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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local High Schools Awarded Funding for Environmental Projects

HAMILTON – Hamilton Community Foundation has announced grants totalling \$17,660 for environmental-action projects, spearheaded by students from 27 local high schools.

“These grants enable students to conduct environmental projects over the school year,” says Linda Hughes, adult advisor to the foundation’s Youth Advisory Council. “The projects range from increasing environmental awareness among the student body, to roof greening, to biodiversity to facilitating commuting and recycling.

This year, we’ve seen an increasing focus on projects that combat the effects of climate change,” she says. “Virtually every high school in Hamilton applied for and received a grant, showing the increasing commitment Hamilton’s young people have toward the environment.”

The grants are provided under the umbrella of Hamilton Community Foundation’s *Protecting Our Environment Together* (“POET”) program. Its goals are to increase the adoption of sustainable behaviours and choices, improve the environment and protect human health. Key target groups for the overall POET initiative are schools and youth, along with neighbourhood and citizen groups.

Since the first “POET Youth” grants were awarded in 2006, some \$60,000 has been awarded in 91 grants to Hamilton high schools. Waterdown District High School is one that has used the grants help students explore solutions to a wide range of environmental issues including air pollution, climate change and decreased exposure to nature because of urban sprawl.

“The grants are wonderful at stimulating initiative and breeding environmental leadership,” says Tim Carr, co-ordinator of a Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board-wide environmental program. This year, Waterdown students are receiving a grant toward two projects: the greening of the school’s roof and vermicomposting, in which cafeteria waste is diverted from landfill, and worms, grown and maintained by the students, turn it into compost to be used in local plantings.

“The funds not only create opportunities for the kids to act on ideas that are important to them,” says Carr, “the results also have a direct benefit to the community.”

The POET youth grant program is administered by HCF’s Youth Advisory Council, kids from 13 to 21 who work with HCF in making grants to benefit other young people, learn about Hamilton’s strengths and needs, gain leadership and provide a youth perspective to HCF’s work.

“Each POET youth application was reviewed by Youth Advisory Council members and it was their recommendations that were ultimately approved by the Foundation’s board,” says Ms. Hughes. “it is very much about kids being in touch with the thinking of other kids, and the change they want to make.”

Hamilton Community Foundation was founded in 1954 and since that time has made grants to our community totalling more than \$51 million to organizations across sectors: health, social services, arts, environment, education and recreation. Its mission is *to strengthen Hamilton's quality of life as an inclusive and sustainable community by acting as a catalyst and by connecting people, ideas and resources through community philanthropy.*

CONTACT:

Linda Hughes, Adult Advisor, Youth Advisory Council
l.hughes@hcf.on.ca; 905-523-5600 x 264

Grace Diffey, Vice-President – Community Relations
g.diffey@hcf.on.ca; 905-523-5600 x260 Cell: 905-518-4641

**Protecting Our Environment Together Youth Grants
February 2009**

	Organization / Project Name	Description	Amount Granted
1.	Académie catholique Mère-Teresa - <i>"Recycling, Reusing & Reducing: The Future Depends on it."</i>	To reduce the amount of recyclable or organic waste that ends up in landfills, or in areas where it cannot benefit the environment. To implement the recycling of cans/bottles and the green boxes to reduce, reuse and recycle in the hope of saving the planet by doing their part.	\$700
2.	Ancaster High School - <i>"Ancaster High School 50th Anniversary Garden"</i>	To raise school spirit and allow the school year to leave its mark upon the school. To provide a hangout place for students to enjoy the outdoors, perhaps while eating their lunches. The garden will tell the community, and visiting alumni (50th Anniversary May 8 - 10) that they care about the environment and climate change and that they are a generation of action.	\$700
3.	Barton Secondary School - <i>"Tree Planting & Recycle Bin Making"</i>	Focus on waste management by reducing the amount of garbage thrown out in the cafeteria. Focus on cleaner air by planting trees and enhancing the picnic area.	\$700
4.	Bishop Ryan Secondary School - <i>"Bishop Ryan Recycles"</i>	School's goal is to become eco-certified. Waste minimization is the primary goal. It is felt that the amount of waste produced each day can easily be reduced by 50%. Recycling centers will be needed in several areas of the school. Their aim is to supply the cafeteria and staff room first, followed by the attendance/main office and auditorium.	\$700
5.	Bishop Tonnos Catholic Secondary School - <i>"The Eco-Fair"</i>	The Eco-Fair is designed to get the entire student community thinking about their environmental impact and to provide tips on how to minimize carbon footprints. By doing so it is expected that the school community will gain awareness on current environmental issues and will be one step closer to becoming eco-certified.	\$700
6.	Cardinal Newman Catholic Secondary School - <i>"Recycling To Reduce Our Impact"</i>	Recycling program expansion at the school. It is expected that the purchase of additional blue boxes for classrooms will help promote recycling in the classrooms, but help us on recycling day, for the first step of separating materials can occur in the classroom. As a result of the recycling program going on around the school, the purchase of larger roll-out blue bins will be required for areas like the libraries, guidance, main office where lots of recyclables are being collected.	\$700

