

2018 Nominees

*Sixth P3 Eco-Challenge
Awards Ceremony*

STUDENT NOMINEES

Elementary School Students

David Gonzalez, Challenger Elementary School



David Gonzalez is a remarkable 5th grader at Challenger Elementary School. This is a student who enjoys working hard and setting goals to get what he wants. Being a 5th grader keeps him pretty busy yet he still manages to find time to be a safety patrol and a member of the Challenger Explorers Science Club. As David learns more about the environment around him through his classes, he wants to learn how to be more environmental sound and do his part to keep the Earth clean and healthy. David is always giving ideas and suggestions to his teachers and fellow students on how they can work together to keep their school clean and healthy. He is a good problem solver and demonstrates excellent leadership skills. David Gonzalez is the student every teacher dreams about having in class.

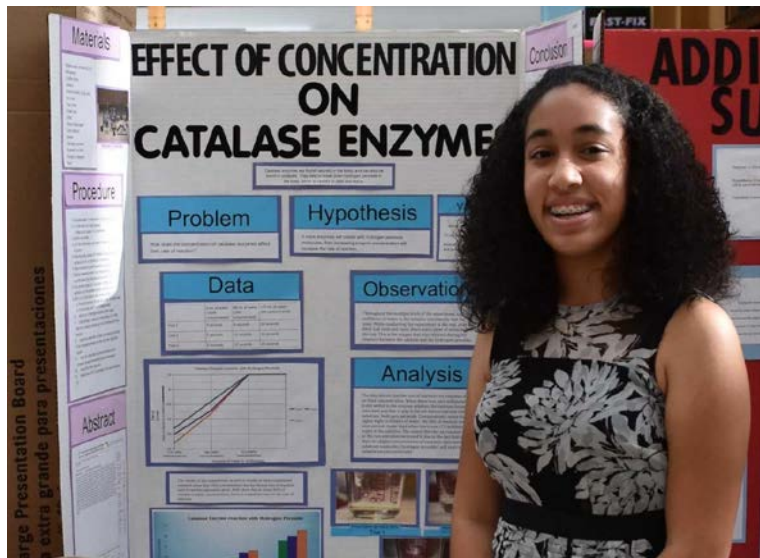
Poovini Illankovian, Orangebrook Elementary School

Reserved and quiet at times, Poovini is a force to be reckoned with when it comes to the Green Team at Orange Brook Elementary. She is the student liaison between the faculty and student Green Teams at her school. Her responsibilities include but are not limited to: relaying the information about green initiatives to the student body during meetings, welcoming guest speakers and community partners during their in-house environmental talks, as well as overseeing the recyclable collection unit and tracking the collection data. She volunteers her time weekly during the afterschool Garden Club where she mentors students in grades 2-5 in how to maintain the hydroponics set up, which includes training students on checking the water levels in the barrel, measuring and supplying the organic fertilizer, trimming plants, watering the garden beds, staking tomatoes and monitoring their growth. She loves to repurpose recyclable materials into works of art. Patient, diligent and knowledgeable, Poovini is a perfect mentor to her younger peers.



Middle School Students

Kayla Bello, Driftwood Middle Academy of Environmental Health and Wellness



Kayla Bello is tireless in her goal to improve herself, the environment, and to empower others to do the same. She is a well-rounded student with various talents and accomplishments in her personal life as well as in the classroom, school-wide, and in the community. Kayla is either the president, creator, or team captain of the activities that she participates in. She is the president of NJHS, Green Team, and Fuel Up to Play 60. She is team captain of the math team and Brain Brawl. She is the first chair pianist in the jazz band. Kayla does not stop until she has accomplished what she is pursuing, and even then she wants more! With her energy and

enthusiasm ideas become action and students are motivated by the changes they precipitate. Her enthusiasm creates a growing body of students that want to experience success in other service activities as they reap the benefits from previous activities. Kayla's strength as a public speaker is an asset in promoting programs that she participates in.

Carolina Silva, Walter C. Young Middle School

Carolina is a seventh-grade student at Walter C. Young. She is an honor roll student that excels in all academic areas. She is involved in many extra-curricular programs at school. Carolina is member of the

math club, scrabble club, robotic/STEM club, poetry slam club, and environmental club. Due to her participation in these different programs, Carolina is well respected and known by her peers. Her passion and love for the environment has allowed her to compete for two years in the Broward County Science Fair and obtain second and first place awards. In sixth grade, her experiment was on how the different materials of bowls affect the speed of the desalination of the water in it. She made a connection with climate change and explained how this experiment can help people know what material to use if they are desalinating water themselves during droughts or when freshwater levels are so critical. She wants to be a part of a sustainable environment at home and at school.



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Joshua Vallejo, Pines Middle School



Joshua is a hardworking individual who strives for excellence. This school year he enrolled in a Leadership course and an Environmental STEM class, which focuses on sustainability, so he could become more educated and be a better global citizen. He chose to take an active role in making positive changes in his school and community instead of just absorbing the coursework. In a short period of time, he created, managed, and implemented a student program called the “CO2 Destroyers” to combat the school’s carbon footprint. He researched the current problems at the school, educated and monitored the staff and students, and implemented a reward system to teachers who adhered the most to the program. The staff and students have made significant personal changes with their electrical usage as a result of these energy audits from his program. Joshua Vallejo is an outstanding example of a student environmental steward. He embodies environmentalism with his lifestyle choices, leadership, coursework, activism, and most importantly his character.

High School Students

Darien Deonanan, South Broward High School



Since the 1800's after the industrial revolution, greenhouse gases have been pouring into our atmosphere at an astonishing rate. This has been the biggest environmental problem humans have faced next to the high rate of garbage and plastics being dumped into our oceans. According to NASA, carbon dioxide levels have reached an all-time high of 407.61 parts per million and global temperatures have risen 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit since 1880. This has caused sea levels to rise, oceanic salinity to drop and water temperatures to raise leading to many problems such as the world-wide death of coral reefs and ocean life. To address this problem I, along with other South Broward students, created an organization called C.O.R.A.L. which stands for Conserving Our Reefs At Artificial Levels. As Co-President and Co-Founder of C.O.R.A.L Club, I am striving to push our members to encourage those around us to encourage the promotion of protecting our oceans along with our coral reefs. The first thing we did was set up fish tanks in one of the class rooms at school where we house some of the animals that we showcase and where we are trying to grow corals and house a predator tank for dwarf Lionfish. Through the club we also have begun community outreach by taking part in multiple events such as the Art Sea Festival, Fort Lauderdale Historical Society Earth day event, and multiple beach clean ups at Hollywood and Dania Beach. Through the school aspect, our club has traveled to nearby middle schools with our Magnet Coordinator, Debra Hixon, to talk about not only our school but the importance of our reefs and oceans on not only our environment but us personally.

Jacob Ewert, South Plantation High School



Jacob Ewert is a senior in the Environmental Science and Everglades Restoration Magnet Program at South Plantation High School. He plans to continue and sustain his environmental passion at the University of Florida, and pursue a degree in environmental science. He has always had a passion for the environment – from home gardening to being an avid bird

watcher, he is knowledgeable of environmental topics and issues is immense. He is an energetic and very involved young man who has been an active member of the Environmental Science and Everglades Restoration Magnet program, the Everglades Restoration(ER) Ambassadors Club, National Honor Society, and school band. Leading the ER Ambassador Club this past year as President, Jacob successfully had the club participate in over 30 environmental initiatives and programs at school and in the community – a club record! Through these and many other endeavors, Jacob has demonstrated that he is determined to be sustainable, and make sure others can be, and should be, like him. Jacob is an astute, well-rounded young leader who is dedicated to the environment and our future.

