



15 years and counting

Wheelabrator Symposium reaches milestone

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Fifteen years ago, Wheelabrator Technologies' senior management team envisioned a program that would help foster environmental and social awareness in the youth of its client communities.

Today, the Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education has become the centerpiece of the company's community relations program and the highlight of many students' academic years.

"I love it," said Juliet Belovich, a student at Westglades Middle School in Parkland, Fla. "You never know what's going to happen next with our world, and our biggest challenge is getting people involved and getting them to change their mindsets."

See **HISTORY** Page 3



The Peekskill (NY) Middle School team enjoys an airboat ride at Sawgrass Recreational Park during a day of activities, following the presentations at the 15th Annual Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education. **Pages 4-5.** PHOTO: REBA SALDANHA

Learning environment

130 students participate in Wheelabrator Symposium

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Tackling issues such as lead poisoning, global warming, wetlands restoration and recycling, 130 future scientists and environmentalists came forth to present their solutions at the 15th annual Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education held May 4-6 in Sunrise, Fla.

Through the symposium, middle-school students representing New England, the mid-Atlantic and Florida commit to a six-month learning project, identifying an environmental challenge in their community and developing a long-term solution. Under the guidance of

See **SYMPOSIUM** Page 2



New River Middle School students, from left, Breanne Dasent, Thalia Leary, and Blake Donnelly, take questions from the judges at the symposium.

PRSRT-STD
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Grant
 Communications

Wheelabrator Technologies Inc.
 4 Liberty Lane West
 Hampton, NH 03842



A PUBLICATION OF:
Wheelabrator Technologies Inc.

Mark A. Weidman
President

Wheelabrator Technologies Inc.
4 Liberty Lane West
Hampton, NH 03842

Tel.: 603-929-3000
Toll Free: 800-682-0026
Fax: 603-929-3123

wheelabratortechnologies.com

PRODUCED BY:



GRANT COMMUNICATIONS
CONSULTING GROUP
Boston/New York
781-598-8200
e-mail: gccg@grantgroup.com



Symposium brings out the best in youth



Mark Weidman

At Wheelabrator, we are dedicated to being a positive force in each community in which our facilities are located. We believe our social responsibility begins with the communities where our employees live and work, and grows from there.

The Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education provides a valuable opportunity to foster environmental and social awareness in

today's youth. The issues, which affect everyone, require a broad and realistic perspective of the impact of society on the environment. Students are charged with coming up with flexible and creative solutions to real-world problems. It is an experience that many students will remember for the rest of their lives, and one that enriches and motivates every adult who participates.

We believe it is vital to invest in future generations, both as mentors and

benefactors. The students that you will see throughout this publication represent our future. They will be the next group of scientists and environmentalists, battling challenges such as global warming and reducing energy consumption. Based on what they have already accomplished, our future is looking bright.

Mark A. Weidman is president of Wheelabrator Technologies Inc.

Students continue to impress



Linda Sapienza

For 15 years, I have witnessed more than 1,500 students step up and make a concrete difference in their communities as a result of their participation in the Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education. And every year, they never cease to amaze me.

The poise these middle-school students display on stage is inspiring. Not only are they doing their part to improve the environment, they are also gaining tremendous experience in public speaking,

multi-media presentations and interacting with community and government officials. It is so gratifying to see the end product at the conclusion of their six-month journey.

The long-term success of the symposium is a direct result of the dedication of the students, teachers and Wheelabrator employees involved. It seems as though each year everyone involved returns with renewed energy and commitment to the project – from our longest-standing participant Stella Shelby

to those who have participated only one or two years. I extend a special thanks to all of you for your continued interest and support.

I hope you will enjoy reading about the history of the symposium, as well as the highlights of this year's event, our 15th annual. I cannot wait to see what the next 15 years have in store for us.

Linda Sapienza is director of community relations of Wheelabrator Technologies Inc.

130 students participate in environmental symposium

SYMPOSIUM: from Page 1

educators and Wheelabrator employees, students apply lessons learned in the classroom to real-life situations.

“As a progressive environmental company and responsible corporate neighbor, Wheelabrator sponsors the symposium to help promote a future where the environment benefits from our children's balanced decision-making and active community involvement,” said Wheelabrator President Mark A. Weidman. “The symposium provides us with a valuable opportunity to work closely with the leaders of the future — our students.”

“Wheelabrator is one of the most unique community partners our school has ever encountered,” said JoAnn Cantlupe, magnet coordinator at Sawgrass Springs Middle School in Coral Springs, Fla. “Their employees have actually come to our school, worked with the students and constructed a greenhouse and gopher tortoise reserve, along with other projects. And this event exposes students to a business-like conference, at a school-aged level. There's nothing like it.”

