundred students are part of this school's Waste Watchers program, which oversees the separation of lunchroom waste into recyclables, compostables, and garbage. The popularity of the program ensures that the knowledge and participation in the program is widespread. The school recycles more than 50 percent of its waste and is a Level Two King County Green School.

TEACHERS

Kathy Dunn, Cody Johansen, Cami Przybylski, and Jane Ulrich, Sunny Hills Elementary School – Issaquah School District

These four teachers reinvigorated their school's green efforts by meeting with district and city personnel, creating a list of tasks, forming a Green Team of students, and raising awareness through reminder stickers, e-news, and announcements. This team of teachers plans to guide the school to Level Two of the King County Green Schools Program.

Tracy Green, Newport High School – Bellevue School District

A culinary arts teacher, Tracy started the food-scrap collection program to deal with the food scraps in her classroom. Last spring, she started a school-wide food-scrap collection program in the cafeteria, which resulted in reducing lunchtime garbage by sixteen 32-gallon cans each day. Tracy has been active in the school's Green Team program for many years.

Cooper Hatton, Newport High School – Bellevue School District

As the AP Biology teacher, Cooper not only teaches his students about environmental issues, he encourages their participation in the school's food-scrap recycling program. He coordinates student management of the program and conveys to students how their actions can affect the environment in a positive way through their everyday choices.

Alaura Keith, Lakeland Hills Elementary School – Auburn School District

Alaura initiated her school's participation in the King County Green Schools Program. She has involved students, staff, and parents in reducing waste, collecting recyclable and compostable materials, and conserving energy. The school has a recycling rate of 64 percent and has seen an 11 percent decrease in energy use. Lakeland Hills is working toward Level Three of the Green Schools Program.



**Congratulations
to all winners!**

Leslie LaFontaine, Muckleshoot Tribal School

Leslie created the school garden and a sustainability program at the school five years ago. She led the effort to plant vegetable beds, build compost bins, establish a fruit orchard, and plant a section of pollinator species. She coordinates the involvement of all students in these projects. Food harvested by the students is used in the cafeteria. Leslie incorporates Native American traditions into her sustainability lessons.

Laine Lenihan, Olympic Middle School – Auburn School District

Laine developed a six-week-long Earth and Human Impact unit aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards. The unit, which covers topics under air, land, water, and energy, will be used in the eighth-grade science curriculum in the Auburn School District. Laine is also the advisor to the Olympic Middle School Green Team, which volunteers at many city-sponsored environmental events.



Chief Sealth International High School students

VOLUNTEERS

Nancy Baker, Two Rivers School – Snoqualmie Valley School District

Nancy's enthusiasm for a school farm project inspired teachers Elise Cooksley and Laurie Weinkauff to establish a garden class and to build a raised bed garden. Nancy further inspired them to host a worm bin workshop, take students to tour the Oxbow Educational Farm, and facilitate a student project to make an all-school harvest lunch from local produce. Thanks to Nancy, many students have been included in this project, creating a strong feeling of community.

Vinnette Lang, Ilako Elementary School – Auburn School District

Among the many projects Vinnette has undertaken over the past six years are co-founding the PTA's Green Team, organizing the school's TerraCycle Brigade, starting the student Green Team, providing environmental education resources to the Ilako school community, and writing a monthly Green Team article. Vinnette also organized the annual city-wide holiday lights recycling event.



Muckleshoot Tribal School students

Susan Vossler, Environmental and Adventure School – Lake Washington School District

For the past seven years, Susan has been a driving force in Lake Washington schools, promoting environmental practices and organizing students, teachers, and parents to form Green Teams at multiple schools in the district. She has spearheaded lunchroom recycling programs, a clean-air campaign, an herbicide-free campus, and other initiatives, instilling an environmental ethos throughout the school community.



These 2014 Earth Hero schools have also earned recognition as King County Green Schools

- Carl Sandburg Elementary School/
 Discovery Community School (Lake Washington School District) – Levels One and Two
- Challenger Elementary School (Issaquah School District) – Levels One and Two
- Creekside Elementary School (Issaquah School District) – Levels One, Two, and Three
- Enumclaw Middle School (Enumclaw School District) – Level One
- Environmental and Adventure School (Lake Washington School District) – Level One
- Fairwood Elementary School (Kent School District) – Levels One and Two
- Lakeland Hills Elementary School (Auburn School District) – Levels One and Two
- Margaret Mead Elementary School (Lake Washington School District) – Level One
- Newport High School (Bellevue School District) – Levels One, Two, and Three
- Olympic Middle School (Auburn School District) – Levels One and Two
- Skyline High School (Issaquah School District) – Level One
- Sunny Hills Elementary School (Issaquah School District) – Level One
- Two Rivers School (Snoqualmie Valley School District) – Levels One, Two, and Three