



MASSACHUSETTS ENVIROTHON

June 18, 2024

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

Dear Principal Bouchard,

Congratulations to the Minuteman Technical High School Envirothon Team for their hard work and success at the 2024 Massachusetts Envirothon! In addition to participating in the competition, the team was one of 3 teams across the state completing requirements for the Mass Envirothon [Community Engagement Award](#) for their work on the 2024 [Current Issue](#) *Clean Energy for a Sustainable Future*.

2024 participating team members were:

Lucas Marsden	Arlington
Alex Evans	Winchendon
George O'Brien	Lexington
Alan Cross-Donnet	Arlington
Felix Nelson	Arlington

The team was coached by Minuteman instructor Dr. 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 and skills, and community connections, that are critical for addressing environmental issues in a democratic society. Teams engage in the kind of student-led civic activity envisioned in the Massachusetts 2018 [Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement](#).

Qualifying for this award in 2024 required teams to become familiar with the transition to sustainable energy sources as it is occurring in their communities. They conducted in-person interviews, visited project sites, investigated and made recommendations for web resources and resource organizations, and researched pending state legislation relevant to clean energy. Documentation of teams' work – and reflection on what they found – was collected using the [Research and Action Checklist](#). In addition to documenting their efforts, 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.

What they did: In their research, the Minuteman team discovered a variety of projects and organizations that are facilitating the energy transition, empowering citizens and communities to take an active role in the change. As they looked at their own school's parking lot, they saw an opportunity, and focused their efforts on a proposal to mount solar panels over the school's parking lots to provide both power and shading. In preparing the proposal they had to get acquainted with technical and design details, but even more, they had to participate in the challenging processes for decision-making and financing that make

public projects possible. They found that there is not universal support for how far and how fast change should happen! They received support from their school's Director of Operations, Michelle Resendes, as they developed the specific elements of the proposal. State representative Sean Garballey helped them see how a project like this offers an opportunity to bring the public up to speed to support the energy transition. The proposal still has several steps to go before final approval.

Documentation of the Minuteman team's work can be found at the [2024 Community Engagement Awards](#) webpage.

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 teams.

Thank you for your support of the Minuteman team and their coach! More about the Envirothon can be found at <https://www.massenvirothon.org>.

Sincerely,



Will Snyder
Massachusetts Envirothon Steering Committee
wsnyder@umass.edu

cc: Kathleen Bouchard, Principal
Kevin McCarthy, Superintendent
Sarah Cammer, Envirothon coach
Anthony Chiarello, Director of Teaching and Learning
Michelle Resendes, Director of Operations
Representative Sean Garballey
Representative David Rogers
Senator Cindy Friedman
Rebecca Tepper, Massachusetts Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Stephanie Cooper, Undersecretary for Environment, Massachusetts EEA