“It shows our students that as adults, we, too, give back,” said Justin Chambliss, assistant principal of Calverton Elementary Middle School in Baltimore, Md. “They see



Symposium judges, from left, Ron Magill of Miami Metro Zoo, Nina Randall of Partners in Education, Melissa Telford of Young at Art Children's Museum and Robin Davidov of Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority.

that someone else is invested in their education and their success, and they're exposed to a variety of different ways to take more responsibility in their community. Together, we can all work to create a better environment for everyone and that's brought to life through this event.”

At this year's symposium, the

students presented their projects and solutions to a panel of educators, government officials and local community volunteers that included Robin Davidov, executive director of the Northeast Maryland Waste Disposal Authority; Ron Magill, director of communications at Miami Metro Zoo; Nina Randall, executive director of Partners in Education in

Broward County, Fla.; Melissa Telford, director of development for Young at Art Children's Museum in Davie, Fla.; and Kent Wallace, director of the physics laboratories at Fisk University.

“I was truly amazed by the quality of work that the students presented,” said Randall. “Wheelabrator is a shining star of our business partners.

The company works all year round with these students, investing not only dollars, but employee time. It's a wonderful example of hands-on learning at its best.”

“The students seemed very mature and engaged,” said Davidov. “I'm inspired by them and by Wheelabrator for organizing and supporting the symposium.”

Participating schools each received \$500 in startup funds and a \$1,000 donation from Wheelabrator at the conclusion of the event. In addition, students can later qualify to earn a four-year scholarship through Wheelabrator's partnership with Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn.

“We've had 208 students qualify for a scholarship at Fisk, and one who took advantage of it,” said Kathleen Lewis Horwatt, school counselor at FDR Middle School in Bristol, Penn. “All of the others were also able to earn full rides to the colleges of their choice because of the recommendations that have come forth through their symposium participation.”

“So many of my former students are now in environmental sciences,” said Stephen Brown, a teacher at Lisbon Central School in Lisbon, Conn. “I had a former symposium participant come in as a guest speaker this year, talking to the kids about her environmental work in Brazil. It's just life-changing for our students.”

Partners in education

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Wheelabrator honors symposium veterans

While the limelight is usually reserved for the students who participate in Wheelabrator's Symposium for Environment and Education, the dozens of teachers who serve as advisors also deserve their fair share of credit.

This year, six teachers and one school counselor representing five participating schools were honored for their long-term commitment to the program, amounting to at least 10 years of involvement in the program. They are:

- ◆ Stephen Brown, Lisbon Central School, Lisbon, Conn.
- ◆ John Cooley, Peekskill Middle School, Peekskill, N.Y.
- ◆ John Hillier, Millbury Jr./Sr. High, Millbury, Mass.
- ◆ Kathleen Lewis Horwatt, FDR Middle School, Bristol, Penn.
- ◆ Meredith Mueller, FDR Middle School, Bristol, Penn.
- ◆ Stella Shelby, Westglades Middle School, Parkland, Fla.
- ◆ Mark Sutphen, Millbury Memorial Jr./Sr. High School, Millbury, Mass.

"The symposium has been able to sustain itself for so long thanks to the students, the dedicated Wheelabrator employees and, most importantly, the teachers who have invested so much extra time and effort because they care about their students and what they will do for the environment," said Linda Sapienza,



Linda Sapienza of Wheelabrator, left, presents appreciation awards to veteran symposium teachers, from left, John Cooley, Mark Sutphen, Meredith Mueller, Stella Shelby, Kathleen Lewis Horwatt, John Hillier and Stephen Brown.

Wheelabrator's director of community relations.

"The support I've gotten from Linda has been the same throughout the 15 years," said Stella Shelby, who was one of the first teachers to come on board in 1994. "It's just incredible. We can always count on her and the plant employees to go through the steps with us and serve as a sounding board for ideas. What a great company."

Shelby, who has taught in Broward County Public Schools for the past three decades, has noticed a shift in the mounting level of students' expertise over the years.

"The kids have always been bright, smart

and so excited about their projects," said Shelby. "But I think today's students are more sophisticated in terms of awareness, not just at the local level, but globally."

"They're always taking it to the next level, above and beyond what's expected of them," said Horwatt, a 14-year veteran of the program.

Across the board, the most significant changes the veteran teachers cited have been as a result of technology improvements. In the early years, students used VHS tapes, overhead projectors and transparencies as the backdrop to their presentations. Today's multimedia presentations include videos, music,

interactive charts and photo slideshows – brought to life by the click of a mouse.