Tyler Lopez, South Broward High School

During Tyler’s sophomore year at South Broward High school he obtained his SCUBA Certification and began exploring the waters off the coast of Florida. He and his friends had never done anything like this before and were thrilled by everything they saw and wanted to continue diving for the rest of their lives. Tyler and his friends became frightened by the damage to coral reefs and wanted to make a difference by building an artificial reef for their school. Thus the C.O.R.A.L Club (Conserving our Reefs at Artificial levels) was born at South Broward High School. As Co-President and Co-Founder of C.O.R.A.L Club, Tyler is striving to push the club members to encourage the promotion of protecting our oceans along with our coral reefs. The club has begun community outreach by taking part in multiple events such as the Art Sea Festival, Fort Lauderdale Historical Society Earth day event, and multiple beach clean ups at Hollywood and Dania Beach under Tyler’s leadership.



Oleysa Malakhova, South Broward High School



Oleysa is an extremely focused young woman with a passion for a healthy, environmentally friendly planet. She has participated in the county Envirothon as team captain for 2 years, 3 years in the National Ocean Sciences Bowl, volunteers in beach cleanup events, community outreach projects and still finds time for other volunteer work. Her desire for positive change has brought her to the leadership role of President of South Broward High's Girls Get IT club. Through collaboration with the Plastic Free Mermaids, the C.O.R.A.L. club and Magnolia troops the event Journey in a Day: between Earth and Sky, Its your Planet-Love It was held on March 10th. Through her high school education, she has learned about the impacts of technological advancements on the environment whether they were positive or negative. In school, she applies eco-friendly aspects like reusable utensils and reusable water bottle, as well as teaching her peers and the community that they can make sustainable changes. She applied her knowledge with her team members in two years of the

Envirothon competition, even competing in states both years. As she moves on into her college career at the University of Florida she will major in Materials Engineering or Environmental Engineering.

EDUCATOR NOMINEES

Elementary School Educators

Shannon Connelly, Hollywood Hills Elementary School

Ms. Connelly started working for Hollywood Hills Elementary last school year as the Autism Special Program K-2 teacher. She also worked with aftercare teaching students at the school American Sign Language (ASL). As a life skills/science project she created a small garden with her students. Soon after, in addition to teaching the aftercare students ASL, she started plans for a sustainable vegetable/herb garden. She worked with another colleague in creating a school friendly look that would bring color and life to the school. This year, kids have stepped up in taking care of the garden through her supervision and have learned life skills, responsibility, cooperation and how they can better help the environment. Students learn about plant growth and how to care for the plants. Teachers at the school look forward to emails about the fresh vegetables, mints and herbs that grow. In her 2 years at the school, she has left a lasting impact that brings life, color and ownership to students at the school.



Kelly De Varona, Davie Elementary School

Last school year, Mrs. De Varona started the Davie Green Team to reduce the amount of paper and plastic bottles sent to the landfill. Mrs. De Varona fosters the love of the environment in her Davie Green team members by teaching them about the negative impact of waste. The Davie Green team members learn to work together to get a task done and how people can make a positive impact on the environment. Mrs. De Varona's Green Team members are role models for other students. This year Mrs. De Varona started a butterfly garden to provide butterflies and other pollinating insects with a safe, organic habitat. The butterfly garden allows students to interact with nature as they learn the importance of plants to humans and birds and insects. While students maintain and care for the garden they learn to appreciate how hard work can create a beautiful home for birds and insects. The garden is a peaceful area on campus where all students, staff and parents can come to appreciate nature. The butterfly garden is a nursery for Monarch butterflies. Mrs. De Varona has taught the life cycle of the Monarch at all stages. Mrs. De Varona uses a butterfly tent so students may observe the metamorphosis stage. The release of the butterflies back into the garden reinforces the importance of environment sustainability.



Joanne Ewart, Sheridan Hills Elementary School



I have developed a gardening program for approximately 80 preschool students enrolled in the Specialized Preschool program, the Half Day Speech/Language Preschool program, and the Head Start program at Sheridan Hills Elementary School. This is the second year of the program that started with three raised edible garden beds and now the addition of a butterfly garden to attract pollinators to the edible beds. The purpose of the gardening program is to educate young children on where food comes from and provide the opportunity for children to taste a variety of healthy foods. This program allows young children to dig in and get their hands dirty. They are encouraged to touch the plants, observe the plants, and look for and observe wildlife in real-life experiences. To keep this project sustainable, I organize “Family Days” throughout the year. This year we have had two different days dedicated to preparation and planting of the beds and the butterfly garden. An “Art for the Garden Day” was organized with the purpose of creating unique decorative labels for plants and decoration for a new arbor. I have also organized a family workday to clean up and

maintain the butterfly garden. This year our preschool gardeners have entered the “Fairchild Challenge” School Garden competition with Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Miami-Dade County for which they have created a how-to garden guide book focusing on three specific plants stating; why they were planted, how they were planted and how they were cared for throughout the growing process.

Monika Moorman, Orange Brook Elementary School



Monika Moorman is a fifth-grade teacher of the gifted/high-achieving students at Orange Brook Elementary. She has been a Green Team coordinator for the last two years and under her leadership, she revitalized the school garden by doubling the number of the garden beds and introducing a hydroponics set up with solar panels, ran a school wide recycling program, initiated green initiatives including quarterly beach-clean ups (often averaging 60 participants), involved several community partners in providing environmental projects to students, organized and managed a weekly afterschool multi-grade Garden Club, as well as spearheaded efforts that led to Orange Brook earning the Green Apple designation as the first school in the Broward County to earn this distinction. Last school year, she inspired and supported her students in a project-based endeavor called Save the Trees which resulted in a student led peaceful protest. Consequently, a school wide (grades 3-5) referendum with customized ballots was organized with students voting to determine the fate of the trees in danger of being removed to make room for a new electronic

marquee sign. This unique experience has allowed students to make real-life connections, inspired open discussion, encouraged debate, and exercised their problem-solving skills. She successfully continues to encourage her peers to apply for grants to fund improvements to the school garden. Together with another OBE staff member- Ms. Monica Williamson, she designed and painted an approximately 50 ft long outdoor mural depicting three Everglades scenes, which adds to the uniqueness of the OBE garden. The mural, which took months to complete, serves as an educational tool showcasing common Everglades species of flora and fauna.

Elizabeth Norrell, Griffin Elementary School

Betsy Norrell is our Physical Education teacher. She has been at Griffin Elementary for almost 20 years. A few years back our school received a BlueSky grant from Johnson Controls to build garden beds in our environmental area. We had a community day and with the help of staff, students, parents, and volunteers from Johnson Controls we built four raised garden beds with concrete block. After an initial year of unsuccessfully trying to integrate the garden into our classrooms, using the classroom teacher, Betsy decided to work with all students (K-5) during her Science Fridays on growing vegetables in our garden. She started by taking a two-day course over the summer on School Gardens, hosted by Ag in the Classroom. The two-day workshop was held in North Miami at Johnson and Wales University. During the workshop she learned how to integrate garden concepts into the curriculum and how to prepare our garden bounty to introduce students to fresh vegetables, which they grew themselves. Students planted seeds, replaced soil, weeded gardens, harvested vegetables, and then were able to taste the vegetables they harvested.



Christina Tse, Challenger Elementary School



Hands on activities and experiments have come to life since Christina C. Tse has been here at Challenger Elementary School. This is Christina's 2nd year at this school. In the past two years, Christina has been able to start the first science club and green club at the school called Challenger Explorers. She has organized different events for the staff, students, parents, and community to be part of her Family Science Nights. Christina has also been able to bring 10 fruit trees to beautify the school campus through a grant from the Whole Foods Kids Foundation. We are very excited to have her be a part of the Challenger Family and bring new and innovating ideas to our school. A passion of Christina's is the environment.

