

Message

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Sent: 6/8/2017 6:53:50 PM
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Subject: White House, EPA Honor Student Award Winners

FYI on FL award.

#Share a Book #Save a Forest #Change a Life

Florida

Team: Chase H. and Vance T.

When 5th grade friends Chase and Vance came across a bin of a thousand books heading to the landfill, while knowing that some community members had no books, these two students set out to solve both problems at once. Calling their partnership “read.repeat”, Chase and Vance successfully collected, sorted and repurposed over 25,000 books in six months, taught thousands of community members about recycling and repurposing, and kept thousands of pounds of waste from entering the landfill.

Chase and Vance researched the lifecycle of books, learning about the amount of wood needed to create a book, the challenges to recycling them (due to glue in the bindings), and the estimated 300 million books discarded into landfills each year. They began collection of gently used books, getting word out into their community through their website readrepeat.org, complete with a program logo to enhance community recognition of the project. They made presentations to their school, their Cub Scout Pack, a martial arts studio, their local National Elementary Honor Society chapter, and other community groups. Chase and Vance even approached the source of the original bin of books that inspired their effort and convinced the company to donate leftover inventory rather than dispose of it. When donations came pouring in, they enlisted friends and family to sort, pack, and deliver thousands of books to community members in need, at places like a homeless shelter, a local VA Hospital, local libraries and schools, and foster and group homes.

Chase and Vance surpassed their initial goal, donated books to 32 organizations across three states, and brought the joy of reading to more than 5,000 individuals. With more than 80 volunteers and involvement from local businesses and media, they made a meaningful impact in their community and environment by keeping waste out of landfills and teaching others to #Share a Book #Save a Forest #Change a Life. In the future, they hope to expand their reach nationally to repurpose 50,000 books annually.



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EPA Announces Student Award Winners

WASHINGTON (June 8, 2017)- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced the winners of the 2016 President's Environmental Youth Award (PEYA). The program recognizes outstanding environmental stewardship projects by K-12 youth. These students demonstrate the initiative, creativity, and applied problem-solving skills needed to tackle environmental problems and find sustainable solutions.

Fifteen projects are being recognized this year, from 13 states: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Nebraska, New Jersey, Michigan, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Washington.

"Today, we are pleased to honor these impressive young leaders, who demonstrate the impact that a few individuals can make to protect our environment," said **EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt**. "These students are empowering their peers, educating their communities, and demonstrating the STEM skills needed for this country to thrive in the global economy."

Each year the PEYA program honors environmental awareness projects developed by young individuals, school classes (kindergarten through high school), summer camps, public interest groups and youth organizations.

This year's PEYA winners conducted a wide range of activities, such as:

- developing a biodegradable plastic using local agricultural waste product;
- designing an efficient, environmentally friendly mosquito trap using solar power and compost by-product;
- saving approximately 2,000 tadpoles to raise adult frogs and toads;
- implementing a hydroponics and aquaculture project in a high school;
- repurposing over 25,000 books;
- creating an environmental news YouTube channel;
- organizing recycling programs to benefit disaster victims and underserved community members;
- reclaiming and repurposing over 4,000 discarded pencils within their school;
- promoting food waste reduction;
- creating a small, portable tool to prevent air strikes of migratory birds;
- engaging their community in a program to save a threatened bird, the Western Snowy Plover;
- testing grey water to encourage water conservation;
- promoting bee health;
- uniting their schools to address local environmental issues.

The PEYA program promotes awareness of our nation's natural resources and encourages positive community involvement. Since 1971, the President of the United States has joined with EPA to recognize young people for protecting our nation's air, water, land and ecology. It is one of the most important ways EPA and the Administration demonstrate commitment to environmental stewardship efforts created and conducted by our nation's youth.

For information on environmental education at EPA, visit:
<https://www.epa.gov/education>.

R109