

## State awards Keys energy project

By KeysNet Staff

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A Key West high school alternative energy program is one of five winners in Florida's Governor's Serve to Preserve: Green Schools Awards program.

Wednesday in Tampa, Key West High School science teacher Joshua Clearman and his students won the program's Class Award for the Alternative Energy Center they created to adopt emerging green technology. Clearman's class produced biodiesel on a small scale and even had a car donated by a member of the community to use as a test model for biodiesel.

With a small amount of funding, Clearman divided the students into groups -- mechanic, research, public relations, artistic and facilitators -- to take their project to the next level, which they hope will be running the School District's bus fleet entirely on biodiesel.

The awards program recognizes the efforts of creating healthy, efficient and productive places for learning.

Three finalists were selected in each of five categories: Class, Student, Teacher, School and School District. Eligible projects were categorized in four themes: Green learning environments including indoor and outdoor facilities, exemplary green curriculum or teacher professional development programs, green service learning projects, and green policies or partnerships. More than 125 applications were received.

Each of the five winners received a \$1,500 cash award. Finalists received \$500. The winners besides Clearman's class:

- Student Award: Matt Mooney, a junior at Land O' Lakes High School. With nearly \$12,000 in proceeds earned from recycling more than 782,000 aluminum cans, he helped finance the building of a home for a family through East Pasco Habitat for Humanity.
- Teacher Award: Allan Phipps, an instructor at South Plantation High School. Phipps, through his Solar & Alternative Energies project, has led his students to create two solar race cars that have competed at national levels.
- School Award: Odyssey Charter School in Palm Bay is a green school of service learning. The school features natural daylight captured indirectly with large windows and clerestories in each classroom. Superior indoor air quality is achieved by bringing in fresh air that's dehumidified and purified through a filtering system. The school's Healthy Cafe offers daily fresh fruits and vegetables, while the Farm-to-School program uses locally picked organic produce in its school lunches.
- District Award: Pasco County School District for taking an active effort in promoting environmental stewardship through its conservation awareness program and hands-on approach to learning about and protecting the environment.
- Judging for the awards was coordinated by the Collins Center for Public Policy's Sustainable Florida Program, with headquarters in Tallahassee and Miami.



Left to right: Josh Clearman, Key West High physics teacher; Dave Perkins, assistant principal, Key West High; Debra Walker, School Board member; and Michael Zavosky, Florida Department of Education.

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