"It was much less integrated in the beginning, but the kids still had to come up with an idea and commit to a solution," said Sutphen. "The telling of the story was just a little harder."

Sutphen, along with his colleague, Hillier, has brought 12 teams to the symposium. Every year, he is impressed by what his young students are able to accomplish.

"Kids at this age level are almost never asked to work on a project of this magnitude, putting together an elaborate PowerPoint presentation and developing an idea over the course of six months," said Sutphen. "They'll never forget this opportunity."

"Every year, they amaze me," said Mueller, who has advised 14

teams. "It's a growing process for them during the school year. They are learning skills that they might not learn until college, if at all."

"I give the students so much credit," said Hillier. "They put in hundreds of hours, probably more than a varsity athlete puts into a season."

Despite the long hours, the teachers collectively agreed the symposium is an opportunity too good to pass up.

"For Wheelabrator to give us the resources to take on environmental problems in our community, it's so unique," said Brown, who has advised teams for 14 years. "It's life-changing for our kids."

Wheelabrator environmental symposium hits 15-year mark

HISTORY: from Page 1

"This company started organizing the symposium long before green was cool, but every year the students have come forward, passionate and driven to make a difference," said Wheelabrator Vice President of Operations William Roberts. "You can't be at this event and not be impressed with the youth of America."

"I really wanted to help my school go green," said Courtney Diamond, an eighth-grader from Millbury, Mass., who helped bring wind turbine technology to her school. "I enjoyed collaborating with all of my peers to accomplish our goal. We definitely put in over 100 hours of work, but it was all worth it."

The symposium, which kicked off in Concord, N.H., in 1994, is a six-month learning project in which middle-school students identify an environmental challenge in their community and develop a long-term solution. They present their findings to a panel of educators, government officials and local community volunteers at the culmination of the project each May.

"Since the start, more than 1,500 seventh- and eighth-graders have had the opportunity to do something positive in their communities through this program," said Wheelabrator Vice President of Public Affairs Frank Ferraro. "We've seen a variety of interesting projects, from radon awareness to beekeeping to graffiti removal. Their hard work is what sets them apart. They're not just good students; they're great students."



From left, Wheelabrator's Linda Sapienza, Heidi Choate and Frank Ferraro prepare to present awards at the symposium.

"With the help of Wheelabrator, we're saving the environment, one student at a time," said Stella Shelby, a teacher at Westglades Middle School in Parkland, Fla., and one of the first to become involved with the symposium 15 years ago. "This event truly makes a difference in our students' lives."

This year's program was the third time the event was hosted in Sunrise, Fla., uniting students from 13 different schools in one location. Previously, the company organized regional events in New England, the Mid-Atlantic and the South, following the first five years in Concord.

This year also marked the 15th anniversary of Wheelabrator's partnership with Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn. Dr. Henry Ponder, former university president, served as a judge for the symposium in its inaugural year and was eager to set up a four-year scholarship at the university for symposium participants.

"In 1994, one of our VIP judges, Dr. Henry Ponder, was so impressed with the students' work, he pledged that if the students kept up their grades through high school, they would qualify for a scholarship at his university," said Ferraro. "In 2001, we had our first symposium student take advantage of that opportunity and pursue a career in environmental science. It's heartwarming to hear that kind of story."

This year, Kent Wallace, director of the physics laboratories at Fisk, served as a keynote speaker, as well as a guest judge during the second half of the presentations.

"School is expensive and any assistance is priceless," said Wallace. "We want to be able to set up that path and turn out students who will have a high impact on the world. It's all about starting early, interacting with the youth and getting them excited about science. It's definitely a two-way street how our institutions interact."

An event to remember

Wheelabrator symposium combines education and entertainment

Following six months of intense preparation, students arrived at the 2009 Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education ready to impress their judges and peers, but also to unwind.

The multi-day event, held at the Crowne Plaza in beautiful Sunrise, Fla., wasn't all fun and games, but it was a lot of fun. In addition to nine hours of student presentations, the students were treated to an awards ceremony and dinner, as well as an activities day,

designed to be both educational and entertaining. The students capped off their trip with a visit to the Sawgrass Recreation Park for an airboat tour through the Everglades and a Florida Marlins baseball game.

"It was a really fun, new experience," said Ryan Ray, a Peekskill, N.Y., student. "The airboat ride was really cool and we got to hold a baby alligator, which was exciting."

"We got to visit places we've never been and see the Everglades and alligators," said Yancey Butler, a student

from Park City Magnet School in Bridgeport, Conn.

"It was also great meeting new people," said Jordyn Phillips, another Peekskill student.

