

22  
23

Impact Report

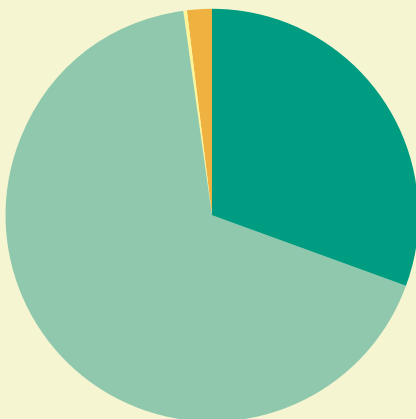


**Grades of Green's** innovative pathway of programming fully supports students of all ages and backgrounds worldwide on their journey to become passionate environmental leaders of the future.

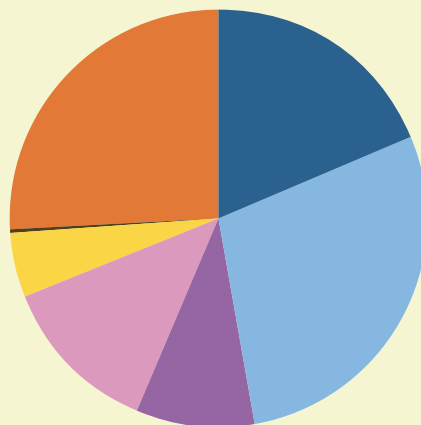
Grades of Green's 5 programs are free for students, teachers, schools, districts and parents with the following objectives:

- Provide accessible, engaging, educational and impactful environmental project-based programs for students in every grade level
- Develop and implement programs to be scalable, sustainable, equitable and measurable
- Build and empower environmental changemakers and leaders to initiate and inspire local communities to make long-lasting impacts
- Bring students from around the globe together to work toward transformative solutions
- Award Eco-Grants to expand students' ongoing impact
- Recognize hardworking educators with much-deserved stipends

**STUDENT ECO-LEADERS**  
Demographics



Male.....30.7%  
 Female.....67.3%  
 Non-binary.....0.2%  
 Prefer to not disclose.....1.8%



African/Black/African American...18.88%  
 Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander....28.51%  
 Hispanic/Latino (Non-White) .....9.04%  
 White .....12.65%  
 Prefer to not disclose.....5.02%  
 Other .....0.20%  
 Two or More Races .....25.70%

## TOTAL Metrics:

**1,761**

Eco-Leaders

**818,898**

Press & Media

**51,008**

Community Members Educated

**44,499**

Students Reached

**124,543.8**

Waste Diverted (lbs)

**81,133.4**

Waste Collected (lbs)

**17,293.4**

Food Waste Diverted (lbs)

**1,112**

Water Saved (gallons)

**10,133**

Trees Planted

**61**

Land Preserved (acres)

