

GRADES OF GREEN

WATER CAMPAIGN

FINAL REPORT 2018



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Grades of Green's Water Campaign is a semester-long, virtual program that provides students with the mentorship and leadership training needed to implement an impactful water solution in their community. Water scarcity and poor water quality are regional and global issues that increasingly put our communities at risk. The Water Campaign employs 21st century technology and personalized mentorship to equip students with the skills they need to lead sustainable water solutions in their communities. The 2018 Water Campaign, which launched in September and culminated in December, empowered 530 students to form 51 Water Campaign Teams in schools and community groups across the globe to involve their communities in water action. Students conserved or protected 9.76 million gallons of water by implementing water solutions, and educated 41,958 classmates, parents, school administrators, district supervisors, elected officials and community members through presentations and informative campaign videos. Thanks to generous sponsors, student teams received \$1,500 worth of personalized support from a Grades of Green Mentor, leadership training from featured environmental experts, and access to a dynamic virtual classroom at no cost.

By completing the Water Campaign, each student team achieved the following:

- Identified an important **water issue** in their school or community;
- Created an innovative **solution** to that issue;
- Educated and inspired their community to save water or improve water quality with a **call to action** through a short video or live presentation;
- Compiled and submitted their results (i.e. gallons of water conserved or protected, community members educated, presentation attendees and video views) to Grades of Green to be considered for grant prizes to expand their water quality or conservation solution.

Student teams who completed the Water Campaign had the opportunity to win grant prizes between \$500 to \$1,000 to expand their innovative water solutions. Grades of Green selected a group of finalists and voted to award four \$500 grants to exceptional student teams, and an expert panel of judges reviewed the top finalists to select the Grand Prize winner of a \$1,000 grant. Student movements are sustained through continued mentorship and leadership trainings through participation in the 2019 Waste Campaign and culminating in the first annual Grades of Green Impact-a-thon, a community event showcasing student solutions at Subaru Pacific in Hawthorne, CA on June 2nd, 2019.



Grades of Green received the 2019 County of Los Angeles Green Leadership Award for students' outstanding achievements in the Water Campaign. The [Green Leadership Awards](#) recognize the outstanding efforts by individuals and organizations in fulfilling innovative strategies to improve environmental sustainability in Los Angeles. Development Director, Kim Siehl and Program Manager, Emily Stewart received the award on behalf of Grades of Green from Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn in April 2019.

Delivered at no cost to participating students, thanks to generous sponsor support, the Water Campaign creates a sustainable model by empowering student leaders around the globe to create an environmental action campaign to conserve or protect water in their community. Students develop their leadership skills, change their water use habits, and improve community culture, leading to a ripple effect of water improvement impacts.

The Water Campaign was a major step towards realizing Grades of Green's 10-Year Strategic Goals, exceeding the long-term objective of saving 5,000,000 gallons of water through student-led efforts to reduce water usage and improve water quality. Student participation in the Water Campaign helped achieve 8% of the Year 1 Strategic Goals, which set out to involve 4,200 student eco-leaders.

Grades of Green will expand this high-impact program during the Fall 2019 semester to empower 800+ student leaders across the globe to implement water solutions in their communities. Both the 2019 Water Campaign and the 2020 Waste Campaign will have a specific focus on single-use plastics reduction. The Water Campaign will reduce the harmful effects of plastic on local and global water resources and marine ecosystems by providing student leaders with customized mentorship, access to environmental experts, a virtual library of NGSS-aligned hands-on resources and activities, and the opportunity to collaborate with other student teams across the globe. 2019 Water Campaign teams will implement plastic reduction solutions and advocate for plastic bans at the school and city level.

RESULTS AND METRICS

Grades of Green is very proud of all the participants in the 2018 Water Campaign. Through hard work and perseverance, student teams created effective and innovative solutions to a wide variety of water issues in their communities. Below are the key results that the 530 participating student leaders achieved in just one semester of action. These numbers will continue to grow as students expand their projects and further develop their leadership skills with support from Grades of Green.