"The traveling and whole social experience is huge," said John Cooley, a teacher at Peekskill Middle School. "It also gives these kids the chance to network and to see that they can shine with the best of the best on the East Coast."

"It's unique in that the kids have the chance to do and

see a lot of different things," said Patricia Crawley, environmental director for Broward County (Fla.) Public Schools. "Plus, it gets them involved in their communities, sets up introductions to elected officials and business executives, and forces them to use technology."

"From the public speaking to the introductions they make, every part of this experience makes a big impact on their lives," said Stella Shelby, a teacher at Westglades Middle School in Parkland, Fla.



Students attending the 2009 symposium were treated to an airboat ride during a visit to Sawgrass Recreation Park.



Symposium participants listen to presentations at the 15th annual Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education in Sunrise, Fla.



Students had a great time at the Marlins game.



Westglades Middle School students were all smiles at the Florida Marlins game at Land Shark Stadium.



Wheelabrator Vice President of Operations Bill Roberts addresses symposium attendees.



McNicol Middle School students enjoy the welcome dinner.



Sawgrass Springs Middle School student Shae Montalvo presents at the podium.



Carmen Galindo and Nicole Frenock of FDR Middle School in Pennsylvania pet a rabbit during a visit to Sawgrass Recreation Park.



Peter Jenkel and Courtney Diamond of Millbury Memorial Jr./Sr. High School make their presentation.

SYMPOSIUM PROJECT OVERVIEWS



Calverton Elementary/ Middle School, Baltimore, Md.

Best Neighborhood Environmental Awareness Project

Calverton students worked in conjunction with the school's community partners, the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning and the Coppin Heights Community Development Corporation, to address lead prevention in the Rosemont neighborhood. Team

members worked with fellow students, teachers and community members to test toys and other household objects for lead, and reported their findings at community-wide forums. They also developed lead-prevention lessons for elementary-school students and partnered with parent liaisons to host workshops for families on how to protect their homes.



Federal Hill Preparatory School, Baltimore, Md.

Best Clean Waterway Information Project

In the past, the Federal Hill Prep team has focused on the run-off from its local city streets to the Inner Harbor, and this year's project reinforced that commitment to the harbor and wetland areas. The

students worked to restore a 60-foot area of rocky unmanaged waterfront on the site of the Baltimore Museum of Industry into a true wetlands site. The team was involved in surveying and testing the site, redesigning it and preparing it for replanting.



Franklin D. Roosevelt Middle School, Bristol, Penn.

Best Environmental Motivational Project

The FDR Nature Environmental Action Team set out to reverse the trend of students spending free time indoors and not having direct experience with nature. The students worked to meet this challenge by

refurbishing a trail and upgrading exercise equipment at Silver Lake Park. They also participated in a Red Cross Walkathon, as well as environmental clean-ups, and compiled helpful tips and brochures to encourage families to enjoy the outdoors and participate in life-satisfying physical activity.



Lawton Chiles Middle Academy, Lakeland, Fla.

Best Endangered Species Relocation Project

The Lawton Chiles team researched methods used to relocate a species of concern - gopher tortoises - back onto reclaimed phosphate land in Homeland, Fla. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection asked

the students to inventory the Peace River area in Homeland for existing gopher tortoise burrows and survey the food supply in the area. This information will be used to create a geographic information system map for the state to use when issuing permits to relocate future gopher tortoises.



Lisbon Central School, Lisbon, Conn.

Best Comprehensive Going Green Project

To devise a green school plan, Lisbon students researched how students travel to and from school, the amount of vehicle idling, energy usage in classrooms and hallways, where cafeteria food goes, what types of cleaning products the school purchases, what is recycled, and opportunities for green space at

the school. Based on the results, the young environmentalists came up with a plan of action and a specific budget to implement changes, such as installing solar panels to help diversify the sources of energy coming into the school and purchasing two pigs from a local farm to cut down on cafeteria waste. They also received grant funding from State Farm to organize a Green School Environmental Summit in 2010.



McNicol Middle School, Hollywood, Fla.

Best Ongoing In-House Recycling Project

Taking part in the symposium for the first time, McNicol's team initiated a school-wide recycling program this year. The students chose this issue due

to the amount of waste they were seeing in their school. Recycling has a relatively large impact-to-effort ratio, and they felt they could make a real difference in their building and community.



Millbury Memorial Junior/Senior High School, Millbury, Mass.

Best Alternative Green Energy Project

The Millbury team focused on renewable energy sources for the school, with a goal to reduce to energy costs of the school, specifically electrical energy costs. In order to

reach that goal, the team devised a plan to install a small wind turbine and an array of solar panels on the school roof. The secondary goal was to provide first-hand knowledge to students and teachers who want to learn more about renewable forms of energy.



