

## City awards schools for Environmental Care and Ownership

Melbourne, Fla., Mar. 15, 2018 — The City of Melbourne’s Environmental Community Outreach Division is pleased to announce that six area schools have recently earned the ECO Schools honor for their achievements this school year. The ECO Schools designation recognizes the efforts undertaken to promote Environmental Care and Ownership (ECO).

The 2018 ECO Schools are:

- Holy Trinity Episcopal Lower School
- Sea Park Elementary School
- University Park Elementary School
- West Melbourne School for Science
- Stone Magnet Middle School
- Melbourne High School

These schools have taken numerous steps to conserve and protect resources inside their schools and on school grounds. Activities include strong water and energy conservation measures, litter patrols, active recycling programs and hands-on environmental stewardship activities with students.

At Holy Trinity Lower School, each grade level participates in activities that bring environmental awareness during Earth Week. For example, first graders use recyclable products to make working thermometers, while fifth and sixth grades create terrariums using repurposed containers and collect trinkets from yards and the beach. Their STEAM program (science, technology, engineering, art and math) involves numerous projects using repurposed material. Birdhouses are made using tissue boxes, pet carriers are made from shoe boxes, plastic grocery bags are used for weaving projects and wind chimes are made from broken tree branches.

Sea Park Elementary teacher Christine Ahern noted numerous environmental achievements made by students at her school including those of the garden club. “It has grown in population of students and is now offered twice a week. The students are responsible for the planning, preparing, establishing and maintaining the gardens and campus environment and turning over the crops,” Ahern said. Students plant traditional vegetable and butterfly gardens and also use hydroponics, rain barrels and tire planters.

At West Melbourne School for Science, third-graders used fallen coconuts from Hurricane Irma to make “Coco Critters.” In gardens at the school, students used recycled clothing to make scarecrows and recycled plastic bottles for plant pots. They compost cafeteria food for the gardens.

University Park safety patrol picks up trash on a daily basis, while students collect recyclables every Friday in each classroom.

Stone Magnet Middle School has solar panels installed at its media center.

At Melbourne High School, the Indian River Lagoon Club and Environmental Science students perform service projects including beach cleanups, while art classes consistently use recycled items for art projects.

“These schools do some amazing environmental stewardship activities, and we are proud to award them with the ECO Schools designation,” said Environmental Community Outreach Manager Jennifer Wilster. “The environmental stewardship that is being instilled in them will surely remain as they become adults.”

*PHOTOS ATTACHED:*



*--Holy Trinity STEAM teacher Dipty Desai displays a bird house made from recycled materials created by one of her students.*



--Melbourne H.S. art students turn old bowling pins into works of art.





*Scarecrow made from recycled materials by the students at West Melbourne School for Science.*





*--Sea Park students display veggies from their gardens.*



*--University Park safety patrol picking up litter.*