- **530** student leaders implemented water protection campaigns in their school and community
- **51** student teams across the globe created innovative solutions to water issues in **37** cities and **8** countries
- **9,761,237** gallons of water were protected or conserved by Campaign Teams and their solutions during one semester of action
- **4,200+** community members world-wide were reached through **26** live presentations given by students, including:
 - **4** presentations to city councils
 - **2** presentations to school districts
 - **11** presentations to the school community
 - **7** presentations to the wider community
- **28,400+** people were collectively educated by student-created water campaign videos showcasing each team's local water issue, innovative water solution and call to action to their community
- **41,948** people were educated about water conservation and water quality protection
- **428,653** people were reached by social media posts raising awareness about water conservation and water quality protection

CAMPAIGN TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

Grades of Green is excited to share the highlights from the 2018 Fall Water Campaign Winners and Finalist Campaign Teams, who achieved exceptional results. Selected highlights include links to the short campaign video that each team created and shared with their community.

COLUMBUS TUSTIN MIDDLE SCHOOL (TUSTIN, CALIFORNIA)

- **Water Campaign Issue:** The 7th grade science class at Columbus Tustin conducted a school-wide assessment of how water was used on campus and discovered that the custodial team used an average of 90 gallons of water each day to hose down the outdoor lunch tables.
- **Solution:** The 7th grade class experimented with using buckets of water and rags to wash the tables and found they could achieve the same level of cleanliness while saving approximately 87 gallons of water per day.
- **Call to Action:** The class called on the student body to organize a “table-washing brigade” in order to take responsibility for bucket-washing the tables, which resulted in water savings of 435 gallons per week!



Columbus Tustin was the Grand Prize Winner of the Fall 2018 Water Campaign and recipient of a \$1,000 Eco-Grant. They used the grant to purchase additional rain barrels and table cleaning supplies to continue their project.

MALEZI COMMUNITY CENTRE (NAIROBI, KENYA)

- **Water Campaign Issue:** This team of 25 primary school students in Kenya focused the improper disposal of household waste in their community, which resulted in polluted waterways. Cleaner waterways would improve water quality, water-borne diseases, and flooding.
- **Solution:** In order to reduce dumping, the team resolved to install proper waste receptacles to prevent litter from ending up in local waterways.
- **Call to Action:** Students presented at a neighborhood council meeting, informing local leaders and community members about safe and eco-friendly waste disposal techniques and how they could help students to set up waste collection points.



As a past participant in Grades of Green's first Water Challenge during the 2017-2018 school year, Malezi was the winner of the Best Alumni Grades of Green Team and the recipient of a \$500 Eco-Grant. They plan to increase the number of community waste collection points using the grant funds.

SOUTH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL (ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA)

- **Water Campaign Issue:** The team of 5 middle school students at South Junior High noticed that there was always water left over in plastic water bottles that students put in recycling bins, preventing those bottles from being properly recycled. From their research, they found that over 11 gallons of water was left over in recycled water bottles during the semester long Campaign alone.
- **Solution:** Club members monitored recycling bins and educated their classmates to ensure that all water left over in recycled plastic water bottles on campus was collected so the bottles could be properly recycled, as well as creating an educational video.
- **Call to Action:** The team presented their educational video to the entire school community to inspire them to recycle correctly and to encourage the use of reusable bottles. Watch their video [HERE](#).



South Junior High School won the Best Community Changemakers award and a \$500 Eco-Grant in the 2018 Fall Water Campaign. They plan to continue their momentum by presenting their Campaign and results at the Cal State Fullerton Sustainability Conference. The team is working towards bringing their program to the 7 elementary schools that feed into their high school, recognizing that instilling water conservation habits at a younger age produces more sustainable long-term results.

GEORGE WASHINGTON ACADEMY (CASABLANCA, MOROCCO)

- **Water Campaign Issue:** This team of 30 students on the George Washington Academy Green Council led by Grades of Green Student Leadership Award Winner, Younes, (pictured) resolved to reduce plastic water bottle usage on campus by encouraging students to use the newly installed water fountains on campus. Since the water fountains were new and water quality in Morocco varies from place to place, there was a stigma



that the water of from the fountains wasn't of as high quality as the water from single-use plastic bottles.

- **Solution:** The team creatively challenged this stigma by conducting a taste test between the fountain water and bottled water, educating the student population about the harmful effects of plastic water bottles, and encouraging them to use reusable water bottles. The team saved over 3 million gallons of water by reducing plastic water bottle use on campus.
- **Call to Action:** The team encouraged the student population to reduce their plastic water bottle usage in several educational school-wide presentations, through their campaign video, and by organizing a taste-test competition between fountain and bottled water (fountain water won!). Watch their video [HERE](#).

