

MAST Academy @ Key Biscayne receives national recognition

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MAST Academy @ Key Biscayne

Maritime and Science Technology (MAST) Academy @ Key Biscayne is one of the 2019 U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) Green Ribbon Schools award honorees.

Nominated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, MAST is one of only two Florida schools recognized for its innovative efforts in reducing its environmental impact and utility costs, improving health and wellness, and ensuring effective sustainability education.

The school has partnered with community stakeholders, including the Phillip and Patricia Frost Science Museum and the University of Miami's GreenU, on best practices to reduce its environmental impacts and costs.

"MAST Academy is a shining example of the district's commitment to eco-friendly practices, while encouraging and nurturing a generation of energy and environmental champions," said Miami-Dade County Public Schools superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho. "Today's students are tomorrow's citizens, for they will be the key change agents who will solve the sustainability and environmental challenges of tomorrow."

MAST is the first school in the district to eliminate straws from the cafeteria and it replaced Styrofoam cafeteria trays with compostable ones. The school prides itself in its electric car-charging unit, solar-powered guard shack, organic gardens, school-funded recycling program and coastal restoration work days.

Students at MAST Academy participated in Green Apple Day of Service to increase energy efficiency through LED retrofit technology, attended BikeSafe clinics through the University of Miami's Pediatric Neurology department, and pursue internships with partner organizations committed to environmental issues such as the U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA, the University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences.

"At MAST, we believe it is our responsibility to teach our students how to be good stewards of the environment," said Dr. Derick McKoy, principal of MAST Academy. "This recognition is a total team effort. Special thanks go to our Green Champions Club and the environmental sustainability task force of the PTSA. Go, Makos!"

Florida has participated in the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon program since its inception in 2012. Since then, the state has had 15 schools and six districts recognized. MAST is the third school chosen as Green Ribbon School. TERRA Environmental Research Institute was honored in 2012, the program's first year, and Air Base K-8 Center was honored in 2017.

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