Her lessons really take off with the students when she discusses the topics related to Ecosystems and Going Green. By creating a positive and active learning environment, she is able to guide inquiry learning in the classroom to all the students. She uses hands on activities and experiments to help students make a connection with what they are learning and the real world. When the students get to the standard on renewable and nonrenewable energy, Christina has the students make a list of everything that uses energy. From there the students have to take a look at the list and start placing into energy categories. Christina will then show visuals and examples of each of these energy's and explain the difference between renewable and nonrenewable resources. The students get excited because they realize that this relates to objects they use every day at school and at home for these energies.

Catherine Uden, Westwood Heights Elementary School

I am currently teaching Physical Education at Westwood Heights Elementary School in Fort Lauderdale. This school year, I taught the school about recycling, and trained all Kindergarten through 5th grade classes how to recycle properly. I ordered enough blue recycling bins for the school. I started a recycling club during one PE class per week, and those students collect all of the recycling from all of the classrooms, front office, and teacher's lounge. We then all walk together to the recycling dumpster to empty the bins. Before this school year, no recycling was taking place in classrooms, and this year, we fill the recycling dumpster every week. In the community, I am Chair of the Surfrider Foundation Broward Chapter, which helps protect our beaches and oceans. Surfrider Foundation is an environmental non-profit, and it is all volunteer. I



organize and take part in at least one beach or waterway cleanup per month, as well as take part in activism to change our local ordinances and state laws, decrease the use of harmful products at restaurants, and help to educate the public about issues facing our environment. We help mentor student clubs in Broward so that our youth can be involved in protecting our oceans. We table at a variety of environmental events, and occasionally screen environmental films about such topics as offshore drilling, sea level rise, and plastic pollution.

Middle School Educators

Grisel Berrios, Walter C. Young Middle School



An Environmental stewardship is defined as a person who can responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices. Grisel is an Environmental Stewart and a National Habit Stewart who spreads awareness and inform the students and faculty at Walter C. Young Middle School about how they can improve their own personal environmental stewardship efforts. She organized the recycle, campus beautification and school garden programs. She is the sponsor for Environmental club and co-sponsor for the Miami Heat How Low Can You Go CO2 reversal challenge. Though Mrs. Berrios's efforts out schools won the most sustainable Award, reducing our energy consumption by 7.8% for four years in a row. Mrs. Berrios is also the club sponsor for the

SWAT/Ignitus, Student Government and Robotic Clubs. Mrs. Berrios uses a variety of teaching strategies in her classroom: Inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, direct instruction, peer-to-peer learning, eLearning, Mobile learning, and flipped classroom. She uses the environment issues and outdoor activities such as gardening to motivate her students and connect them to real life.

Elaine Fiore, Beachside Montessori Village

Elaine Fiore guides and inspires young environmental leaders, her school and community to create solutions for the many challenges we face. She is a creative problem-solver whose talents lie in drawing people from variety of backgrounds to collaborate towards a common goal. This is demonstrated by the results of her ASU Sustainability Teacher Academy experience which led her to create a middle school Sustainability Course and raise awareness of reducing her school's carbon footprint. She, then, led a team of teachers to pursue the U.S. Green Ribbon School Award. Additionally, a project she and her colleague brainstormed at ASU turned into co-founding our nonprofit, Climate & Sports Student Summits, which creates an inspired space for kids to become sustainability change agents in their communities. For the past two years, she has created and organized an opportunity for middle school students to attend an International field trip to the rainforest in Costa Rica. After recently learning about the



Bill Emerson Act, she brought together students, administration, district leaders, and two non-profits to pilot a food rescue program for Broward County Schools. Elaine has partnered with contacts from the State and foodrescue.net for guidance through the process and to help expand statewide. In honor of Earth Day, Elaine partnered with two local artists and collaborated MEEC, NSU, Broward County and the City of Hollywood to create the Free Our Seas Environmental Art Festival to raise awareness and shine a light on solutions for our environment.

Matthew Hamilton, Crystal Lake Middle School



Matthew Hamilton is a dedicated educator that strives to provide activities in and out of his class to all students in the school. Through these activities Mr. Hamilton tries to instill environmental stewardship skills and assist students with developing traits that embody environmentally conscious citizens. In class Mr. Hamilton has incorporate a program called Global Scholars, where students complete projects and share the information with peers across the globe. Specifically, this programs theme is Food nutrition/ Gardening. Subsequently, his students have been intertwining conservational projects into their classroom throughout the school year while providing and receiving feedback from many different cultures. Additionally, Matthew Hamilton is the club sponsor for the Environmental club. Students in this organization have been managing an urban garden, learning traits of master gardeners, producing meals from their efforts,

and researching additional pathways for growing in an urban environment. For Earth Day, Mr. Hamilton is coordinating a conservation fundraiser where students in the school can donate money or receive a sponsor and then complete laps around the track at our school. Money collected will be donated to an animal charity and assist with providing supplies for a park beautification and cleanup at the Crystal Lake Pine Scrub. Overall, Mr. Matthew Hamilton volunteers his time consistently to provide opportunities for students to become well versed on ecological issues. Students flock to his guidance, mentorship, and meetings with passion because of the interest and information he provides. Crystal Lake Middle will always be thankful and happy to assist Mr. Hamilton continue to flourish both in and out of the classroom.



High School Educators

Debra Hixon, South Broward High School



Debra Hixon is the Maritime/Marine Science & Technology Magnet Coordinator at South Broward High School. She is a motivating force in our school and community as she advocates for students, as well as community members, to learn about the issues that the marine environment faces. Through these efforts, our community has incorporated a variety of new policies and initiatives that make it a better place to live. She plans and implements field trips during the school year to help students immerse themselves in field activities that will enable them to learn about the marine environment and the problems it faces. She

also creates and sponsors clubs on campus that allow students to participate with community groups outside of school; Interact, Girls Get IT and Shark Club. Through these clubs, Debra has shared the problem of Coral Reef decline, Single use plastic, bee extinction, Sea Level Rise and decline of shark populations in our area, not only with the students in her club, but with community members as well in the many outreach programs she has participated in. Debra also plans and implements two summer programs; one that teaches incoming freshman about a variety of marine science and technology topics through hands-on activities with marine businesses and college professors and one for upper class students that allows them to experience a college level curriculum focused on marine science and technology topics in a partnership with NOVA Southeastern University. She doesn't use single use plastic items, she recycles, she tries to reduce her carbon footprint as much as possible, so her students and community members know her lessons are authentic.

Daniel Stackhouse, McFatter High School

Dr. Daniel Stackhouse is the Advanced Placement Environmental Science teacher and Environmental Club sponsor at McFatter High School. Through his class Dr. Stackhouse teaches nearly every student at McFatter about protecting the environment. Dr. Stackhouse also helps students take the knowledge gained in AP Environmental Science and apply it through Environmental Club. As the sponsor of Environmental Club Dr. Stackhouse helps the students plan events and activities such as Trashket Ball or Earth Day. Dr. Stackhouse also leads the AP Environmental Science section of Local Advanced Placement Credentialing (LAPC). LAPC is a program meant to instruct teachers on how to teach an AP class. Through this program Dr. Stackhouse helps improve how all other Broward County AP Environmental Science teachers teach their classes. Dr. Stackhouse is also credentialed as a Master AP Teacher in Broward County through the LAPC program.



CUSTODIAL STAFF NOMINEES

Jim Coleman, Jr., Challenger Elementary School



Jim Coleman Jr. is someone who goes above and beyond to ensure every one of our staff and students at Challenger Elementary School is ready for each day. Having many years of experience behind him as a custodial staff and now as head custodian at our school, he brings with him a wealth of knowledge to our school about keeping organized, clean, and going green. Being new to our challenger family at the beginning of this school year, Jim has shown us that he wants to be involved and part of the ideas of beautifying and greening

our campus. With a smile on his face, he's always willing to lend a hand or share ideas of how things can always be improved around our campus. Jim helps to also maintain the areas around campus that have earned our school to be a National Wildlife Certified School Yard. This school year, any areas that have had excess water, leakage from broken sprinklers heads, leaky faucets and sinks, or leaky water fountains have had work orders put in and repaired. Air quality is also very important at our school. Jim goes into each area and changes out the air filters when it is time to be changed. Ensuring we all have clean air to breathe. By having a positive work attitude and high expectations to have our school be clean and green, has motivated his staff to put all the procedures in place to ensure Challenger Elementary School is an eco-friendly environment.

