

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ****

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****Photos available upon request****

LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL JOINS WHOLE FOODS AND CONGRESSMAN MORAN TO GO SOLAR

WASHINGTON, DC – In celebration of Earth Day, Tuesday April 22, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology partnered with local Alexandria Whole Foods Market to help fundraise for a student-led solar panel initiative. In 2006, students formed the TJ Environmental Impact Club. This year, the club focused efforts on the Solar Panel Initiative to bring clean energy to the TJ community. Student volunteers have successfully fundraised over \$7,000 to help reach their year end goal of purchasing solar panels to lower TJ emissions and fight climate change. Whole Foods agreed to donate five percent of its total receipts from Earth Day to purchase the solar panels. On this Earth Day, Whole Foods and TJ were joined in support of this cause by U.S. Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA).

"As the top-ranked high school in the nation, we have an obligation to be leaders in environmental stewardship and sustainable design," said Varun Bansal, the student leader of the Solar Panel Initiative.

Congressman Jim Moran emphasized the importance of young people being environmentally conscious and advocating for green energy in their community. Knowing that students are our future leaders, he also wanted them to increase awareness of global issues and actions that they can take.

"We couldn't imagine a better event to help our local community than supporting TJ to go green on Earth Day," said Ann Beisel, Marketing Specialist & Community Liaison at the Alexandria Whole Foods.

Whole Foods business is linked to the neighborhood and larger community that they serve and live in. Without community financial and philosophical support, Whole Foods would be out of business. Whole Foods routinely offers 5 % Days to donate funding in support of local community organizations, like TJ's Solar Panel Initiative. Whole Foods

also celebrated Earth Day by launching their plastic bag ban on this Tuesday, Earth Day 2008, to aid storewide efforts to lower emissions, waste, and fight climate change.

“What were once lofty goals are now being turned into realities – and we couldn’t have done it without Whole Foods’s help,” said TJ history teacher Amanda Hurowitz, who sponsors the Solar Initiative.

Earth Day Network and Energy Action Coalition also supported the event at Whole Foods. Earth Day Network and Energy Action Coalition’s partnership allows teachers to apply for grants to fund school greening. The partnership seeks to engage the center of every community, the school, to transform the foundation of our communities into sustainable centers of learning. TJ has also partnered with Standard Solar Inc, a Maryland-based company, for the purchase and installation of solar panels. Standard Solar has discounted the solar panel system and offered free installation and training seminars for TJ students and faculty, providing the group with the financial and technological assistance that will bring them closer to their goal.

For further information please contact Amanda Hurowitz at 516-316-5710, amanda.hurowitz@fcps.edu; Mary-Carson Saunders at 757-376-1364, mary@earthday.net; or visit <http://tjspi.110mb.com/>

About Thomas Jefferson Solar Panel Initiative

Founded in 2006, the Thomas Jefferson Solar Panel Initiative (TJSPI) is comprised of a group of student volunteers from the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. The students work under the guidance of Mrs. Amanda Hurowitz and Mr. Hadan Kauffman, faculty members at TJHSST. The mission of the TJSPI is to integrate solar energy into the TJHSST building and culture by first introducing solar power infrastructure and then ultimately powering the entire school from solar power via incremental increases in solar power production and photovoltaic system output. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology was recently voted the best high school in the nation by US News and World Report. TJ is located on 6560 Braddock Rd. Alexandria, VA 22312. (703) 750-8300

About Whole Foods Market

Whole Foods Market is a dynamic leader in the quality food business. They are a mission-driven company that aims to set the standards of excellence for food retailers. Quality is a state of mind at Whole Foods Market. Their motto, Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet, shows that their vision extends beyond a food retailer. Whole Foods measures their success in fulfilling their vision by customer satisfaction, Team Member excellence and happiness, return on capital investment, improvement in the state of the environment, and local and larger community support.

About Energy Action Coalition

Energy Action (<http://energyactioncoalition.org>) united a diversity of organizations in an alliance that supports and strengthens the youth climate and energy movement. The

partners of Energy Action work together to leverage our collective power and create change for a clean, efficient, just and renewable energy future. The work of Energy Action is focused on four strategic areas: campuses, communities, corporate practices, and politics.

About Earth Day Network

Earth Day Network (<http://www.earthday.net/>) seeks to grow and diversify the environmental movement worldwide, and to mobilize it as the most effective vehicle for promoting a healthy, sustainable planet. It pursues these goals through education, politics and consumer activism. Earth Day Network has a global reach with a network of more than 17,000 partners and organizations in 174 countries. More than 1 billion people participate in Earth Day activities, making it the largest secular civic event in the world.