**599,917.6**

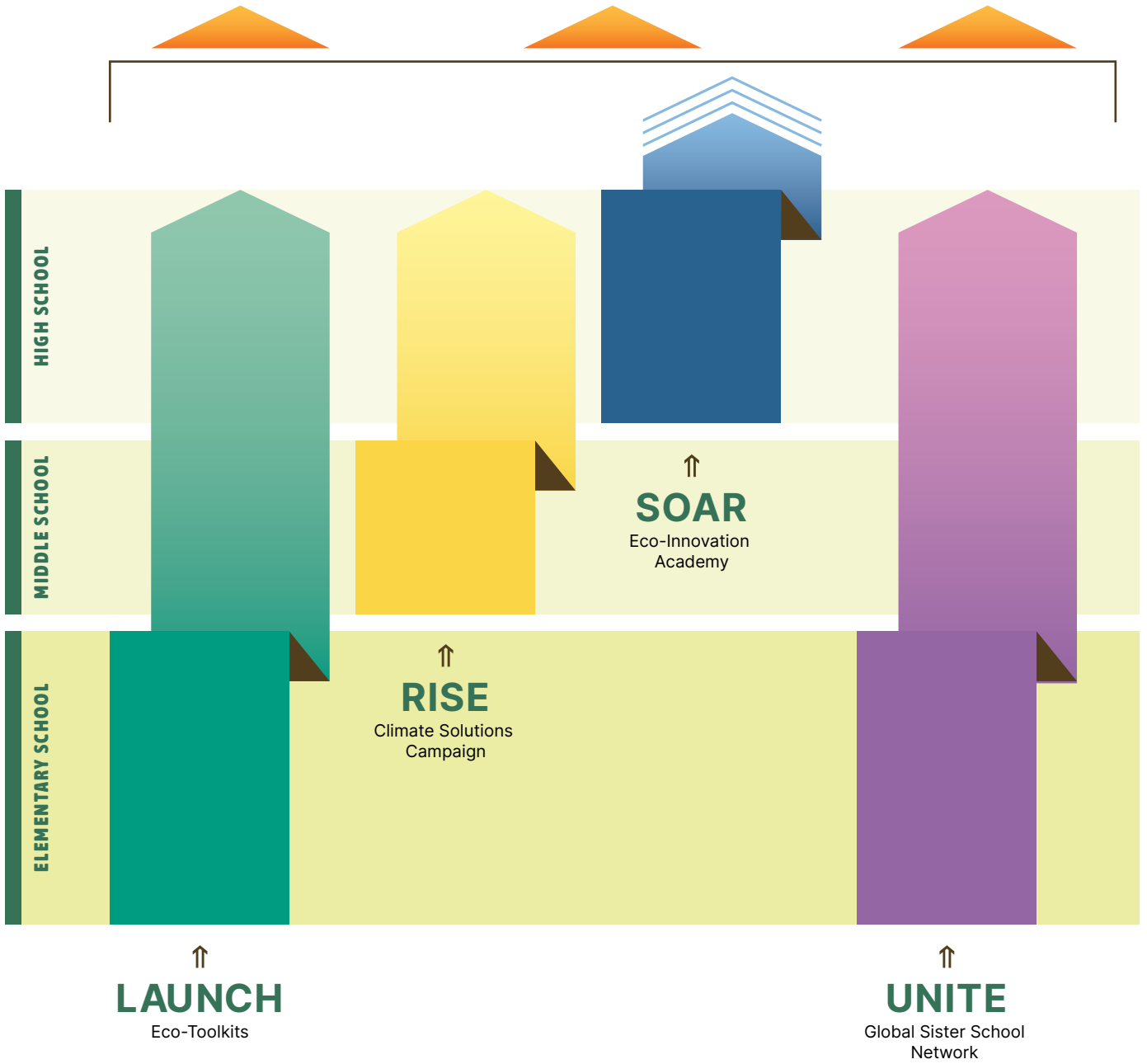
CO<sub>2</sub> Diverted (lbs)

**1,450,284**

CO<sub>2</sub> Sequestered (lbs)

# UPLIFT

School District  
Partnerships



## LAUNCH

Eco-Toolkits

### STUDENT ECO-LEADERS (Received Consent and Permission Form)

**64%**

Eco-Leaders  
in the US

**54%**

Eco-Leaders  
in California

**36%**

Eco-Leaders  
International



# UPLIFT

## School District Partnerships

**The UPLIFT School District Partnership fosters sustainability in K-12 districts through Grades of Green's student-led programs.**

Aligned with district objectives, initiatives like LAUNCH, RISE, SOAR, and UNITE are coordinated by UPLIFT to achieve eco-friendly goals. UPLIFT recruits, supports, and collaborates with schools, communities, and industries. The program tailors its approach, focusing on California's waste laws and SB 1383 compliance. UPLIFT also prioritizes expansion and supports SB 535 Historically Disadvantaged Communities, in line with environmental justice goals.

Oak Street Elementary receiving the SparQ Grant Enlightened by LumenSparQ



**"Loved how we were able to donate food instead of waste it."**

Ashley Rios

"Things that we liked about Grades of Green Programs was the teamwork that was involved and getting to understand where we should put our food."

Katelyn Morales





Dawnyell Goosby from Inglewood GATE

## GATE Academy

Grades of Green's partnership with the Inglewood Unified School District's (IUSD) Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program brings together students from multiple schools to collaborate on projects addressing environmental issues in their community. Throughout the school year, students from ten different schools utilized the Trash Free Lunch, Campus Food Rescue, and Lunch Time Sorting LAUNCH Eco-Toolkits to assist their schools in addressing California's Organics Bill (SB 1383). On June 3, 2023, IUSD held their annual GATE Academy Culmination Event, where students from 1st to 12th grade presented the environmental projects they have been working on throughout the school year. Thanks to the generosity of John Umekubo and his wife Katya De los Rios, co-founders of LumenSparQ, we were able to exclusively reward a \$1,000 grant to Oak Street Elementary for their Lunchtime Sorting Project.



Students from STEAM Academy presenting their eco-projects



"I learned tons and tons of waste gets thrown into landfills every year even though you can get rid of that waste in more eco-friendly ways."

**Chylier Williams**





# LAUNCH

## Eco-Toolkits

**LAUNCH Eco-Toolkits educate and empower educators and students to implement effective eco-projects creating positive impacts in their schools and communities.**

40 NGSS-aligned toolkits on various climate topics are accessible online and include free resources, educational materials, action instructions, reflection questions, worksheets, and provide the link between climate issues and environmental injustices. This year, the “Leaferboard” was introduced, creating friendly competition among participants and providing the most impactful teacher or student on the Leaferboard a stipend. Tabitha Goins, an elementary school custodian, was awarded the most impactful stipend for her outstanding work with her team of 250 students. Looking ahead, LAUNCH plans to translate all toolkits into Spanish and create printable PDF versions for enhanced accessibility.

