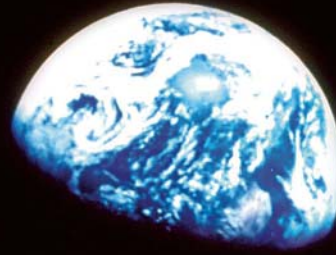


# Earth Heroes at School 2010 Winners



**King County**

Department of  
Natural Resources and Parks  
Solid Waste Division

For their outstanding contributions in schools and beyond, King County recognizes the following Earth Heroes and their work to protect the environment.

**Awards Presentation — April 29, 2010**

## Teachers

### **Joanne Burkett, Sunrise Elementary School, Redmond**

Joanne Burkett was instrumental in the school's achievement of level one of the King County Green Schools Program, and in increasing its recycling rate by over 20 percent. She led the Green Team in educating students and staff on proper recycling and on reducing one's impact on the earth. Joanne initiated a pilot program in two classrooms to collect milk cartons for recycling before the effort was expanded school-wide. Other Green Team actions that she oversaw include supplying each classroom with paper reuse boxes, obtaining recycling bins, and starting a cell phone recycling program. A catalyst for strong science education, Joanne also leads the school's spring Science Expo.

### **Ted Cox, Bellevue High School, Bellevue**

A science teacher at Bellevue High School (BHS) since 1990, Ted Cox gives his students hands-on experience and leadership skills in putting on community events, arranging tours to environmental organizations and events, starting innovative programs and providing education and outreach to the student body at BHS. Ted is the BHS representative to the district and has worked with students and administrators toward achieving level one and level two of the King County Green Schools Program. He also has left a physical impact in Bellevue through restoration projects he's coordinated with the city's Parks and Utilities departments.

### **Meagan Elliot, Pine Lake Middle School, Sammamish**

Concerned about food waste at lunchtime, Meagan Elliot worked with custodians and district staff to place food scrap collection containers in the lunchroom. She trained student volunteers to monitor the bins and help other students learn which items are acceptable for food scrap collection. She produced compost facts for the daily bulletin and enlisted two students in making an informational video that was shown to all students. The project has increased student awareness about the consequences of their actions. Through Meagan's leadership, Pine Lake was the first school in the Issaquah School District to complete level one of the King County Green Schools Program.

### **Cathy Haws, Glacier Park Elementary School, Maple Valley**

Under the leadership of Cathy Haws, the Green Team at Glacier Park Elementary started a worm bin for composting food scraps, expanded the recycling program to include drink pouches, promoted energy conservation and led two *Walk, Bus or Bike to School* events. Not only have students increased their awareness of and commitment to the environment as a result of Cathy's leadership, parents have been inspired to start worm bins at home, are more diligent about recycling, and are striving to carpool and walk when possible. Cathy has led several staff development sessions to deepen faculty understanding of preferred environmental practices.

### **Elizabeth Johnson, Cascade View Elementary School, Snoqualmie**

As the leader of the school's Green Team, Elizabeth Johnson involved students in milk carton, ink cartridge, cell phone and eyeglass recycling, and doubled the overall recycling rate. She and her Green Team eliminated the school's use of polystyrene bowls and plastic utensils and replaced them with durable items. They encouraged reduced use of paper towels, reduced frequency of photocopying and increased use of both sides of the paper. Over \$300 was saved in one month as a result of reduced photocopying. Elizabeth has conveyed to students that it's cool to be green, helped her school become a King County Green School and inspired others in the district.

### **Karen Konrad, Green Gables Elementary School, Federal Way**

Each year Karen Konrad directs her class in putting on an Earth Day assembly to raise awareness of the importance of being stewards of the earth. She has championed green practices both at Green Gables and in the entire Federal Way Public Schools. She headed up the school's pilot program for food scrap collection, which may become a model for other schools in the district. Karen started a student Green Team whose members help in the cafeteria with the food scrap recycling program, promote recycling and waste reduction in the classroom, and work on community service projects such as raising funds to purchase new trees to plant on school grounds.

## **Dianne Thompson, Kent-Meridian High School, Kent**

Environmental science teacher Dianne Thompson designed a project-based curriculum to facilitate learning outside the classroom as well as in. Diane was awarded several grants enabling her and her students to establish a wildlife habitat in the school courtyard, develop an organic edible garden, partner with the City of Kent to improve habitat in a city park, and organize a food scrap recycling program in the cafeteria. She involved students in making a video, a PowerPoint presentation, and posters to teach others to separate their lunch waste for recycling and composting. Dianne has taken on the Cool School Challenge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and led her school to become a level one King County Green School.