Antjon Lockhart, Orange Brook Elementary School

Mr. Antjon Lockhart is the Head of Facilities at Orange Brook Elementary in Hollywood. His involvement in OBE goes beyond his daily responsibilities. Hard working, always optimistic, and sporting a big smile on his face, he undoubtedly contributes to the positive culture and climate of the school. His diligence in monitoring, troubleshooting and maintaining all operating systems at OBE is evident. When you see him walking down the hall or working in the cafeteria, you can't help but notice his interactions with the OBE students. Every child knows him and adores him. Mr. Lockhart became a role model for many boys on campus. Some approach him and ask how they can help with recycling or become Green Team members. His work ethic and enthusiasm set a great example for everyone with whom he interacts daily.



Mr. Lockhart played an instrumental role in enabling Orange Brook Elementary earn the Green Apple designation by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. "The recognition identifies Orange Brook Elementary as an environmental leader in Florida's educational industry, and its commitment to conserve and protect Florida's natural resources." To become designated, Orange Brook Elementary conducted an in-depth property assessment spearheaded by Mr. Lockhart and implemented environmental practices in five areas of sustainable operations, including: communication and education, waste reduction, and recycling, water conservation, energy efficiency and air quality. His collaborates will all faculty members to ensure that Orange Brook Elementary continues to be a model school for green practices and initiatives.

Jorge Mendez, Hollywood Hills Elementary School



Mr. Mendez is the head of facilities at Hollywood Hills Elementary school and an after care counselor who always goes above and beyond his job description. He is an active participant in many events throughout the school year and makes sure the school stays clean and presentable all year round. Over the past 2 years, this year included, he worked in tangent with another of the Aftercare counselors to create a sustainable garden for the students. Through this, students have learned how to take care of a garden, as well as responsibility, cooperation, and teamwork. He helps to teach the students the importance of taking care of our environment, our school and our community. Some of the many inspirational involvement that Mr. Mendez has provided Hollywood Hills include: Working with aftercare students to create a sustainable vegetable, herb and mint garden; helping students to understand the importance of keeping the campus and environment clean and the importance of recycling; demonstrating leadership qualities; providing a good example for others to follow and working to motivate and/or educate others to use eco-friendly methods. Mr. Mendez demonstrates

personal commitment to environmental principles. He has attended custodial trainings as well as gone to nurseries to learn about Florida native plants and what plants are best to plant in the South Florida environment.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL NOMINEES

Tanya Lacasse, Griffin Elementary School



Tanya Lacasse has been a champion for the environment for many years. I've had the pleasure of working with her, co-sponsoring our school's environmental club, Eco Patrol, for the past three years. She has been an employee of Griffin for almost five years and her children all traveled through Griffin and are now in middle and high school. She currently works with children with special needs as a Teacher Assistant. Her patience and guidance are an invaluable asset to our school. Even before she started co-sponsoring Eco Patrol, she has always been involved in our school's sustainability initiatives, along with her children. Also, for several years she volunteered with the group S.T.O.P. (Sea Turtle Oversight Protection). We are very fortunate to have her here at Griffin, not only is she a committed and talented employee, but also one with an environmental background since she has a degree in Marine Biology. Her advocacy for civic responsibility is evident in her desire to participate in several school and

community events throughout the year. She has pulled weeds in our environmental area, during our Environmental Area Restoration Day; dug burrows at our neighborhood parks, during our Burrowing Owl Habitat Restoration Day; patrolled our beaches at night to ensure that sea turtle hatchlings made it safely to the ocean, as a volunteer for STOP. For several years, she has come out to volunteer with her

daughter at our Water Matters Day booth. Her daughter communicated with participants about the importance of reducing their use of plastic and recycling. This type of participatory action will encourage life long skills in her children that will enable them to address and hopefully prevent environmental issues in the future. Mrs. Lacasse takes every opportunity to educate herself and learn about the latest environmental issues and best practices. Recently she attended a workshop at the South Florida Wildlife Center to learn about how to rescue animals in the wild and bring them into the Wildlife Center for rehabilitation.

Dion Nader, Orange Brook Elementary School



Mrs. Dion Nader is an IT Microtech who joined Orange Brook Elementary two years ago. She is a volcano of energy who is capable of simultaneously tackling multiple projects with a huge smile on her face. Mrs. Nader exemplifies and encourages an environmentally conscious lifestyle among teachers and students alike. She contributed to expanding the recycling program at Orange Brook Elementary by adding the collection unit for old toners and ink cartridges as well as outdated electronics. She consistently reminds OBE staff about responsible green practices which include unplugging classroom equipment when not in use. She encourages collaboration among teachers when it comes to using technology to improve their instructional delivery as well as among students by providing them with tools to showcase their thinking processes. She supports OBE staff by providing

training in using Recordex, smart boards, tablets, or interactive tables, to name a few. She equips teachers with skills and tools that enable them to conduct distance learning sessions in all subject areas with educators all around the world. She arranges and provides support to teachers who Skype or use google hangouts to connect with scientists, naturalists and green advocates to educate students about the importance of conservation and sustainable lifestyles. Mrs. Nader loves introducing students to new technological tools that help reduce the carbon footprint. She has been successful at eliminating the use of paper and transitioning students in select classes to the use of digital tools and programs such as using Office 365 and its sharing capability instead of traditional notebooks. She motivates OBE staff, teachers, parents and community members by promoting OBE's green initiatives such as beach clean-ups or Save the Trees referendum by advertising them on the school's website and Twitter account.



SCHOOL NOMINEES

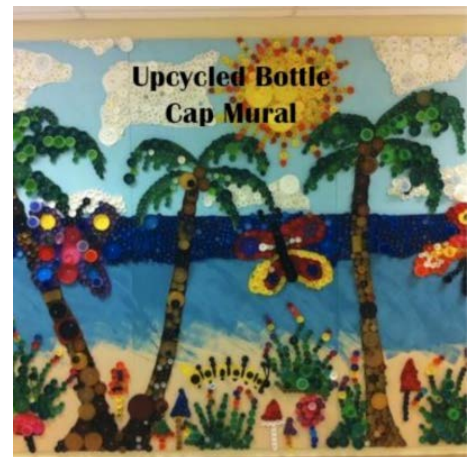
All Categories

Beachside Montessori Village



Beachside Montessori Village is an outstanding example of a school community engaged in preserving our planet for posterity. From community involvement to school sustainability, it is our intention to create an environment that inspires our children to take ownership of their surroundings and action for change towards a more peaceful and sustainable world. Reducing our environmental impact, integrating sustainability education and promoting community involvement accomplish this. Our facilities staff, teachers and students collaborate to reduce environmental impact and costs. Creating an environment mindful of our carbon footprint is

evident from the wide variety of programs and activities. Our latest initiative, Food Rescue, not only decreases waste and methane gas but also feeds the hungry. To reduce energy, we participate in the Miami Heat's How Low Can You Go Energy Efficiency Challenge. Recycle Rangers take ownership of schools recycling program, while the Montessori curriculum utilizes reusable manipulative lessons, student notebooks, and key experiences, reducing the need for single-use materials. Green Car Pool and a No-idling program reduce CO2 further reduce emissions on campus. As you walk through campus, upcycled murals, artwork and inspirational quotes create a positive, nurturing learning environment. Our outdoor environment reflects the same feel. We are a NWF certified wildlife habitat. Through our classroom gardens and weekly gardening club, students learn about planting, maintaining and harvesting organic edibles. The garden clubs' vision of creating an outdoor classroom for our school has become a reality through grants to open spaces and in the future create seating.