9  
Teachers Receiving  
Stipends

\$4,250

Overall Stipend  
amount

41

Total Number of Toolkits  
on Website

## LAUNCH Metrics:

1,314

Eco-Leaders

3,435

Students Reached

3,042.5

Waste Diverted (lbs)

875.9

Waste Collected (lbs)

466.2

Food Waste Diverted (lbs)

1,372

Trees Planted

11,281.81

CO<sub>2</sub> Diverted (lbs)

181,104

CO<sub>2</sub> Sequestered (lbs)



Some of Tabitha's  
students participating in  
a LAUNCH Eco-Toolkit



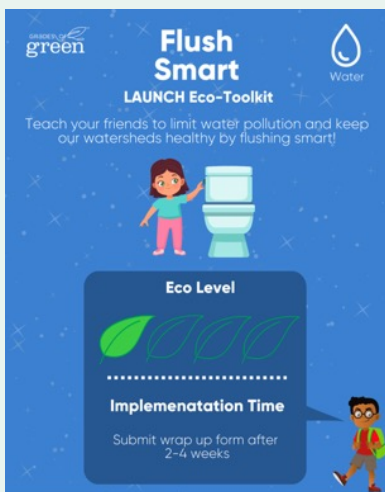
## Rosewood STEM

Rosewood STEM Magnet of Urban Planning and Urban Design completed four LAUNCH Eco-Toolkits this year including “How to Form a Green Team”, “Campus Composting”, “Classroom Recycling”, and “Earth Week Daily Activities”

**“It is a great introduction lesson for students to collaborate, especially at the beginning of the year. I introduce all programs to students so they can start the team and a specific project at the same time. This way, they explored various ideas with the team members and shared ideas between groups.”**

Olivia Lam, Educator from Rosewood STEM In Los Angeles, CA

Rosewood STEM students collaborating on one of our Eco-Toolkits



## Responsible Flushing Alliance

Through the Los Angeles Sanitation Districts, Grades of Green was thrilled to meet the Responsible Flushing Alliance (RFA), our partner and funder for one of Grades of Green's newest toolkits: Flush Smart to Protect Your Watershed. This toolkit emphasizes the importance of knowing what is suitable to flush down our toilets and drains in a kid-friendly manner. With the support of RFA, we were able to make this toolkit accessible to all by translating it into Spanish and creating a printable PDF version for those who may not have consistent internet access.



“It is a good education for the students. And they learned about the dangers of plastic pollution and plastic and brand audits. They thought about ideas to use less plastic and then did a follow up activity to see how much plastic each students uses each week.”

Mr. Ame (Educator) on the Waste Audit Toolkit, Zanzibar, Tanzania

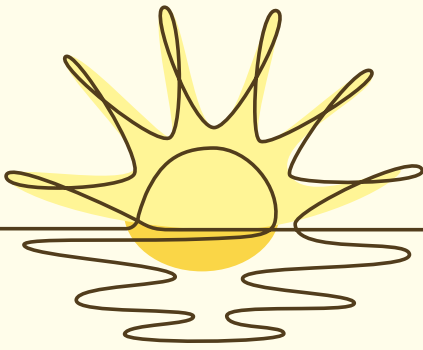
“Students were able to create their own club and work as a unit. The students will continue this project throughout the school year and beyond.”

Hakima K. (Educator) on the Adopt a Spot Toolkit, Inglewood, CA

“The toolkit was educational to teach students that it is possible to have a Trash Free Lunch from home and it brought a lot of attention to reusable water bottles and the refill machines at school. It also encouraged us to see what items were polluting the most: water bottles, utensils, snack packages, etc.”

Sheri Sather, Parent lead, Carlsbad, CA





# RISE

## Climate Solutions Campaign

**The RISE Climate Solution Campaign, with personalized mentorship from Grades of Green advisors, empowers and inspires student teams through a guided, year-long program to create lasting environmental impacts in their communities.**

Students choose one of five climate crisis topics to explore, identify community needs, create a plan, and take action. Projects are evaluated based on impacts and metrics, with top teams receiving Eco-Grants to further their solutions. In addition to learning about environmental issues and climate change, participants also gain leadership and advocacy skills. Environmental justice is explored through guidebooks, reflection questions, guest speakers, and webinars, fostering equitable environmental solutions.



“We were able to connect with hundreds of students and make them feel passionate about climate issues. Hearing young students talk about climate issues brought a smile to all of our faces, and seeing them enthusiastic about helping out with composting was even better.”  
Cordelia O.