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7.	Cathedral High School - <i>"Recycling Centre"</i>	To reduce the waste created by the student body. Last year Cathedral's focus was paper reduction. This year the school anticipates a continued decrease of their ecological footprint by expanding the recycling program and educating students about the negative impacts of waste.	\$700
8.	Delta Secondary School- <i>"Delta's Going Green"</i>	To reduce the energy consumption of the school and to decrease their ecological footprint.	\$700
9.	Glendale Secondary School - <i>"Bike to Glendale Day (Earth Day April 22, 2009)"</i>	G-Beat intends to encourage the school community to walk or ride their bikes to school on Earth Day. An additional bike rack would provide additional space for students to lock their bikes. G-Beat wants students to re-think "biking" as a healthy choice loaded with benefits for students, the community and the environment.	\$700
10.	Hamilton District Christian High School - <i>"HDCH Recycling"</i>	Recycling continues to be a challenge for the school. Two recycling bins in each classroom (one for paper, the other for cans/bottles) are emptied by members of the Ecoserve Club. It is anticipated that the purchase of larger outdoor bins would be helpful for students from each class.	\$700
11.	Highland Secondary School - <i>"Highland Recycles"</i>	Since installing a large recycling bin in the cafeteria, the school has seen an extremely positive difference in the general recycling attitudes of their student body. The school wishes to expand their program by placing additional bins in the hallways.	\$460
12.	Hillfield Strathallan College - <i>"HSC Goes Green"</i>	To assist the school in developing an indigenous designated area on the grounds. This would be an addition to the existing Carolinian plants and trees planted around the school. HSC believes it is important to raise student awareness of the species at risk and to provide them with a green area.	\$700
13.	Mountain Secondary School - <i>"You Can Recycle Everywhere"</i>	To build/purchase a recycling centre and place it strategically in the school.	\$700

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14.	Orchard Park Secondary School - <i>"Courtyard Beautification/Geography Murals"</i>	To continue to maintain the schools' environmentally conscious student body. To create a variety of environmental murals which send a message to the students using mediums other than reading and writing.	\$700
15.	Parkview Secondary School - <i>"Aquaponics"</i>	To build an Aquaponics system. To demonstrate how this system, with minimal effort, can be sustainable, practical, and beneficial to lower income people of the world. At the same time to provide organic meat (fish) and vegetables while reducing the water consumption relative to a similar greenhouse watering system.	\$700
16.	Saltfleet District High School - <i>"Recycling Improvements at Saltfleet High School"</i>	To introduce a separated recycling bin in our cafeteria to help encourage more recycling. If students had a place to recycle their paper and cans at lunch, it is anticipated that less garbage would be produced. It is hoped that if recycling is encouraged at school, students will continue to recycle at home.	\$700
17.	Sherwood Secondary School - <i>"Sherwood Beautification"</i>	To continue the recycling program and maintain and improve the school front yard and courtyard by planting more plants and flowers. Presentations made by Meagan McKeen at the Earth Week fair and Earth Day. Purchase a supersorter from City Hall.	\$700
18.	Sir Allan MacNab Secondary School - <i>"Bike Rack"</i>	To build a bike rack and hopefully increase the number of students and teachers who bike to school on a regular basis. Completion of the project is anticipated by the end of May 2009. It is felt that MacNab, through the project, could be an emissions reduction leader within the community. The project will be carried out by the environment club, machine shop class, and landscape class.	\$700
19.	Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School - <i>"Cafeteria Makeover - Eco-Caf"</i>	To use the school cafeteria to increase environmental awareness at SJAM. This project requires the installation of recycling containers, greenery, and the use of wall murals. It is felt that bringing nature into the school will help promote environmental awareness.	\$700
20.	Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School - <i>"Composting at SWC"</i>	SWC would like to continue to reduce the amount of waste being sent to our local landfill. Composting is seen as the next step in their efforts. Due to the increased number of gardens that have been planted in their courtyard, they felt it was more beneficial to do the composting themselves.	\$400

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	Organization / Project Name	Description	Amount Granted
21.	St. Jean de Brébeuf Catholic Secondary School - <i>"Courtyard Revitalization - Final Phase"</i>	To further develop their woodland sites with both rare and native species. A further focus will be to expand by adding plants that are able to provide food for the SJB foods course.	\$700
22.	St. Mary Catholic Secondary School - <i>"Environmental film festival "Climate Change in our Everyday Lives""</i>	To make this a springboard for a larger board-wide environmental film festival. IT is anticipated that their eco school team will create a few videos as well as brochures to promote the event to the community. Their hope is to educate the public, make them aware of the issues, and offer alternative choices to lessen one's impact on global warming.	\$700
23.	St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School - <i>"Greening Our School Grounds"</i>	They would like to naturalize the school grounds by introducing more native plants, trees and flowers onto the school property in an effort to create biodiversity on the school grounds. Planting trees will help create shade which, in turn, helps to cut energy costs for the school buildings as well as create a cool shady place for students to relax and socialize. By installing recycling containers throughout the school grounds it is hoped that the importance of respecting our environment and keeping it clean will be encouraged.	\$700
24.	Waterdown District High School - <i>"Worms for Waste / Greening of Waterdown's Roof"</i>	Vermicomposting will be maintained and grown by students. Students will write about the happenings of the project as part of their English journaling curriculum. Waste from cafeteria will be diverted from landfill to feed the worms and be turned into compost. Compost will be used in local plantings. The solar panel will be used by the Green Team and many different subject areas to teach about renewable energies in a really practical way.	\$700

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	Organization / Project Name	Description	Amount Granted
25.	Westdale Secondary School - <i>"Project Take Flight"</i>	Project Take Flight hopes to achieve the goal of bringing back the homes for birds around the Westdale community. We are going to purchase bird feeders that will be attached to posts beside trees located around the school. We will also participate in community cleanup around the Westdale area (ideally Cootes Paradise and Bayfront) by teaming up with the City of Hamilton, contributing to the city's waste management ideas. Finally, indoor plants will be bought and given to classes to increase air quality inside the school and to help connect, in a small way, with the nature outside.	\$700
26.	Westmount Secondary School - <i>"The Greening of Westmount 4"</i>	Improve air quality and make students aware of the importance of plants to our health, and to show how organic waste can be turned into soil to be used by our plants.	\$700
		TOTAL	\$17,660