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2018 Best of Green Schools and Green Apple Day of Service Awards Announced

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Honorees represent impressive environmental efforts in schools across the United States

Denver, CO—(May 4, 2018)—Today, the [Center for Green Schools](#) at USGBC, in collaboration with the [Green Schools National Network](#) (GSNN), announced recipients of the 2018 Best of Green Schools Awards. For the first time, the Center also recognized outstanding K–12 sustainability service learning projects and leaders in the Green Apple Day of Service Awards. Both awards were presented at the [Green Schools Conference and Expo](#), taking place in Denver this week.

“We are excited to recognize a group of honorees who represent the breadth and depth of sustainability education and leadership,” said [Anisa Heming](#), director, Center for Green Schools at USGBC. “The hard work being done by this year’s recipients is nothing short of inspiring and a reminder of what can be achieved when communities come together around our schools.”

This year, the Best of Green Schools Awards recognized 11 individuals, institutions and projects that represent the best environmental efforts in schools across the country and highlight the national leaders and innovators in school sustainability.

“Every movement needs leaders, and this year’s Best of Green Schools honorees reflect the transformative leadership that is needed to move the green schools movement from niche to mainstream,” said Jennifer Seydel, executive director, Green Schools National

Network. “I applaud their passion and selfless dedication to co-creating a sustainable future for us all.”

Recipients include:

- **Ambassador: Christos Chrysiliou** (Los Angeles, Calif.): As L.A. Unified School District’s director of architecture and engineering, Chrysiliou has provided remarkable leadership, integrating measurable sustainability goals and promoting green practices across the district, city and country.
- **Business Leader: Legrand North and Central America** (West Hartford, Conn.): Through its Better Communities-Better Schools program, Legrand has raised thousands of dollars for several Green Apple Day of Service projects in schools across the U.S., and employees have supported a variety of efforts, from a solar-paneled garden shed to a green playground.
- **Collaborator: EcoRise** (Austin, Texas): EcoRise is a pioneer in K–12 sustainability education, serving more than 400 schools with innovative and proven curricula and teacher training that has impacted 50,000 students. With EcoRise’s support, students have reduced campus energy bills and watering needs, installed gardens and more.
- **Higher Education Institution: Chatham University’s Eden Hall Campus** (Pittsburgh, Pa.): Chatham University’s new Eden Hall is self-sustaining in every way. By protecting valuable watersheds, incorporating surrounding land and agricultural resources, and rehabilitating existing farmland, Eden Hall is a one-of-a-kind venue for education, conferences, community outreach and ecotourism.
- **K–12 School (K–8): Maplewood Richmond Heights Middle School** (Maplewood, Mo.): MRHMS believes that sustainable schools provide all community members with the greatest opportunities for success. It has integrated sustainability and green practices into its curriculum, including lessons in gardening, aquaponics, urban chickens, beehives, composting and rain gardens.
- **K–12 School (High School): Eisenhower High School** (Goddard, Kan.): Eisenhower High School aims to prepare its students to make sustainable decisions every day, fostering environmental literacy and stewardship by incorporating the environment into lesson plans, including its award-winning outdoor wildlife learning site, 14 garden beds and nature trail.
- **Moment for the Movement: Green Schools Catalyst Quarterly** (Madison, Wis.): GSCQ is a peer-reviewed digital journal that highlights evidence-based practices for green, healthy, sustainable schools. GSCQ’s in-depth coverage includes qualitative and quantitative research, and explores emergent issues like net zero energy, waste and water.
- **School System: Oak Park Unified School District** (Oak Park, Calif.): As the first National Green Ribbon School District in California, OPUSD has modeled creative environmental education strategies including building a classroom entirely from recycled sea containers, and eliminating pesticides and rodenticides from the districts’ pest management system.
- **Student Leader: Maegan Rosario** (Ewa Beach, Hawaii): Rosario is an exceptional

advocate of environmental stewardship, consistently committing her free time to maintain her school's aquaponics system, garden and vermicomposting bin, and coordinating community beach clean ups and recycling drives.

- **Transformation: Marumsco Hills Elementary School** (Woodbridge, Va.): Since forming a student-led Green Team, the culture at Marumsco Hills Elementary School has transformed into one that values sustainability, with students actively collaborating with staff and administrators to implement green programs.
- **Policymaker: Kathleen Gebhardt** (Boulder, Colo.): An instrumental player in passing the 2008 legislation establishing the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) capital construction grant program, Gebhardt remains a strong advocate through her leadership on the BEST board. Her work has helped fund 319 requests to address deteriorating school facilities in Colorado, positively affecting nearly 180,000 students.

In its inaugural year, the Green Apple Day of Service Awards recognized three leaders and two projects that have collectively engaged and inspired a network of nearly one million volunteers around the world. Recipients include:

- **Angelica Rockquemore** (Standout Leader): With overwhelming community support, Rockquemore coordinated projects at two elementary schools in Hawaii to support STEM, sustainability and culture-based learning objectives, including building a water wall, custom weather monitoring data station, a closed-loop irrigation system and more.
- **Ibrahim Kronfol** (Standout Leader): For six years, Kronfol has worked to spread awareness and encourage students to be good stewards of the environment through projects in Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan and India. Through his efforts, 77 volunteers working in 10 schools have positively impacted 1,000 students in 2017 alone.
- **Ocean Bay Elementary School** (Standout Project): Through their SMART Recycling program, Ocean Bay Elementary in Myrtle Beach, S.C., reduced waste going to landfill, and also planted a community garden.
- **Peggy Soll** (Standout Leader): Soll was the driving force behind the creation of an outdoor classroom at Washburn Elementary School in Bloomington, Minn., which features several learning elements like vegetable and pollinator gardens; bluebird houses; a dry stream; gathering space; and tree huts for reflection, reading and writing.
- **Solana Ranch Elementary School** (Standout Project): As part of its sixth consecutive Green Apple project, Solana Ranch Elementary School in San Diego, Calif., introduced a "FarmBot"—a precision cultivation tool to reduce water use, energy, transportation and crop grow time—to its STEAM program, among other activities.

Take a look at our slideshow of award recipients:



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