“The achievement that we are most proud of is building awareness of climate solutions and optimism for the future, raising funds for Kiss the Ground for their initiative, and inspiring people to take action. We were also very proud and excited that we had the amazing opportunity to talk to Phil McGrath and John D.Lui. We hope that this connection will allow us to help out in the future and continue having an influence and making positive changes for our communities and the planet.”  
Alexandra W.



## RISE Metrics:

**426**

Eco-Leaders

**818,899**

Press & Media

**51,008**

Community Members  
Educated

**41,064**

Students Reached

**121,501.25**

Waste Diverted (lbs)

**80,257.5**

Waste Collected (lbs)

**16,827.2**

Food Waste Diverted (lbs)

**1,112**

Water Saved (gallons)

**8,761**

Trees Planted

**61**

Land Preserved (acres)

**588,635.8**

CO<sub>2</sub> Diverted (lbs)

**1,269,180**

CO<sub>2</sub> Sequestered (lbs)

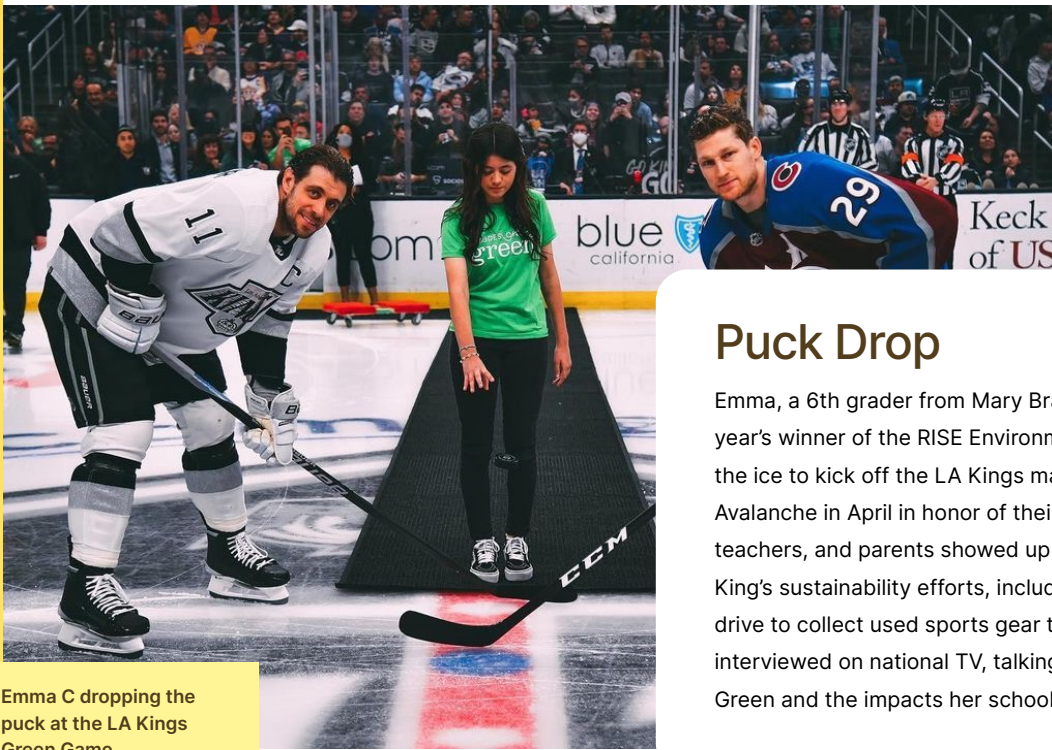
**10**

Total # of Stipends

**\$5,000**

Total \$ Amount of Stipends

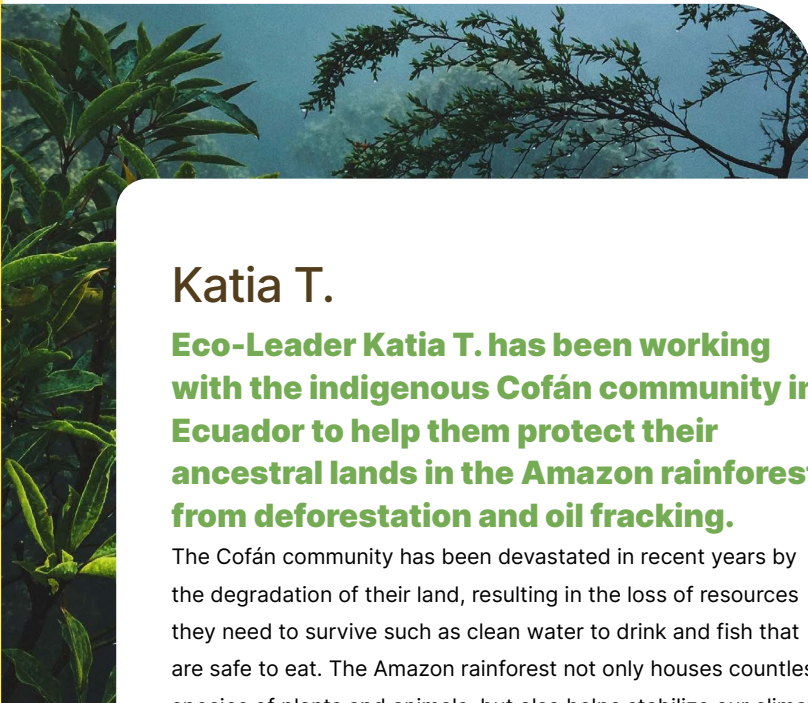




Emma C dropping the puck at the LA Kings Green Game

## Puck Drop

Emma, a 6th grader from Mary Bragg Elementary who were this year's winner of the RISE Environmental Impact Grand Prize — hit the ice to kick off the LA Kings matchup against the Colorado Avalanche in April in honor of their Green Game. Students, teachers, and parents showed up to support Emma and the LA King's sustainability efforts, including participating in an equipment drive to collect used sports gear to be recycled. Emma was also interviewed on national TV, talking about her project with Grades of Green and the impacts her school has made for the environment.



## Katia T.

**Eco-Leader Katia T. has been working with the indigenous Cofán community in Ecuador to help them protect their ancestral lands in the Amazon rainforest from deforestation and oil fracking.**

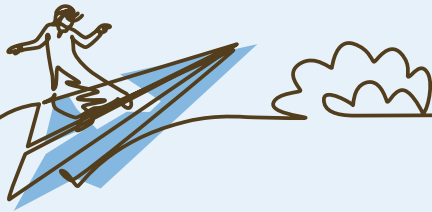