George Washington Academy was a finalist in the 2018 Fall Water Campaign. They strive to expand their efforts to helping other schools in their district to reduce single use water bottles and improve water filtration on campuses.

AQUATIC SOCIETY OF OMAHA (OMAHA, NEBRASKA)

- **Water Campaign Issue:** This team of 21 elementary students focused on developing water quality testing techniques in their lab in order to use local water sources to grow quality food for a nearby homeless shelter.
- **Solution:** The Aquatic Society team used water quality testing kits to check the quality of local water to confirm it was acceptable to use to grow crops to feed the homeless.
- **Call to Action:** In order to raise awareness, the team challenged others to also test water quality in their areas. They also worked directly with other Water Campaign teams in Kenya and Uganda to help them test their local water quality. Watch their video [HERE](#).



Aquatic Society of Omaha was a finalist in the 2018 Water Campaign and has been very active in Grades of Green Campaigns since the program's inception, continuing to develop sustainable solutions during the 2019 Waste Campaign.

SOUTH BAY TEAM (SOUTH BAY, CALIFORNIA)

- **Water Campaign Issue:** This team of 9 highly active Grades of Green students realized that the water quality in each of their towns in the South Bay area is significantly impacted by urban runoff. They also learned about proposed plans to rethink how runoff water is handled, such as Los Angeles County's Measure W, and learned about designing water capture, cleaning, and infiltration systems to replace the ubiquitous storm drain systems that send untreated runoff water to the ocean.
- **Solution:** The team created a video outlining the sources of runoff water and pollution, and what residents can do to minimize urban runoff.
- **Call to Action:** The team posted the video on their school websites and contacted city officials in Manhattan Beach to post the video on city websites. Watch their video [HERE](#).



The South Bay Team is comprised of former Grades of Green Youth Corps middle and high school students from Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, and Long Beach, CA. They were awarded Best Innovative Idea and a \$500 Eco-Grant for the 2018 Water Campaign. With the grant money, they are planning to host an urban runoff prevention festival.

MEADOWS ELEMENTARY (MANHATTAN BEACH, CALIFORNIA)

- **Water Campaign Issue:** The 11 Meadows Elementary students began their campaign by researching the major water issues in their city. They concluded that they live in an area where fresh water is a scarce resource, and met with the sustainability director for their city to learn about what Manhattan Beach is doing to encourage its residents to conserve water.
- **Solution:** The students started a campaign to teach their peers how to conserve water by turning off the tap,



watering lawns and gardens at the optimal time of day, and supporting their city's initiative for all residents to conserve water.

- **Call to Action:** The Meadows team called on their peers to build awareness about the amount of water they use on a daily basis and take steps to reduce their water usage at home and at school. They made an educational video and shared it with their school and their community at a Manhattan Beach City Council meeting. Watch their video [HERE](#).

Meadows Elementary was a Finalist in the 2018 Fall Water Campaign and has also been active in participating in many Grades of Green's programs. They were awarded Greenest School Community in the 2016-2017 Trash Free Lunch Challenge and moved on to participate in the 2019 Spring Waste Campaign, with a focus on reducing plastic pollution in the oceans.

GRAND VIEW ELEMENTARY (MANHATTAN BEACH, CALIFORNIA)

- **Water Campaign Issue:** Grand View Green Team students were concerned about the amount of single-use plastic bottles that are sold to students every day at lunch. They noticed that many students only drank part of the water before throwing away the bottles, adding up to a large amount of water and plastic waste every day.
- **Solution:** The Green Team made a video to educate their peers about the amount of money and natural resources that are wasted by the consumption of single-use plastics on campus each day and encouraged their peers to switch to reusables.
- **Call to Action:** The team called on their peers to bring reusable water bottles to school every day and fill them at one of the two hydration stations on campus. They also showed the video to their school superintendent to encourage the Manhattan Beach School District reduce single-use plastics by installing hydration stations district-wide.



Grand View won the award for Best Elementary Impact and an Eco-Grant for \$500 in the 2018 Water Campaign. The team will use their grant funding to install an additional hydration station on campus for students to refill reusable water bottles.

The Grand View team continued campaigning for a district ban on single-use water bottles during the 2019 Waste Campaign. Grand View was the first school that Grades of Green mentored in 2010, and continues to expand their environmental advocacy efforts.

