

5th Graders' 'Green' Project Honored by Disney Company; Dianne Feinstein

Contributed by Leigh Ann Clifton
Wednesday, 21 May 2008

The biggest 'landfill' in the world isn't actually on land—it's in the middle of the ocean. And though they've never seen it first hand, this staggering pile of garbage has been on the minds of Mount Madonna School's 5th graders all year. Known as the 'Great Pacific Garbage Patch,' this huge mass of trash—80% of which is waste plastic—is one of the subjects of the students' webpage and environmental pollution project.

Titled '5th Grade Will Change the World—Waste Reduction,' the project was entered in the Walt Disney Company's recent Environmentality Challenge, a statewide contest open to fourth and fifth grade students. The MMS project ultimately made it to the semi-finals, and was named one of the top 10 projects in California. The students and their work, along with their science teacher, Jessica Cambell, were honored by the Disney Company during a presentation at MMS on May 20.

'The [MMS students'] project was chosen because of its strong curriculum integration, community outreach, and sustainable impact,' explains Christiane Maertens, Environmental Affairs Manager for the Walt Disney Company. 'Their entry, '5th Grade Will Change the World —Waste Reduction,' effectively reached over 6,000 community members through online education and presentations about the importance of waste reduction. In addition to impacting the community in a positive manner, the students reached out to their fellow schoolmates to educate them on the importance of good green behavior.'

Throughout the school year, the students conducted extensive research into waste reduction and environmental pollution, as well as organizing and leading a school-wide recycling drive to raise awareness among their peers. The results of their efforts were compiled in a class book, a video posted on YouTube (DVDs were also sold) and the creation of a webpage.

The students' work also earned several other recognitions: 3rd place at the Earth Day Art and Science Fair sponsored by the City of Morgan Hill in April; and letters of commendation from Assemblyman John Laird and Senator Dianne Feinstein. 'I appreciate hearing about your class' efforts to reduce waste,' wrote Feinstein. 'The world faces serious environmental challenges and it is essential that our nation's students contribute to the discussion on finding solutions.'

Visit the students webpage: <http://mountmadonnaschool.org/environmentality>

The video portion of their project is viewable at
http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=environmentality+project+5th+grade&search_type=

Contact: Leigh Ann Clifton

Media & Public Relations

408/847-2717 vm 519

\n lclifton@mountmadonna.org

This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it

Nestled among the redwoods on 355 mountaintop acres, Mount Madonna is a safe and nurturing college preparatory school where students learn to think, create and succeed. The fully-accredited program emphasizes academic

excellence, creative self-expression and positive character development. Located on Summit Road between Gilroy and Watsonville.