The Cofán community has been devastated in recent years by the degradation of their land, resulting in the loss of resources they need to survive such as clean water to drink and fish that are safe to eat. The Amazon rainforest not only houses countless species of plants and animals, but also helps stabilize our climate. Katia has been working with the youth of the Cofán community to bring awareness to their struggles.



Nkeng Joel and Team University of Buea

## Nkeng Joel

Nkeng Joel from Buea, Cameroon led the way for Earth Month with an impressive initiative. This year, Nkeng is spearheading a community clean-up at Downbeach in Limbe, Cameroon. Not only did he collect waste, but Nkeng and his team utilized waste to create eco-bricks, which were then used to construct schools in their community. Nkeng formed partnerships, wrote letters to the local delegation, hosted webinars, and even conducted a media tour across Buea to raise awareness. As a result of his hard work, his project has garnered significant attention, being featured in local press, television, and various media outlets.



# SOAR

## Eco-Innovation Academy

**SOAR Eco-Innovation Academy is a forward-thinking program that empowers high school students to lead with an environmental mindset.** Throughout SOAR, students will have the opportunity to realize their environmental potential by exploring a variety of industries and learning about sustainable practices from corporations, organizations, and civic entities. With mentorship from Grades of Green staff and corporate partners, students collaborate on developing better environmental standards for industries today and for generations to come. By participating in SOAR Eco-Innovation Academy, students emerge from the program with a comprehensive understanding of global environmental issues through a corporate lens. This experience prepares students to enter college or the workforce with diverse, sustainable, and innovative perspectives.

## SOAR Metrics:

**21**

Total Students Who Completed the Program

**8**

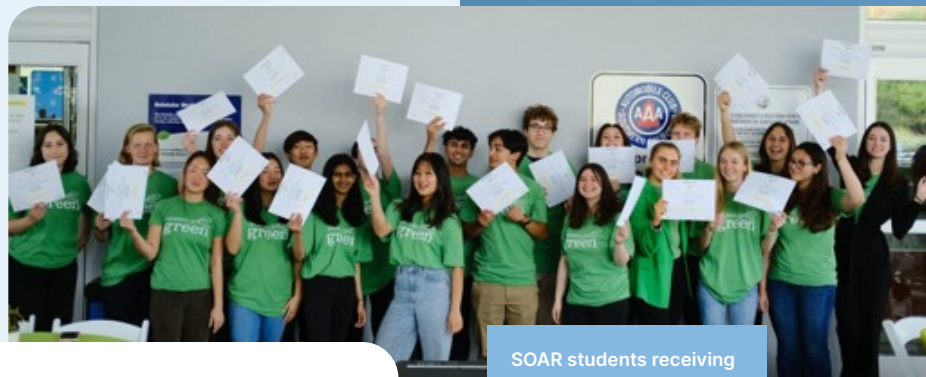
Schools Represented

**7**

Sponsors Involved

**5**

Tours Participated In (USGBC-LA, Veggie Grill, Lazy Acres, Paneros Eco-Fashion, West Basin)



SOAR students receiving their awards of completion at our annual culmination event, Sustain-a-thon, hosted by LAcarGUY