KATHERINE JOHNSON STEM ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL (KJS) (LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA)

- **Water Campaign Issue:**

The student team of 32 middle schoolers at KJS were concerned about the amount of water that



Katherine Johnson
STEM Academy

people in their community waste each day at home, especially when waiting for their shower water to heat up. They researched the effects of drought and water scarcity in their region, which results in wild fires with devastating effects. They realized that they needed to teach others what they had learned about the importance of water conservation.

- **Solution:** KJS students decided to make a video to teach their peers and school families about the effects of drought on their community and easy things everyone can do daily to conserve water at home and at school.
- **Call to Action:** The KJS green team students called on their community to reduce their use of water by using a bucket to collect shower water while it is warming up and reuse that water for washing dishes or watering plants. They shared the video with a local elementary school and developed a contest to challenge their peers to reduce water usage and water waste.

Dalia, a former Grades of Green Youth Corps student, founded the Water Campaign team at KJS to continue her efforts as a young environmentalist. KJS was a Finalist in the 2018 Fall Water Campaign, and Dalia wrote a guest blog post on the National Association for Environmental Education (NAEE) about the project she led ([read it here](#)). KJS hopes to create a “Safe Water: One Bucket a Time” bucket along with a competition with prizes for the five families who saved and reused the most of water.

WATER CAMPAIGN PROGRAM MEDIA MENTIONS

102.7 KIIS FM

Total Reach: 2.8 million



Grades of Green is currently working on a Global Water Challenge to help schools across the globe conserve water... and about half of the schools represented in this global movement are from Los Angeles. Grades of Green brings awareness to the global water crisis as well. Collectively, the schools have already conserved 16 millions gallons of water! Grades of Green has an array of Activities that will help protect the environment today while instilling environmental values in students for years to come.

Emily Gee

County of Los Angeles



NEWS RELEASE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Contact: Gary Gero, Chief Sustainability Officer and Green Leadership Awards Program Chair (GGero@ceo.lacounty.gov or 213-974-1160) or Kristen Pawling, Sustainability Program Director (KPawling@ceo.lacounty.gov or 213-974-2662).

April 18, 2019

'Green Leaders' to be Recognized by County Supervisors



As part of its long-standing commitment to innovative efforts that support adoption of renewable energy and preserve air and water quality, the Board of Supervisors will present the 11th annual Green Leadership Awards on Tuesday, April 23 at their regularly scheduled meeting.

The awards recognize outstanding efforts by individuals, cities, businesses and public agencies that raise the bar in improving the County's environmental sustainability through water conservation, expansion of urban forestry, infrastructure improvements, development and promotion of non-motorized transportation, and programs and initiatives that reduce reliance on fossil fuels and sustain the region's rich biodiversity.

North American Association for Environmental Education

Total Reach: 30,500



[TAP into Morristown](#)

Total Reach: 1 million



[Modern Conservationist](#)

Total Reach: 3,100+



Plus many more mentions in local school district and city council newsletters, such as [Councilmember Brandon Todd Ward 4 Weekly](#)

THANK YOU

2018 WATER CAMPAIGN SPONSORS



SANITATION DISTRICTS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY



Long Beach Water
Exceptional Water • Exceptional Service



Los Angeles
County
4th District



Los Angeles
County
3rd District



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INFOGRAPHIC

WATER



CAMPAIGN

IMPACT 2018

Grades of Green's fall 2018 Water Campaign was a semester-long virtual program providing free mentorship and resources to empower student Campaign Teams to research local water issues and create innovative solutions to water issues.

530 ECO LEADERS

Formed 51 Campaign Teams in schools and community groups across the globe to create water conservation and water quality solutions in their communities.

37 CITIES

Involved in student-led Water Campaign movements

8 COUNTRIES

Represented in the Water Campaign, including the United States, Rome, Indonesia, Kenya and Honduras.

4,200 COMMUNITY MEMBERS & LEADERS EDUCATED

By student presentations advocating for their water solutions at city council meetings, community events, school assemblies and more.

9,761,237 GALLONS OF WATER SAVED

Through student water solutions and daily habit changes such as capturing greywater, reducing stormwater runoff, fixing leaks, planting and mulching native gardens and eating meatless meals.

= 15 OLYMPIC SWIMMING POOLS

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

The Boeing Company | Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County | Kings Care Foundation | LAcademy
Subaru Pacific | Long Beach Water Department
Klean Kanteen | Continental Development
Downtown Manhattan Beach Business and Professional Association | 5 Gyres | JUST Water | Sierra Club | DigDeep

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