Montessori cosmic education, partnerships and extracurricular activities support our environmental and sustainability literacy.

The Montessori curriculum teaches "cosmic education" to help students understand the connections between the world's biodiversity and themselves. Interconnectedness of all things provides a way for children to be able to study math, science, nature and the universe. The Sustainability elective offers students an opportunity to study and practice environmental wellness. Students have opportunities for off campus, field-based environmental studies at Everglades National Park, Pigeon Key and Costa Rica. Off the Canvas, run entirely by parent volunteers, cultivates a sustained awareness and interest in art/craft, using of recycled materials and socially responsible practices through monthly classroom hands-on projects. The Warriors of Rainbow student green group provides opportunities for school leadership and service learning, even travel to California to attend Algalita International Youth POPS Summit with international students. Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) students research and offer solutions for global environmental issues from climate change to affordable energy services. The Montessori philosophy coupled with strong partnerships and a passionate school community create a unique environment that inspires our children to become protectors and guardians of our planet.

Griffin Elementary School



Striving for a more sustainable campus is an organic and constantly changing challenge. We are always reviewing and tweaking our procedures; yet our campus culture remains the same: reduce, reuse, recycle, rethink. Griffin has an environmental club for 4th and 5th grade students, called Eco Patrol. Our mission is to create a more sustainable campus, while educating our peers, parents, and community on the importance of promoting and living as good environmental stewards. September, we kicked off our tenth year of school wide recycling of all paper, plastics, cans and bottles. Although, this year we have implemented many new initiatives, our previous initiatives are finally paying dividends. Through our Captain Planet grant from 2014, we were able to build artificial burrows for not only our community parks, but also for our school campus. Also, we were able to plant several coontie plants, which are the host plant for the Atala butterfly. We are very proud of our recycling program, which has been running strong for almost ten years. Each Monday and Thursday our Eco Patrol members collect

the recycling from each classroom using the large round blue bins on wheels. In addition, to collecting recyclables, we signed up to compete in a contest with other schools in Florida as to who could collect the most plastic film; i.e., plastic bags, dry cleaning plastic, plastic from paper towel and toilet paper packages, etc... The contest is sponsored by Trex, which manufactures a decking product made totally from recycled plastic. The contest runs from November to April, Earth Month. We participate in the district's "How Low Can You Go?" energy challenge. Some of the new initiatives we adopted over the past few years, include our participation in the School Flag Program sponsored by Broward Air Quality. Also, last year we participated in GLOBE (Global Observation to Benefit the Environment), which partners with National Wildlife Federation Eco Schools USA. Our students recorded data for precipitation, soil temperature, and clouds, which in turn gets sent to NASA scientists to help predict weather and climate change. Last year we were fortunate to book the Agrium Seed Survivor bus. We had the computerized interactive bus here for three days in February. What a great way to reinforce those science standards in plant nutrients and growth. This year we were lucky to have Del Diamond Gem Mining come to our school for our 4th and 5th grade classes to reinforce rocks and minerals. The previous summer we were awarded a grant for \$1000 to restore our environmental area, build concrete raised beds, and make it more of an outdoor classroom. In an effort to allow every student to experience the garden, our PE Teacher utilized her "Science Fridays" to have students work in the garden. It's been a huge success! Also, this year we were notified that we received a grant from Whole Kids Foundation for tropical fruit trees for our food forest initiative. We received a total of \$2,000 in grant funds and will be working on this project next school year. These improvements will help us reach many of our NWF pathway goals and provide teachers with a great outdoor space, conducive to learning. In addition, our students have operated a booth at Water Matters Day for the past 4 years, to educate the community on water



conservation. Another attempt to reduce our waste, we introduced Waste Free Wednesdays a few years ago. Our Green Team is currently looking into ways to make the program more successful. In summary, we are in constant change; introducing new ways and revamping old ways as a means of reducing our school's carbon footprint.

Orange Brook Elementary School



Orange Brook Elementary located in Hollywood is becoming a model school for green practices and environmental awareness in its community and the district. The school's continuous work on improving its grounds to make them more environmentally friendly as well as its sustainable efforts and practices earned it the title of the Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation and the Green Apple Designation by Florida Department of Environmental Protection making it the first school in Broward county to earn this distinction.

Orange Brook Elementary has been involved in protecting natural habitats through the Project Perch (burrowing owl shelter) and promoting sustainable life style (vegetable, fruit and butterfly garden beds). Fueled by the faculty and administration's efforts to obtain funds from community supporters and grants, OBE has been consistently expanding its green initiatives. This year, a state of the art four-tower hydroponics system powered by four solar panels has been added to the traditional four garden bed set up. The school garden has been adorned by an Everglades mural painted by OBE staff members.

OBE teachers in various grades completed a variety of short and long term environmental trainings which enabled them to become National Wildlife Federation Habitat Stewards. As a result, Orange Brook Elementary has been equipped with a comprehensive green curriculum program which has been progressively implemented across all grade levels. Additionally, OBE is working towards the Everglades Champion School Recognition. The program provides each grade level with all-inclusive lesson plans about the importance of Everglades in our eco-system, sustainable practices and conservation awareness.

The student-led Green Team manages the recycling program including recycle pick up twice a week as well as educates all students about the benefits of recycling by maintaining an educational bulletin board addressing green topics. The student morning announcement team (WOBE) has also been involved in the Broward County's Air Quality Flag Program.

OBE encourages the local community to support its efforts in becoming more environmentally friendly and mindful. Thanks to the generosity of the local Hillcrest HOA that paid for the two fabricated owl homes built with the help of the experts representing the Project Perch, OBE became a permanent home to two families of burrowing owls. Students are responsible for cleaning and monitoring the protected bird site. It also provides them with a unique first-hand experience of observing protected species and their behavior.

OBE has been fortunate to enlist many community partners to enrich student's educational experiences. 4H Club supports OBE students by exposing them to STEM technologies used to solve environmental problems by designing drones and presenting topics related to human activity affecting the native bird migration patterns, ocean pollution and conservation, turtle protection, healthy habits and eco-friendly lifestyle.

Orange Brook Elementary also partnered with another local community environmental enthusiast: SOL (Saving Ocean Life). Consequently, OBE has supported and participated in quarterly beach clean-up events often paired with environmental awareness talks given by expert guests (e.g., the importance of sea oats planting, beach erosion, protection of sea turtles, etc.)



Walter C. Young Middle School

Walter C. Young Middle participates in different green initiatives that will benefit our community and the world. We are a certified Wildlife Habitat by the Florida Wildlife Federation. Walter C. Young is participating in the NWF's Eco-School USA Pathways to a sustainable school. We are in the process of completing the Eco-Action plan to start implementing initiative to reduce energy, water, and solid waste consumption.



Another Eco-School pathway that we want to continue working on is to increase biodiversity at school and beyond. For a couple of years, we have been working towards increasing the diversity of species – birds and plants by planting native plants. Every year we invite Mr. Suarez from NatureScape to come and teach our 6th Graders about the biodiversity of our school. Earth Science curriculum ties very well with the environment. The students learn how all Earth's spheres connect and how they work.

We are also working with

C.B. Smith Park – STEM in the Park. This Broward School STEM initiative allows teachers and students to work together to find problems in their backyard and work on solutions to those problems. Students will have the opportunity to visit the park and work with the park naturalist.