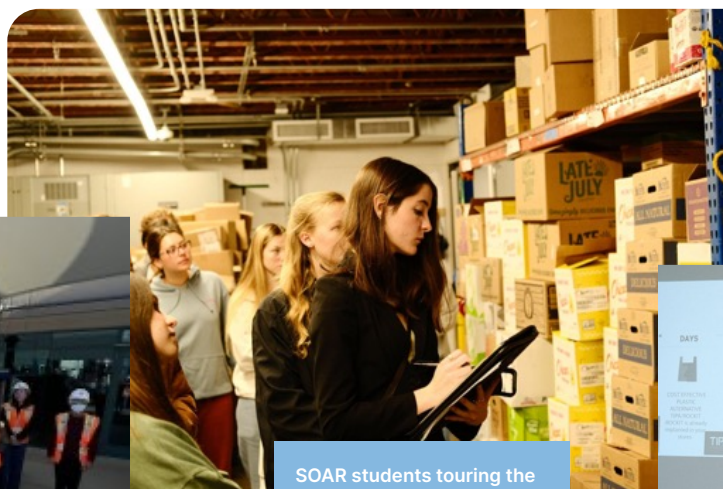
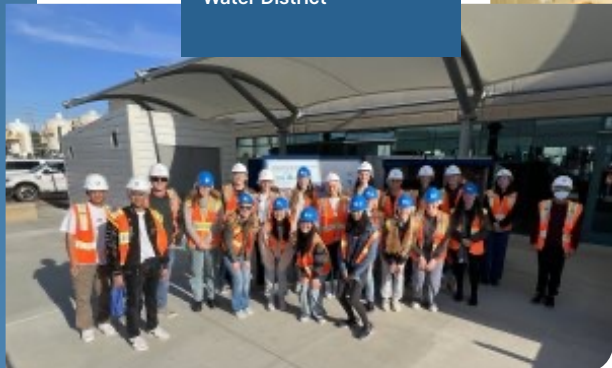


“Having participated in the most recent SOAR Eco-Innovation Academy, I was able to learn a lot about many industries and from companies within the industries themselves about how they commit to sustainability in their work, as well as how they can improve. SOAR also helped me further develop and utilize my critical thinking, creativity, and leadership skills.”

**Nathan Luk**, South High School



SOAR students touring the West Basin Municipal Water District



SOAR students touring the Lazy Acres facilities



SOAR students presenting their project about Lazy Acres at Sustain-a-thon hosted at Subaru Pacific with LAcarGUY

## SOAR Students Take Flight with Grades of Green Corporate Partners



**VEGGIE GRILL:** T.K. Pillan, Veggie Grill's CEO, met with SOAR students, sharing his journey, entrepreneurial tips, and plant-based delights.



**LAZY ACRES MARKETS:** This local market supports healthy living and community. Students explored the sustainable store, trying nutritious treats.



**WEST BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT:** Students toured a reclaimed-water facility, discovering water purification.



**PANEROS CLOTHING:** SOAR students joined Paneros Clothing's founders, Lauren DeCarli-Till and Eric Till, for insights into eco-friendly fashion, combatting fast fashion's drawbacks, and crafting sustainable attire.



**SUBARU PACIFIC**, a dealership of LAcarGUY, is one of our longtime donors who helps fuel our programs to inspire students around the globe to lead environmental action. This year, they were gracious to host our annual culmination event for SOAR at Subaru Pacific. With their support, students and their families came together to celebrate their impactful sustainability plans created throughout the school year.



"I really enjoyed the Lazy Acres tour because I loved learning about all of the awesome things they were doing to make the company eco-friendly, and I loved learning about the eco-friendly farms and their farming techniques that Lazy Acres was working with."

**Emma**, West High School

"The SOAR program was a great learning opportunity and experience. I became very aware of the environmental issues within our world and became familiar with the possible solutions that could increase our overall sustainability."

**Kate**, Mira Costa High School





# UNITE

## Global Sister School Network

**UNITE is a new international program that aims to connect students from across the world.** In addition to collaborating on environmental projects, students meet virtually to learn about each others' cultures and humanitarian values. This year, UNITE initiated sister school partnerships between four schools. Through partnerships with This Little Light Africa and Sahel International Support Foundation, three schools in Nigeria joined forces with Grades of Green RISE students in the United States. Furthermore, we welcomed a new country to UNITE, Hillcrest High School in South Africa, who partnered with our Mira Costa Green Team in Manhattan Beach, California!

