June 15, 2023

Kathleen Bouchard, Principal
Minuteman Technical High School
758 Marrett Road
Lexington MA 02421

Dear Dr. Bouchard,

Congratulations to the Minuteman Technical High School Envirothon Team 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 Arlington – included:
> Alex Nikolaev
> Felix Nelson
> Nicky Mandola
> Lucas Marsden

The team was coached by Minuteman teacher Sarah Cammer.

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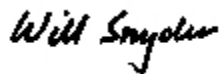
The award aims to recognize high school youth (and their advisors) who meet Massachusetts 2018 Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement goal of student-led civic engagement.

What they did: This year's Envirothon team focused particularly on natural resource conservation on sites in the town of Bolton, and work related to the town's Municipal Vulnerabilities Preparedness planning. For their action project, the team used their technical natural resource expertise (including ArcGIS and I-tree) to help the Bolton Conservation Commission and other local organizations to create a Climate Resilience Plan for Forbush Mills Field, which includes athletic fields adjacent to wetlands. The team's work had a surprising intergenerational angle: they found that the Bolton Council on Aging was a powerful, positive force for climate policy in town, since these seniors hold important positions in the community and understand what needs to happen in order for change to occur.

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 Minuteman team and their coach! More about the Envirothon can be found at **https://www.massenvirothon.org**. More documentation of the Minuteman team's work can be found at **https://massenvirothon.org/2023-community-engagement-awards/**. I can be reached at **wsnyder@umass.edu**.

Sincerely,

Will Snyder

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Massachusetts Envirothon Steering Committee

cc: Kevin Mahoney, Superintendent
        Sarah Cammer, Envirothon Coach
        Rebecca Bucciaglia, Town of Bolton Conservation Commission
        Representative Sean Garballey
        Senator Cindy F. Friedman
        Arlington Community Media
        Rebecca Tepper, Massachusetts Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
        Stephanie Cooper, Undersecretary for Environment, Massachusetts EEA