## **Students**

### **Brownie Troop 41245, Syre Elementary School, Shoreline**

For their annual service project, this determined group of second and third grade scouts challenged themselves and their entire school by starting a lunchroom recycling program. They researched what materials could be collected for recycling, contacted their local recycling service for information, met with the school principal and custodian, and recruited parents and students to monitor the program and educate others on how to properly use it. Through a lunchtime presentation and a school newsletter article, the girls provided information about the program. As a result of the program, lunchtime waste was cut in half, from six bags a day to two or three bags a day.

### **Jed Smith, Mount Si High School, Snoqualmie**

A motivator, a fun-loving guy, and a role model are some of the terms used to describe senior Jed Smith who has led the school recycling program for the last two years. Jed rallies his fellow Key Club members to collect and empty the classroom, cafeteria and hallway recycling bins each week, and is mentoring a sophomore student to take over his role next year. When the school recently expanded, Jed obtained recycling bins for the new spaces. When he discovered some recycling containers were being used as garbage cans, Jed made lids for the containers to help keep garbage out of them. Jed's leadership has been crucial to the success of the recycling program.



## **Congratulations to all winners!**

## **Staff/Volunteers**

### **Connie Jo Erickson, Glacier Park Elementary, Maple Valley**

Head custodian Connie Jo Erickson brings passion and commitment to Glacier Park's Green Schools committee. She promotes energy efficiency and recycling, monitors the school's progress toward its Green School goals, encourages continual improvement, and reminds the school to celebrate its successes. She helped lead a *Who Wants to Be a Recycler* game during lunchtimes to review recycling practices with students. Garbage has decreased from three dumpsters to one per week. Recycling has increased to two containers per week plus one of compostables. Connie's leadership helped the school become the first in its district to be a level one King County Green School.

### **Jon Nishimura, Leota Junior High School, Woodinville**

Custodian Jon Nishimura is one of the leaders of the GET IT (Greenest Environmental Team in Town) club of 30 active student members at Leota Junior High. He has tirelessly volunteered his time, energy and creativity to help the club meet the school's King County Green Schools goals. He has worked with the district resource conservation manager to reduce energy consumption on campus, educate students on conservation practices, promote green events such as Green Spirit Week, and initiate the food scrap collection program in the lunchroom. By creating games such as *Green Family Feud* and *Green Deal or No Deal*, Jon has made student involvement fun.

### **Mark Schlosser, Waskowitz Outdoor School, North Bend**

As caretaker/janitor for Waskowitz Outdoor School, Mark Schlosser keeps the composting, recycling and energy reduction programs operating at the highest level. He works with all students to ensure they understand what and why the school recycles, supports the student service crews in maintaining the food-composting Earth Tub, and participates on the school's committee to reduce energy consumption. As a result, Waskowitz has reduced its garbage volume by about 50 percent. Due to Mark's diligence and commitment, the school is walking the talk 365 days a year, not just when students are on site.

### **Wes Yasny, The Attic Learning Community, Woodinville**

Parent Wes Yasny saw an environmental problem to solve, knew the consequences of not taking action and made it his mission. On school property, an unsupported cement bridge listed downstream and posed a risk to prime habitat for spawning salmon and other aquatic species. Due to Wes's efforts, The Attic received funding from state and local agencies, acquired the necessary permits, and completed the proper steps to remove the structure and restore habitat. The whole school became involved, learning about erosion, salmon, and native plant species. This project took years, a lot of red tape, many hours of manual labor and the dedication of Wes Yasny.

## Program/School

### **Camelot Elementary School Green Team, Auburn**

This dedicated group of ten students has raised awareness about recycling through a school-wide poster contest, green tips-of-the-week, and classroom checklists for recycling, all of which have helped generate a school culture where *Being Green is Cool*. The school also collects drink pouches and chip bags from the lunchroom for recycling. Improved classroom recycling and a new lunchroom recycling program for beverage containers and food scraps increased the recycling rate by 25 percent and decreased garbage volumes by 50 percent. Behind the student Green Team is a large Green Schools team of supportive adults, including a custodian, para-professionals, teachers and parents.

### **Cascade Ridge Elementary School, Sammamish**

Cascade Ridge Elementary School established a recycling program in 2005 and has been increasing its recycling volumes ever since, most recently as a result of collecting lunchroom food scraps for recycling. The Green Team, made up of students and staff, ensured that campus recycling containers identify what can and can't be recycled; hung promotional signs in hallways and the cafeteria; and eliminated the use of straws and polystyrene trays. As a result, Cascade Ridge Elementary increased its recycling rate to 58 percent and decreased its garbage costs by 35 percent. These and other actions earned the school recognition as a level one King County Green School.