### UNITE Metrics:

**133**

Eco-Leaders

**1,027**

Students Reached

**184**

Waste Collected (lbs)

**13**

Trees Planted

**1,584**

CO<sub>2</sub> Sequestered (lbs)

**530**

CO<sub>2</sub> Diverted (lbs)



Map of Sister School Locations



Isaac Komolafe with students from Mary Bragg receiving an award



## Sister Schools

This year, all of the four sister schools in Nigeria and South Africa took part in Grades of Green's programs. JSS Tudunwada, Wuse Zone 2, and GSS Tudunwada participated in LAUNCH by creating green teams, adopting spots to keep clean, and planting trees. Hillcrest High School in South Africa took part in our RISE Climate Solutions Campaign to share education on the importance of recycling and composting throughout their school.



"Something I would like to do next semester is become a green team leader. I would love to lead projects and get my own team to do a fundraiser, earn money, donate, and make funds to purchase things for our friends in Nigeria. Cause I love the idea of helping people. It would give me such a good feeling."

**Matthew** from Mary Bragg Elementary



# Eco-Grants

In our commitment to empower the environmental endeavors of our students, we proudly awarded Eco-Grants to our teams that have made the greatest impact. With the generous support of LAcarGUY, our grants range from \$250 to \$1,000 and serve as a catalyst for sustainable projects. This year, we celebrated the outstanding achievements of student teams worldwide by awarding 10 Eco-Grants, totaling an impressive \$5,000. Moreover, we recognized the exceptional efforts of four Honorary Award winners who have demonstrated remarkable dedication to sustainability and environmental stewardship. From Cameroon to California, India to New York, Grades of Green stands firmly behind students' aspirations for a more sustainable future.



Delve into the captivating stories of our Eco-Grant winners fueled by LAcarGUY, and explore the profound environmental impact they have made with their projects!



## LAcarGUY International Changemaker Grand Winner \$1,000

Matungu Community Development Charity  
NAIROBI, KENYA

Addressing large-scale issues of waste in their community, Team MCDC reduced 5,000 kgs of waste from the environment and educated students in local schools and across social media platforms. This ambitious team established 4 micro-gardens with the ability to feed up to 200 people monthly, while also planting 3000 trees. Team MCDC also furthered their efforts by processing 5,000 kgs of organic fertilizer, which were used to plant crops and indigenous trees.

"We are overwhelmed with joy and happiness after learning that we are among the winners of the Eco-Grant this year. Thanks again for your kind generosity and recognizing and honoring our work. We are taking this seriously and we promise that we shall continue working and pushing for a better and green environment in future."

Eunita A - Matungu Community Development Charity



## Environmental Impact Grand Prize \$1,000

Mary Bragg Green Team  
CERRITOS, CA

The students at Mary Bragg Elementary School took on the ambitious feat of addressing multiple topics of the Climate Solutions Campaign. They managed sorting stations on their school campus, planted trees, held an E-Waste drive, encouraged alternative forms of transportation, participated in beach clean-ups, and raised money for students in Africa. Mary Bragg also worked with a school in Nigeria, JSS Tudunwada, to learn more about their culture while fundraising money to beautify their community. They also were the recipients of the EPA Presidential Environmental Youth Award and the California Green Ribbon School Award.

"I have recommended Grades of Green to anyone who will listen. I love working so closely with our advisors who are AMAZING! They really know how to interact with young ones."

Kerry - Mary Bragg Green Team



\$500

### Green Campus Leaders Award The Pear Tree Foundation

LA CRESCENTA, CA

This enthusiastic team set up composting stations across 3 elementary schools, in addition to their own campus. They also created an animated video to educate viewers on composting on school campuses.



\$500

### Green Thumb Award Agoura High School

AGOURA HILLS, CA

The Agoura High School team educated over 3,000 students about regenerative gardening and built an edible garden on their campus. They connected with local farmers to promote organic and regenerative farming methods while raising \$100 for the Kiss the Ground organization.



\$250

### Planet Protector Award For the Love of Frogs

CARLSBAD, CA

Justin S. has worked diligently to save acres of the Ecuadorian rainforest by participating in the Reserva letter campaign. He has collected over 1,500 letters and held a Raffle for the Rainforest that encouraged his classmates to join his mission.



\$500

### Habitat Heroes Award Kishoka Youth Organization

MOMBASA, KENYA

The Kishoka Team educated their community on the impacts of climate change. They planted 2,500 mangrove trees and collected waste, which they reused to construct buildings in their community.



\$250

### Eco-Influencer Award Team University of Buea

BUEA, CAMEROON

Team University of Buea recovered 4.5 kgs of waste and educated their community members on the impacts of waste. Through appearances on national television, this driven team reached audiences of over 30,000 people.



\$250

### Rookie of the Year Award Akili STEMARTS Academy

KISUMU, KENYA

The students at Akili STEMarts Academy learned vertical gardening methods to build gardens at their homes and school. This ambitious team used composting to reduce waste in their community while improving soil quality and crop yields.