Walter C. Young Green Knights Environmental club is open to all students at school. The club meets every Friday morning and each day during lunch. The Green Knights are working on many projects that allows them to investigate, design, research, collect data, and present their findings to the rest of the school. Some of the projects that they are working on this year are:

- Carton4Garden – milk carton recycle bin
- Recycle Relay -Pepsi co
- Outdoor classroom
- Native Garden
- STEM in the Park
- How Low Can You Go Challenge
- School wide clean up
- Art for teachers
- SECME Banner
- Environmental Poster Contest
- Green Knights Website by Ingrid Groose and Sophia Huth
- Turn it Off stickers and flyers – Energy Reduction



Walter C. Young’s goal is to work on cultivating a sustainable mindset that allows students to participate, apply and make a difference for future generations.

School Categories

Annabel C. Perry Elementary School – Category I



Annabel C. Perry PreK-8’s goal is to repurpose and improve underused outdoor space on our school grounds. This area will attract wildlife, include play, and incorporate authentic outdoor learning experiences. Repurposing the school’s outdoor space gained the approval of the administrative team which consists of a principal and 2 assistant principals. Twelve school volunteers which includes parents, six teachers, and 10 students worked diligently to design this space to be multidisciplinary. Though on a small scale, the garden design includes a sustainable goal of replenishing itself over time. The key feature in the process

of repurposing this underused area of our school grounds is the involvement of our school staff, parents, students, and the expertise of community volunteers and partners in education. We have formed a gardening committee which comprises of six teacher leaders who meet periodically to discuss the development of the school’s garden. We include parents and the community by inviting them to our School’s Advisory Council (SAC) meetings where we share information regarding improvements that are taking place at our school. All gardening members, parents, and students are invited to, and volunteer in the creation and development of our school’s garden. Funding support for our school garden came from our Parent Teacher’s Association (PTA) and other community partners in education which includes local gardening supplies stores. These community partners have donated material and we have used it

to begin the school's garden. Compared to the previous school garden, this new school garden is designed to include wildlife such as butterflies and bees. These insect pollinators are important in sustaining garden fruit and vegetable production. We have included space for plants that attract these pollinators. Included in the garden design is an area of stimulating play. Students will be able to engage in chess while visiting the school's garden. Chess helps improve concentration, it develops problem solving skills, improves memory, and builds strategic thinking.

Challenger Elementary School – Category I



Challenger Elementary School has come a long way to improve its school grounds. With a student body of 1,020 students and more than 50 staff members, it has taken the efforts of everyone on campus as well as parents and the community to beautify and improve our campus. Being a Title 1 school, many of our students don't have a chance to see plants or animals grow. On our campus this year, they have had a chance to do just that. With 10 new fruit trees, cabbages, flowers in our butterfly garden

blooming, and efforts to keep our school grounds litter free, Challenger Elementary School is on its way to a greener school. All the green efforts that have been happening on our campus has allowed many of the students and staff to see that improvements are possible. Teachers are now using their curriculum and outdoor spaces to guide the students learning. Students are getting involved with keeping the campus clean. Everyone is starting to take ownership about keeping our campus beautiful and clean. This has been an exciting school year here at Challenger Elementary School. Through the assistance of the South Florida Audubon Society and NatureScape, Challenger Elementary School has received a fruit tree grant from the Whole Kids Foundation. We have received 10 beautiful fruit trees that were planted by the Challenger Explorers Science Club throughout the campus. Students had a chance to beautify many areas of the school that began to deteriorate due to students playing and running around the school grounds. Students learned about the limestone and soil that was found underneath the school. These areas are now in the process of regrowth thanks to the beautiful trees that have been planted. With the efforts from the district and our amazing custodian, the school grounds now have a proper irrigation system that not only waters the new trees, but also many of the areas around the school that needed irrigation. These areas have now begun to regrow and improve around the school.

Dania Elementary School – Categories I, II, III, IV, V



School grounds at Dania Elementary are used as dynamic living learning environments. Several locations on school grounds are used for on-going learning activities; from the playground to the butterfly garden to the reading garden to the shaded pavilion to the Peace Pavilion, special projects and on-campus field trips are ongoing. Our students practice yoga outdoors, learn about gardening and science on the outdoor Certified NWF Schoolyard Habitat and new vegetable garden. When the weather permits, P.E. classes are held on the outdoor field as well as our annual kickball tournament. Our school grounds are used continuously throughout the year for quiet reading, nature walks, and teacher/student special event/lunches, such as Thanksgiving Pilgrim/Native American dinner, Easter Egg Hunts. Science projects such as solar-ovens to make 'smores, or newly built kites are tested in our great outdoors. Our campus provides ample space for students to participate in physical activities and fundraisers, such as Walk for Cancer, Dan Marino Walk for Autism, Annual Yoga Day of Mindfulness and Movement, Chalk for Peace, Earth Day, Special Olympics, Fun in the Sun science projects, and Jingle Jog, among

others. Dania Elementary is participating in energy conservation initiatives and behaviors. Classroom teachers are raising awareness of energy use and conservation practices in the classroom and at the school level. The school participated in the "How Low Can You Go" Florida Power Light Challenge. Teachers were educated on the amount of energy the school consumed in a given period (December-February). To reduce consumption, teachers were asked to explain the effect of CO₂ emissions and educate students on potential financial savings through responsible energy consumption. Teachers placed a "How Low Can You Go?" placard on classroom doors. This placard served as a reminder to teachers and students to conserve energy and turn off the lights. Teachers assigned classroom jobs to students relate to the conservation of energy. At the end of the initiative, FPL awarded our school one thousand dollars which was used towards Energy Kits. The Energy Kits will be used in connection with STEM curriculum, providing students from K-5 and ESE with hands-on learning around sustainable energy and energy circuits. Fifth-grade students received an on-campus presentation from the Museum of Science and Discovery about alternative energy. Students engaged in developing their own energy circuits. The school is currently working on NWF Eco- Schools Energy Pathway.

There are many ongoing projects through the school year that teach solid waste, sustainability, green initiatives, and energy conservation. The Global Patrol is a student-led environmental club, where students not only learn about solid waste, conservation efforts, social activism and community involvement, but also carry out the recycling program in the school. On Thursday's Grade 3-5 students from various classes get together under teacher supervision to collect and sort school recycled materials. This provides students with hands-on life and job skills; it provides them with experimental projects to learn about environmental efforts to conserve, reusing materials for classroom projects, and engineering activities, such as learning how to create something new out of recyclable materials. So far, the students have created pencil holders, marker holders, seed packet containers with labels, and posters for their

conservation campaigns like Carton2Garden with recycle materials. The Global Patrol together with students and staff participation have led the campaign of How Low Can You Go with the Florida Power & Light as they learn about Energy and alternative energy. Students are in the process of collecting plastic bottles to make life size igloos that can be use as reading spaces inside the classrooms.

Lauderdale Lakes Middle School – Categories III, V



Lauderdale Lakes Middle School provides a unique curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students. We are a proud magnet school, offering dual magnet theme comprised of International Baccalaureate and STEM. Numerous lessons have been developed within 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade curriculum that address environmental topics. At Lauderdale Lakes Middle we have aeroponics through tower gardens. Using the tower garden in the classroom students can sow seeds, watch the seeds germinate, track the growth of plants and harvest plants over a short period of time. They have used the tower gardens to accomplish several plant processes in the classroom. Several crops are grown using the tower gardens. These include Bibb lettuce, Asparagus, Back Choi, Kale and Sweet Basil. The students added value to the vegetables by creating culinary dishes through “Salad in a Jar” party. Both students and staff consumed the products. This was an enriching experience for the students as they watched the full development of the plant from seed to harvest to dish preparation and consumption. Similarly, with the mini-farming students get the experience to observe the plant cycle from

pollination to fruit development as they harvest cucumber and watermelon. As they watch the development of each, students can see and explain how plant structures interact with the water cycle. In order to foster a culture of healthy eating, we work to get buy in from our staff and encourage teachers to host Tower Gardens within their classrooms and enable them to have the students harvest the seeds, with the incentive of the students knowing that they will be rewarded with “Salad in a Jar Party”. It is for this reason, one of our Life Science teachers, Mrs. Baker, has been trained with the intent to initiate green initiatives such as: using 95% less water than field farming and 40% less than hydroponics; reusable cloth medium for seeding, germinating, growing, and harvesting. Our growing cloth medium is made out of BPA-free, post-consumer recycled plastic, each taking 350 (16.9 oz) water bottles out of the waste stream.