New River Middle School, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Best Animal Conservation Project

New River students worked to restore the beach community at John Lloyd State Park. Students planted mangrove seedlings, sable palms, sea oats, as well as other native Florida plants to help prevent

further beach erosion and to enhance the park's tree canopy. This was especially significant in reducing the artificial lighting from the surrounding area during the sea turtle nesting season.



Park City Magnet School, Bridgeport, Conn.

Best Ecosystem Pollution Awareness Project

Realizing that Bridgeport is a port city on Long Island Sound, the Park City Magnet students focused their attention on the destruction of the sound and its impact

on tourism, water sports and commercial fishing. The students participated in a clean-up project at Seaside Park Beach and partnered with Aquaculture School and Save the Sound to inform people about the devastating effects of pollutants.



Peekskill Middle School, Peekskill, N.Y.

Best Carbon Footprint Education Project

The Peekskill team selected global warming as its overriding topic. The students have been implementing a variety of mini-projects to allow the school and community to make a difference. Those projects include a pledging program, challenging individuals from the school and community to reduce their carbon

output; a district-wide global warming day; a continuation and expansion of the school's recycling program, with outreach to other schools; and the creation of a sustainable school landscape and garden. The students also partnered with the Peekskill School District, City of Peekskill and Wheelabrator Westchester in the Adopt-a-Street litter pick-up program.



Sawgrass Springs Middle School, Coral Springs, Fla.

Best Water Conservation Project

The Sawgrass Springs team tackled the issue of water conservation by planting native wildflowers, which survive longer with less water and have the ability to reseed and adapt the state's climate. The students directly compared impatiens, native to Africa and Asia, with the state wildflower coreopsis to reveal how much water could be conserved in daily landscaping and gardening.



West Deptford Middle School, Thorofare, N.J.

Best Recycling Education Project

The West Deptford Middle School team launched a recycling program in the school district's high school, middle school and three elementary schools. The plan included providing recycling bins throughout the buildings and educating the West Deptford community on the importance of recycling.



Westglades Middle School, Parkland, Fla.

Best Community Outreach Project

The Westglades team worked closely with the City of Parkland to find ways to "bag the bag" — reducing the use of plastic and paper grocery bags. A citywide contest was conducted and culminated on National Recycling Day, awarding prizes to those with the most plastic grocery bags collected. Westglades students brought in more than 6,000 bags, raising awareness about the importance of recycling plastic bags and reducing their use. They also orchestrated efforts to design and sell canvas bags.

Speakers: dream big



Disney Imagineer Eric Goodman speaks to participants and guests at Wheelabrator's 15th annual Symposium for Environment and Education.



Fisk University professor Kent Wallace spoke to students about space and science education.

Students urged to follow through on their ideas

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Regaling students with tales of rocketry and roller coasters, this year's keynote speakers at the Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education reinforced one simple belief: If you dream it, you can achieve it.

The featured speakers over the course of the three-day program included Kent Wallace, director of the physics laboratories at Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn., and Disney Imagineer Eric Goodman, who designs and builds attractions at Disney's theme parks.

"The process that you go through and that I go through is the same: It all starts with an idea," said Goodman, who spoke to students at the awards ceremony and dinner. "For Walt Disney, one simple idea turned into an entire enterprise. Anybody can dream; anybody can be an Imagineer. The sky's the limit for you."

Goodman, a graduate of Northwestern University, began working at Disney parks as an hourly employee. Today, he is one of about 1,000 Imagineers. "I'm so lucky," he said. "I have the coolest job in the world – making sure people are having fun."

He described to students the different disciplines of Imagineering and how an idea moves from the brainstorming phase to production. He went into detail about his role in creating a new interactive exhibit in the heart of Epcot that features Waste Management – Wheelabrator's parent company – and its green approaches to handling garbage. Dubbed "Don't Waste It!" the exhibit illustrates the technologies behind single-stream recycling and converting waste into energy.

Wallace, in his luncheon address, spoke to students about space, rockets and science education. A professor and astrophysics doctoral student, Wallace also leads the Fisk Altitude Achievement Missile Team (FAAMT), a student rocket team that competes in the NASA University Student Launch Initiative program.

"You are the next generation of scientists; we need you," said Wallace. "Years from now, you'll be of age to participate in the first mission to Mars. Anyone ready to step on the red planet? Your journey starts now."

He also encouraged the students to take advantage of the scholarship opportunity at Fisk, made possible through the symposium. "Our university has a tradition of students not only graduating, but becoming leaders," he said. "We hope some of you will decide to join us some day."