### **Cedar River Middle School, Maple Valley**

Among the accomplishments of this school's Green Team are lunchroom and staff room recycling programs, an energy conservation campaign, recycling presentations in advisory period, and participation in the Terracycle program for recycling drink pouches, chip bags and scotch tape dispensers. In addition, Treena Fritsch, the Green Team advisor, partnered with Project Learning Tree and sixth-grade science teachers to develop a unit on environmental sustainability. As a result, the school reduced its lunchroom waste from eight to two cans per day, staff and students are more environmentally aware, and Green Team members experience leadership and teamwork.

### **Martin Sortun Elementary School Green Team, Kent**

This group of 60 students implemented a school-wide education campaign of posters, morning announcements, and a lunchroom monitoring system in order to promote increased recycling. The recycling rate increased from 20 to 57 percent. The school, a King County Green Schools program participant, has also avoided the use of polystyrene trays by having food delivered to tables on large metal trays. With recycling and waste reduction practices established, the Green Team is focusing on energy conservation and greenhouse gas reductions with *The Power Is in Your Hands* campaign and encouraging a practice of no-idling in the school parking lot to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### **Maywood Middle School, Renton**

With a well-established recycling program since 2005, this school recently added lunchroom food scrap recycling, which increased its recycling rate from 24 to 62 percent. A Green Team of five staff and 24 students conducted training sessions and promoted the new lunchroom recycling program with hallway signs and morning announcements. The Green Team, clad in green T-shirts, monitored the cafeteria recycling stations to ensure proper recycling. Students and staff signed a *Go Green* pledge committing to recycling and composting both at school and at home. These actions contributed to the school's achievement of level one of the King County Green Schools Program.

### **North Bend Elementary Green Schools Team, North Bend**

Among this school's environmental actions are recycling milk cartons and ink cartridges, having a GOOS (Good On One Side) box in each classroom for paper reuse, having a reuse section in the teacher supply room, using durable plates and cups for classroom parties, and instituting a paper-free day once a quarter when students use white boards instead of worksheets. A student Green Team picked up litter on school grounds and another group of students encouraged the use of durable tote bags. Following the earthquake in Haiti, the school collected gently used shoes to be sent to those in need. The school is working toward becoming a level two King County Green School.

### **Pine Lake Middle School, Sammamish**

This school's Green Team of twelve staff members and 40 students recently added food scrap collection to an already established recycling program. Creative signage, an outstanding original video, and a supportive kitchen staff all contributed to the success of the expanded program. Another program element is the zero-waste locker clean-out at the end of each trimester when students sort items from their lockers for recycling and reuse. As a result of these actions, Pine Lake Middle School increased its recycling rate from 35 to 58 percent, and decreased garbage costs by 62 percent. Its recycling program provides a structure for students to learn about recycling and actively participate in daily.

### **Secondary Academy for Success (SAS), Bothell**

Since 2006, SAS students have been involved with the school's recycling program as well as service projects at 21 Acres, an agricultural and environmental learning center in Woodinville. The successful recycling program tripled the amount of recyclable materials previously collected. For their offsite service projects at 21 Acres, students participate in activities such as trail and pond maintenance, organic gardening, and clearing weeds without the use of toxic substances. These outdoor service activities encourage students to take on leadership roles, increase their knowledge of environmental issues and build awareness of their ecological footprint on both a local and global level.

Many of the Earth Heroes at School participate in the King County Green Schools Program, which helps schools and school districts initiate or expand conservation practices. For more information about the Green Schools Program, contact Dale Alekel at [dale.alekel@kingcounty.gov](mailto:dale.alekel@kingcounty.gov) or 206-296-8457.

## King County Green Schools Program

**These schools receiving Earth Hero recognition have completed level one of the King County Green Schools Program.**

- Bellevue High School, Bellevue, Bellevue School District
- Camelot Elementary School, Auburn, Federal Way Public Schools
- Cascade Ridge Elementary School, Sammamish, Issaquah School District
- Cascade View Elementary School, Snoqualmie, Snoqualmie Valley School District
- Cedar River Middle School, Maple Valley, Tahoma School District
- Glacier Park Elementary School, Maple Valley, Tahoma School District
- Green Gables Elementary School, Federal Way, Federal Way Public Schools
- Kent-Meridian High School, Kent, Kent School District
- Leota Junior High School, Woodinville, Northshore School District

- Martin Sortun Elementary School, Kent, Kent School District
- Maywood Middle School, Renton, Issaquah School District
- North Bend Elementary School, North Bend, Snoqualmie Valley School District
- Pine Lake Middle School, Sammamish, Issaquah School District
- Sunrise Elementary School, Redmond, Northshore School District

**These schools receiving Earth Hero recognition have participated in the Green Schools Program in the past.**

- The Attic Learning Community, Woodinville
- Mount Si High School, Snoqualmie, Snoqualmie Valley School District
- Waskowitz Outdoor School, North Bend, Highline School District