



# MASSACHUSETTS ENVIROTHON

June 15, 2023

Chris Lowe, Principal  
Millbury Junior Senior High School  
12 Martin Street  
Millbury MA 01527

Dear Principal Lowe,

**Congratulations to the Millbury Junior Senior High School Environmental Council for their hard work and success at the 2023 Massachusetts Envirothon!** In addition to participating in the competition, the team was one of 5 teams across the state completing requirements for the Mass Envirothon [Community Engagement Award](#) for their work on the 2023 [Current Issue Climate Change in Your Community](#).

2023 participating team members – all from Millbury – included:

Sophia Burrowes  
Peyton Perry  
Emma McRae  
Emily Melo  
Savannah Gonzalez

The team was coached by Millbury teachers Terry Hamilton and P.J. McQuade.

**The Mass Envirothon Community Engagement Award** recognizes teams who engage in thorough and wide-ranging community investigations in preparation for their Current Issue presentation AND THEN take this new knowledge and put it to work in an action project in their community. Participating teams' work exemplifies the integration of science and civic knowledge, connections, and skills that is so critical for addressing environmental issues in a democratic society.

Qualifying for this award in 2023 required teams to conduct in-person interviews, visit local sites with significance for climate issues, comb media sources, and research pending state legislation relevant to climate change. Documentation of teams' work – and reflection on what they found – is collected on the [Research and Action Checklist](#). In addition to documenting their research, Envirothon Community Award teams participate in a zoom interview that offers the chance for a wider public to learn about the teams' work and perspectives.

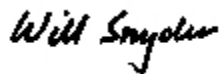
The award aims to recognize high school youth (and their advisors) who meet the goal of student-led civic engagement under the Massachusetts 2018 [Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement](#).

**What they did:** – The Environmental Council's research included investigations of diverse climate topics, from energy conservation to community gardens to flooding problems to plans for new housing in town. Their action, currently still in the planning stages, includes advocating for changing the motion sensors in the school to reduce the time that lights stay on when there is no activity in the room AND setting up a composting program for the schools that will provide a model for a composting program for the whole community.

Envirothon teams gain strong environmental knowledge and community connections through their research and action experiences. They develop teamwork, stewardship values, and skills for civic engagement. They show that they are capable of college level work and that they can make a real contribution to their communities. Their coaches deserve special commendation for the time and care they put into working with the team.

Thank you for your support of the Millbury Council and their coaches! More about the Envirothon can be found at <https://www.massenvirothon.org>. More documentation of the Millbury team's work can be found at <https://massenvirothon.org/2023-community-engagement-awards/>. I can be reached at [wsnyder@umass.edu](mailto:wsnyder@umass.edu).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Will Snyder". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Will" and last name "Snyder" clearly legible.

Will Snyder  
Massachusetts Envirothon Steering Committee

cc: Greg Myers, Superintendent  
Terry Hamilton, Envirothon Coach  
P.J. McQuade, Envirothon Coach  
Representative Paul Frost  
Senator Michael Moore  
Melissa McKeon, Millbury Sutton Chronicle  
Rebecca Tepper, Massachusetts Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs  
Stephanie Cooper, Undersecretary for Environment, Massachusetts EEA