The students at Lauderdale Lakes Middle are involved in a plethora of field studies in their Marine and Pre-med classes. They learn about their local environment through the first-hand investigation. Some of the field studies include a field trip to the Everglades, construction of solar cookers, plywood boats, and solar race cars. They have also actively involved in Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) competitions through their Pre-med classes.

McFatter Technical High School – Categories I, II, III



McFatter Technical High School is well versed in undertaking actions to create a harmonious and green environment for all of its students. From the design and format the school was built in, it was made to protect the natural subtropical environment its location presents. Bordering Broward College stands an untouched forest that is protected by a metal fence that prevents disruption of the ecosystem. The school is decorated with plenty of plant and green areas. Little “Plant outposts” are found in the middle of the school walkway growing firebush and small

palmettos among other iconic Floridian plants. Along every major building in the high school, at least one specially designed green space is presented in the front where students enter. Moving away from the main school hallway, grass surrounds the rest of the school. Trees in these places provide free and cozy shade for students to sit under during lunch.

Another highlight of McFatter eco-friendly environment is the garden between the student services and medical building. Run by culinary, it displays a collection of blooming flowers and green vegetables for anyone striding along the main hallway. Surrounded by a fence and only accessible by a locked gate, the garden is free from any possible litter or contamination. Compost bins for the culinary program sit behind the garden and accepts organic matter from our kitchens and the garden. Currently, the garden is in full bloom and the fresh eggplants, lettuce, and tomatoes will soon be incorporated in the school’s gourmet lunch menu.

Through the use of BCPS Department of Information Technology’s Go Green Output Reduction Checklist, we consistently analyze and improve our use of energy conservation behaviors related specifically to reducing greenhouse gases which have a positive impact on the environment. Our energy audits allow administrators to review McFatter’s energy practices to determine areas for energy conservation. We are constantly improving upon our energy usage by following the National Wildlife Federation’s Energy and Eco-Schools Climate Change Pathways. We serve as a pilot location for energy conservation and renewable pathways such as our student’s Architectural Awnings Initiative. The Architectural Awnings Initiative was a student developed project to design and implement awnings for use as permanent additions to the layout of the school to provide for reduced energy use and an environmentally friendly place for members of the school community to find respite from the Florida sun. This project has been designed and we are currently raising funds to implement these ‘cool’ additions to our campus.

New River Middle School – Categories IV, V

As a Marine Science Magnet Program at New River Middle School many of our students get involved not only in their communities, but at school as well. Students get involved in various clubs that implement green projects on school especially through our Marine Science Club and Environmental Club. Our Marine Science Club every year reminds their classmates about taking care of the environment and our school in a variety of ways including public service announcements (PSA) on morning announcements, posters, and clean ups activities. Our Environmental Club has created a butterfly garden on campus along with starting more gardening and sustainability projects. Students and staff of New River Middle participate in various community and service learning projects throughout the year. Our annual volunteer participation at International Coastal Cleanup in the fall brought out more than 350 parents, students, and family members at Dr. Von D. Mizell-Eula Johnson State Park. We have been participating in this event for over 15 years and we get our whole school involved in the community. The Annual Waterway Clean up in the spring, sponsored by Marine Industries Association of South Florida (MIASF), had many of our students with family members cleaning up at various locations throughout Broward County. Many of our students entered the Waterway Clean up essay and art contests with one of our students winning an award for his art project. The students used their creativity in both writing and marine debris art projects to educate others about preserving our waters through less pollution and getting involved in additional clean up initiatives in the community.



New River Middle School is a Marine Science Magnet Program with a goal of exposing our students to environmental issues and fostering marine stewardship. Our goal is for students to become proactive in their community and on campus to positively impact the environment. We do a number of different green and marine related activities in our community and on campus. Administration supports all of our endeavors to achieve these goals of making a difference on campus and our community. Our principal, Ms. Wessinger, leads by example for our entire faculty, students, and families by actively participating in our marine/green activities on campus and off. She supports all green/marine science activities and helps by seeking out environmental projects and grants that are offered to enhance student learning and engagement. The administration at NRMS is very active in all the activities that promote stewardship and attends all our functions and participates in our annual International Beach Clean-up and Waterway Clean-up events. They also support and encourage the opportunity for field experiences to various South Florida ecosystems including snorkeling, canoeing, and kayaking where our students learn about the local ecosystems at the same time learning how to preserve and protect what is right in their backyard. Administration encourages green practices on campus by promoting and encouraging teachers and students to take part in all school wide initiatives. Our administration is consistent in reminding faculty and students to participate in our school wide recycling program, our energy conservation along with Miami Heat program, “How low can you go?” initiative in turning off lights when not in the room, and reduce our waste in the cafeteria. The administration supports this by use of morning announcements, newsletters, emails, and website reminders.

Panther Run Elementary School – Categories I, II, IV



One of Panther Run’s school philosophies is to continue to bridge our community and school through efforts that support student learning through hands-on projects that are relevant to the real-world. Students at every grade level are involved in the food garden from watering, investigating for insects, removing harmful weeds and invasive plant species and for providing plant maintenance. The area continues to build on student science skills, understanding of different ecosystems and grounds enhancements.

Through support from the staff, PTA and donations from parents, our butterfly garden continues to thrive and provides an excellent opportunity for students to witness first hand the life cycle of the Monarch butterfly, while also helping to protect the species. Through a grant this year, we were able to build and establish the Panther Cub Reading Corner. The area name has changed to recognize the effort and support of our principal in promoting and encouraging teachers to utilize the garden areas as an extension of the classroom. We held a dedication ceremony and renamed the reading corner, “The Elaine Saef, Literacy Garden.”

Panther Run Elementary promotes energy and water conservation, promotes the reducing of plastic water bottles and recycles materials whenever possible. The school participated in the “How Low Can You Go Challenge” for the 2018 school year. The student council again assisted by posting “How Low Can You Go” signs around the school and gave one to each teacher to hang in their classroom. We are happy to say that Panther Run came in 2nd place with 23% in reduction, -88,956kWh reduced, bringing a savings of \$8006. Our students have been making a conscious effort to bring reusable water bottles for their PE classes instead of plastic. Students also bring in old, 1 or 2liter soda bottles to use a water bottles for the gardens. The students are also focused on water conservation by hand watering the gardens. The children are able to check the soil regularly and determine how much water is needed. They water directly around the base of the plant, helping to control where the water goes.

Students, school staff and the community will once again be participating in the Orange Bowl’s “Kicks 4 Kids,” school challenge. For the second consecutive year, our Panther Run Family will collect athletic sneakers, cleats or shoes, to be shared with other youth within our own communities. Not only does this benefit others but it’s also an added benefit for the environment. The shoes are being recycled for use instead of landing up in a landfill. Panther Run placed first in Broward County in the fall of 2016. We are hoping to help make an impact again this year. Our students, staff, families and community help to collect items for a local animal shelter. Our student council helps spearhead the collection of used towels, blankets, bowls and leashes so that our furry friends can use them instead of them landing up in the garbage. This activity helps our students understand that “Paying It Forward,” doesn’t have to be for people only. This year, our science teacher has partnered up with an organization in the maritime industry, T&T Salvage, to help students understand how the environment is affected by the marine industry.