\$500

### Community Rubbish Reducers Malezi Community Center

NAIROBI, KENYA

The Malezi Community Center educated over 1,800 students amongst 4 different schools about the effects of waste. This passionate team collected over 25,000 kgs of waste and planted 120 trees.



\$250

### Hydration Heroes Award Nathaniel Hawthorne Middle School – The Water Team

BAYSIDE, NY

The students at Nathaniel Hawthorne Middle School purchased reusable water bottles for over 1,300 students and staff and educated their community on plastic waste. In addition, they raised \$300 for students in Africa.

#### HONORARY AWARDS

Student of the Year  
Cordelia O'Rourke  
Crescenta Valley High School  
LA CRESCENTA, CA

Facilitator of the Year  
Kerry Flores  
Mary Bragg Elementary School  
CERRITOS, CA

International Student of the Year  
Ayuk Esame Marie Noel  
Team IRIC  
YAOUNDE, CAMEROON

International Facilitator of the Year  
Dhanam Sivalingam  
PSGR Krishnammel Nursery and  
Primary School  
COIMBATORE, INDIA

# Teacher Stipends

**Grades of Green recognizes and honors exceptional teachers and adult facilitators who engage in our RISE Team Facilitator Training program and utilize LAUNCH Eco-Toolkits in their classrooms.** Their dedication was instrumental in guiding their student teams, ensuring the successful completion of their Eco-Projects. We provided the facilitators and students with enrichment training and hosted numerous one-on-one meetings, ensuring every facilitator and student an excellent program experience. The collaborative efforts of these passionate facilitators, combined with the generosity of our community, continue to empower and inspire the next generation of environmental leaders.

We believe we can build a better future by recognizing the teachers and students who are making a real impact on the environment.

Our program honors those who are going the extra mile to raise awareness, educate, and find solutions for environmental challenges. As part of our initiative, impactful teachers and students receive stipends as a way to show our gratitude for their outstanding projects throughout our various programs. Our stipends are meant to give them the resources they need to keep pushing for better environmental education and innovation. This year, we proudly awarded 19 stipends, totaling \$9,250!

## Kerry Flores

Kerry Flores, an educator from Mary Bragg Elementary in Cerritos, led an outstanding group of students to win the Environmental Impact Grand Prize from Grades of Green. In addition to her work in our RISE Climate Solutions Campaign, Kerry has worked alongside the City of Long Beach and the Los Angeles Kings to spread the message for a cleaner and greener community. With the help of her amazing students, Kerry has greatly contributed to establishing Mary Bragg Elementary as a Green Ribbon School and being awarded the EPA Youth Environmental Award.







## Tabitha Goins

Tabitha, the lead custodian at Dunn's Corner Elementary School in Westerly, Rhode Island, led over 250 students in her LAUNCH Eco-Toolkit implementation on campus. Tabitha's amazing team of students established 33 sorting stations for students to use during lunchtime. Her students also rescued 150 food items to donate, making an impactful difference in the amount of food waste sent to the landfill. Tabitha and her amazing team of students rose to the top of the LAUNCH Leaderboard for the 2022-2023 school year, earning them the top stipend!

## Niel Leonard

Niel Leonard, a science teacher from Manhattan Beach Middle School, led students in the completion of the Community/Beach Clean-Up LAUNCH Eco-Toolkit. Niel and his team of 30 students and their families gathered 1,765 pieces of trash from the Redondo Beach Harbor. Through their dedicated efforts to reduce the amount of trash on their local beach, they have created a thriving, clean environment for living things to flourish.



# 2022-2023 Program Team

## PROGRAM STAFF

**Kim Siehl**  
Executive Director

**Sam Blake**  
Operations Manager

**Brianna Redmond**  
Communications & Social Media

**Anjuli Koentopp**  
LAUNCH Program Manager

**Robyn Murphy**  
RISE Program Manager

**Lauren Muller**  
SOAR Program Manager

**Noelle Bergère**  
UPLIFT Program Manager

**Glenn Arnade**  
Special Projects Manager

**Zarinah Salahuddin**  
Program Associate

## VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS

**Yajaira Figueroa**  
College Corps Fellow

**Kim Nguyen**  
College Corps Fellow

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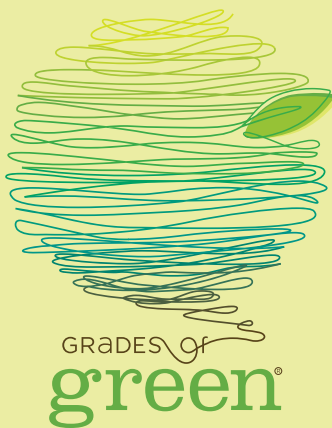
**Dawnyell Goolsby, Ed.D**

**Megan Mauck**

**Gege Schoenfelder**

**Kay Sheth**

**Let's help them make  
a world of difference.**



**DONATE TODAY**

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