

Press Release

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Energetic teenagers from South Africa win the Volvo Adventure

For immediate release

TORONTO (May 11, 2005) – First prize in the Volvo Adventure 2005 was awarded to Ladysmith Enviro Club from South Africa which carried out a project entitled “Electrical Efficiency from Our Town”. The team’s five members worked to increase the use of low-energy bulbs and thus reduced energy consumption and emissions of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas. Curt Germundsson from Volvo Car Corporation’s executive management board presented the \$10,000 (USD) prize during the awards ceremony in Göteborg. The grant will finance the group’s ongoing pro-environmental work.

The eco-focused 16-year-olds had replaced more than 4,000 bulbs with low-energy variants in households, schools and bed & breakfasts in the town of Ladysmith. According to the group’s own calculations, the low-energy bulbs have reduced energy consumption by about 1,584,000 kWh. The group also planted trees to increase carbon dioxide absorption and thus reduce the global greenhouse effect. In addition, the project promoted partnerships with other pro-environmental organizations, companies and schools with the aim of marketing an ecologically sustainable lifestyle.

Jury chairman, Theodore Oben of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), said: “These kids have demonstrated that it is actually possible on an individual level to work to reduce global environmental problems such as the greenhouse effect. It’s an excellent example of the concept of ‘Think globally but act locally.’”

Improved quality of water in South Korea

The second prize, \$6,000 (USD), went to a group called “The Keeper of the Gwangju River”, which worked to improve water quality in the Gwangju River in South Korea. When work got under way in 2001, the river was so polluted and dirty that no wildlife or vegetation lived in or near in its waters. However, through information campaigns directed at the population living along the riverbanks, life has gradually returned and both plants and animals now live in and alongside the Gwangju River.

Recycling of electronic scrap

The project “Win '05: Recycle and Re-use Our E-Waste” was carried out by Westerly Innovations Network, Babcock Middle School in the USA. The group worked on the recycling and reuse of scrap electronic materials. In addition to educating the general public on recycling issues, it collected more than 11 tonnes of electronic waste that would otherwise have ended up in the refuse dump and dispatched it for recycling. The team’s excellent efforts secured a third place and a prize of \$4,000 (USD) in the Volvo Adventure 2005.

A team of Canadian students from Fredericton traveled to Sweden to present the results of their environmental efforts. Led by Ralph Simpson, Patrick Simpson (14), Jack Simpson (12), Matthew Nickerson (12), Morgan Yeates (11) and Clara Simpson (10) worked toward restoring New Brunswick’s native bur oak tree in the Saint John River Valley. The team discovered that human expansion had threatened the tree’s population in the valley and acted by planting over 200 trees throughout Fredericton.

Environmental know-how for tomorrow's decision-makers

Volvo Adventure is a joint project run by the Volvo Group, Volvo Car Corporation and UNEP. It is an Internet-based global environmental-education program for young people aged between 10 and 16 with an aim to increase the environmental expertise of tomorrow's decision-makers and consumers. Part of the education program consists of a competition structured around groups of a maximum of five participants who undertake environment-promotion projects. The three best teams are rewarded with a development grant of \$10,000, \$6,000 and \$4000 (USD) respectively.

Together with UNEP, Volvo is continuing to challenge young people from around the world via the Volvo Adventure. The next competition series is already open for new projects and the last day to register is January, 31 2006. The best projects from every nation are invited to the Volvo Adventure finals in Göteborg. In addition to a development grant, the top three winning teams will also receive an invitation to participate in the annual UNEP conference for children and youths.

For more information or to register for the Volvo Adventure, visit:

<http://www.volvoadventure.org>

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