Park Springs Elementary School – Categories I, IV



Park Springs Elementary Environmental Club continues to grow just like our students do every day as they help enhance our campus. The Park Springs Elementary Environmental Club is comprised of 30, third through fifth grade students who are all eager to make a difference not only at our school but also in the surrounding community. As a club students are given the opportunity to come up with ideas for projects and activities they want to do throughout the year. The Club has two advisors whose main role is to aid students in making these projects come to life. During the 2017-2018 school year the students created three main goals to help them in their overall efforts to enhance the grounds at Park Springs. These goals included but were not limited to creating a variety

of recycled artwork for students and teachers to enjoy, keep our campus clean as well as to raise funds to purchase an aeroponic tower gardens that would be placed around campus. These gardens would be used to create social emotional areas for students and teachers to utilize and enhance not only our campus but the learning environment at Park Springs.

One of the first goals our environmental club students had to enhance the campus at Park Springs was to create a variety of recycled artwork for all who visit our campus to enjoy. During teacher planning week club members volunteered to paint blue panther paws around campus. The purpose of these paws was to aid new and returning students as well as volunteers to specific locations on campus like our kindergarten building and our back building that is more difficult to find. Students painted these paw prints by making stencils out of laminate fill scraps that teachers would have thrown away.

PSE Environmental Club also encourages the involvement of families and surrounding community members to donate to our also Textile Donation Box that is conveniently located in our school parking lot. The Textile Donation Box came to Park Springs in 2016 based on a partnership with Florida Textile Recycling Program. Families are encouraged and reminded to donated items throughout the year, especially when spring cleaning, in our quarterly newsletters. The box's location also makes it easy for families in the surrounding neighborhood to drop off their donations, as well. These donations help the Environmental with funding for future projects to benefit both our school and local community.

Pines Middle School – Category II



At Pines Middle School we have taken pride this past year and half in increasing our awareness, education, activism, and parent/community involvement in sustainability. Because of our efforts, we have earned the distinguished honor of becoming a Green School and have been featured through several local newspapers and a television network. Pines Middle has an environmental STEM program that focuses on sustainability. Students learn about conservation, innovation, and detrimental consequences of all industries that effect our basic needs; and most importantly individual footprints such as carbon and water. The students are required to do two hours of community service each month. One of our students chose to improve Pines Middle School's energy consumption. After reviewing the school's KWH usage, he along with several other students participated in "the How Low Can You Go" challenge. The students met weekly to create, manage, and implement a student initiated program called the "CO2 Destroyers" to combat the school's carbon footprint. The CO2 Destroyers researched the current problems at the

school, educated and monitored the staff/students energy consumption. They also completed energy audits for all classrooms after school and implemented a reward system for the class who adhered the most to the program (view energy audit slip). The success of the CO2 Destroyers Program was shared to the entire learning community at our school's annual Literary Night with a power point developed and presented by the students (view Literacy Night PDF).

The students' passion and participation are driving our school's success in sustainability' but none of this would be possible without the support of our custodial staff. The majority of the maintenance staff at our school have attended the NatureScape Broward Custodial Training in the past or this year. They also installed a sprinkler system scheduled to water our butterfly and vegetable garden 2-3 times a week. Lastly, they helped the students come up with creative ways to make and use a rain barrel to water the plants. In the classroom, students were required to find their water and carbon footprint and create an action plan to minimize their usage. Students then shared their learning through posters and PSAs on how to conserve water. When students built our butterfly garden this school year, they chose native plants that require minimal watering and can withstand the summer's heat. Several other students are working with a teacher on a program called "Be Fantastic and Reduce Your Plastic" to educate and fundraise for a water bottle filler fountain station. Outside the classroom, students partook in water conservation related activities in the beginning of this school year. They volunteered at the International 32nd Annual Coastal Cleanup in Dania Beach (view Beach Cleanup PDF). The students also participated in the Shark Tagging field trip with Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center, where they learned about conservation of marine life and the ocean. As part of the students' required community service, they participated in local beach cleanups. The leadership classes in our school have also partnered in these events with the STEM students. Both classes encourage our students to give back to the community and use their leadership skills to their fullest potential.

South Plantation High School – Categories I, II, III, IV



This school year South Plantation High School’s Environmental Science and Everglades Restoration program significantly enhanced and expanded our outdoor learning labs this year. Efforts focused on enhance students’ connection to the environment, increasing the quantity and variety of outdoor learning opportunities, as well as to improve and extend our organic gardens as well as our National Wildlife Federation Certified Habitat and Florida Friendly Yard areas. This year, a few efforts truly stand out.

In the early fall community partners from Green Thumb and Youth Environmental Alliance provided inservice training for teachers which covered essential background knowledge, skills and techniques needed to maintain the Magnet’s outdoor learning labs without the use of harmful chemicals and assist their students in doing the same. This effort was followed up by a series of workshops in which community partners from Green Thumb and Youth Environmental Alliance provided classroom and hands on field-based lessons on weed identification and removal as well as eco-friendly garden practices to all 10th-12th grade students in the magnet program.

In late fall, 10th and 11th grade students and teachers worked with Gourmet Gardener, Inc. to renovate and expand our organic garden. In order to assure the “transferability” of our efforts to other sites as well as student’s homes, a variety of planting beds, and grow bags of differing shapes and sizes were utilized. Students constructed the garden (from placing the beds and hand mixing the soil) and then planted the crops (a variety of vegetables, herbs, and flowers – both edible and pollinator-friendly). In the months following installation of the garden, students were responsible for weekly maintenance (weeding, watering, and pest removal) as well as the harvesting and distribution of crops within the magnet community as well as to the wider school community.

In order to promote the importance of creating nature friendly landscapes, South Plantation High School once again drew on its long-standing partnership with Broward County’s Department of Environmental Protection and Growth Management. All 11th grade students participated in a classroom based lesson in which they learned about the principles of “Naturescaping” and the impact that small scale changes in landscaping practices can have on the environment; they then travelled out onto the school grounds and participated in an interactive lesson that focused on strengths and weaknesses of the Magnet grounds as a showcase for environmental stewardship. These students then put what they learned into practice by renovating select areas to decrease the prevalence of turf and exotics and increase the abundance of native and Florida-friendly species that provide resources for wildlife. In addition to transforming the more public spaces surrounding the Magnet building into more sustainable landscapes, students have continued to maintain and enhance our pollinator gardens. They have taken the one bed originally planted as a waystation for Monarch and Atala butterflies and expanded the footprint threefold. By increasing the size of the garden, the quantity and diversity of food resources for both larval and adult butterflies. Through these efforts students from across our campus have not only been able to watch the

butterflies as they go through their complete life cycle, but also know that they have helped to protect species that are imperiled.

South Plantation hosted the county-wide NatureScape Broward custodial training which focused in part on conservation measures and the reduction of a school's water footprint. Several restrooms within the school have been retrofitted with faucets that shut off automatically, thereby reducing water waste. Students designed and built a solar irrigation system for the food gardens. The water for the irrigation system is collected from the roof of the Magnet Building and stored in rain barrels. Students are knowledgeable about the importance of water and choose to plant drought tolerant vegetation as part of their campus enhancements. Additionally, teachers and students annually attend Water Matters Day and for the sixth year running, students from SPHS have participated (and placed) in the annual Water Matters Day essay contest.

Students participate in environmentally themed field trips throughout their 4 years in the Magnet Program. The 9th grade students visit Everglades National Park where they sample and test the water quality, slog and water test at Everglades Holiday Park, and participate in the state program "Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs" through YEA! - where they learn about ethical fishing. In 10th grade, the classes visit the agricultural area (EAA), and visit the US Sugar Corp. operations. 11th grade students complete two trips: Marvelous Mangroves/Habitat restoration with YEA!, and Everglades Exploration – Ernest Coe to Florida Bay with Science Eye. On all of these trips, students collect data and experiences that enrich their understanding of the natural ecosystems that compose the KOE watershed. Follow up activities challenge them to deepen their understanding of how human interactions with those environments can either help or hinder that natural world.