



Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

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Press Release

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Sustainability Awards Recognize People, Projects that Advance Smart Growth, Conservation in Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Recognizing individuals, organizations and programs that exemplify smart growth initiatives throughout the state, the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission presented awards for leadership, community planning and conservation at its third annual forum and awards ceremony today.

Winners are both professionals and university students who demonstrate their commitment to smart growth – development or redevelopment that is compact, walkable and takes advantage of existing infrastructure while preserving the rural landscape – in Maryland.

The commission selected a diverse set of award recipients, from the owner of a farm-to-table restaurant, who is helping to keep local farmers in business, to a facade improvement program promoting the architectural significance of older buildings in Ocean City.

The event featured a keynote address by Edward G. Rendell, former governor of Pennsylvania (2003-2011) and mayor of Philadelphia (1992 – 2000), on the importance to America – and Maryland – to rebuild and reinvest in its infrastructure.

Awardees include:

Karl Brendle, served as Economic Development Officer and Director of Community Planning and Business Services for the city of Laurel and as a member of the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

For a lifetime of service and commitment to smart growth

Greater Homewood Community Corporation, Baltimore

For leadership in strengthening neighborhoods in central Baltimore, focusing on lower- and middle-income neighborhoods, improving public schools and facilitating investment, community organizing and leadership development

Spike Gjerde, Owner and Chef of Woodberry Kitchen

For commitment to local farmers and providing them with a reliable market for high-quality products and supporting the rural economy

Farm Alliance of Baltimore City

For helping transform neighborhoods by removing blight and bringing life and purpose back to often-forgotten parts of the community, through increasing food access, creating viable farms, revitalizing vacant lots and building vibrant urban communities

Homewood Community Partners Initiative

For focusing on solutions to urban blight, generational poverty and social struggles by collaborating on projects as varied as erecting homes and businesses on former vacant lots to planning community festivals

Alice Virginia and David W. Fletcher Branch of the Washington County Free Library

For choosing to rebuild and renovate a 50-year-old building in the heart of downtown Hagerstown contributing to the continued success of its revitalization

Ocean City Development Corporation Façade Improvement Program

For reversing the trend to demolish dilapidated structures and convert them into surface parking lots, providing financial assistance and incentives to renovate Ocean City buildings with a focus on their public face

Evergreen Heritage Center

For showcasing best practices in environmental conservation and providing an example of how to live off the land while protecting it for future generations, providing environmental education programs, healthy living programs to organizations, experiential learning for college students and workshops on best practices in sustainable agriculture and forestry

A competition for university students called the Sustainable Growth Challenge focused on Maryland's future leaders.

First prize went to a team of Morgan State University Landscape Architecture Program students who presented "Rethinking Street Typology for Social Equity, Environmental Stewardship and Economic Revitalization: A design intervention in the small-town historic context of Easton," a comprehensive approach to even out social disparities in a community in Easton that lags behind the city's general prosperity.

Second prize honors went to a team from Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville Department of Geography program who presented "The WALL: A Watershed Analysis Model on a Local Level," a watershed analysis model.

Johns Hopkins University's Environment, Energy, Sustainability & Health Institute team took third prize for "Wilson Park Aquaponics," a project that addresses a food desert area of Baltimore City.

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