



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

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**Five Connecticut Leaders Recognized for Innovative Efforts
to Address Climate Change**

Award recipients reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over 21,140 tons

The Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change (GSC) today honored five individuals and organizations that have made great strides in addressing global climate change.

"The five award winners being honored today are taking strong action - each in their own way - to address one of the most pressing environmental issues of our time," said Governor M. Jodi Rell. "The range of recipients - from a major company to a municipality to individual adults and young students - shows that there is a role for everyone to play in this effort. With the help of today's award winners and many other concerned people across our state, we will continue to serve as a national leader in combating climate change."

In presenting the awards at a ceremony at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Gina McCarthy, Chair of the GSC on Climate Change said, "There are many, many individuals and organizations in Connecticut working with great dedication to address global climate change. These people show us that there are simple solutions to this overwhelming issue and that each of us can make a difference. We are honored to acknowledge these champions and encourage others to follow in their footsteps."

The actions of the five awardees have reduced greenhouse gas emissions in Connecticut by more than 21,000 tons per year, or the equivalent of **taking over 4,500 cars off the road for a year**. The **2006 award winners** are:

- **Sandy Fry of the Capitol Region Council of Governments** for creating the Harford area's "Bike to Work" initiative. The initiative promotes bicycling as a viable form of transportation and promotes and supports bicycle commuting. Participation has increased approximately 16% each year since the program began in 2000, building to 340 bicycle commuters in 2005. Commuters who switch from motor vehicles to bicycles eliminate greenhouse gas pollution from their commutes.
- **Chad Vincente, a 7th-grade student at Mansfield Middle School**, for encouraging fellow students, families, town employees, and the general public to sign up for Connecticut's clean energy option. With Chad's help, more than 100 Mansfield residents have signed up for clean energy, making the Town eligible for a free solar installation.
- **Pitney Bowes, Inc. of Stamford** for supporting renewable energy equivalent to 10% of Pitney's U.S. and U.K. home office electricity use. In addition, Pitney Bowes is a founding partner of The Green Power Market Development Group, comprised of 12 leading corporations and the World Resources Institute, seeking to develop corporate markets for 1,000 megawatts of new cost competitive clean energy by 2010.
- **The Town of Suffield** for its action and commitment to preserve forest and agricultural lands. The Town's 10-year goal is to preserve 55% of residentially zoned land (50% of the town). Since 2001 the Town has preserved over 700 acres. Trees and soil on preserved land sequester carbon from the atmosphere, valuably countering greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Colin Bennett from Westbrook** for educating students and the general public about climate change and clean energy. Colin's efforts range from classroom teaching to organizing workshops and training sessions. He has helped organize workshops and environmental initiatives at many Connecticut campuses, including Wesleyan, Southern Connecticut State University, and a regional conference at Yale. His work has engaged many others in taking action to address climate change.

Commissioner Stephen E. Korta II of the Connecticut Department of Transportation said, "On behalf of

the Governor's Steering Committee, I am delighted that the award recipients have taken active steps to address the issue of global warming. The first year recipients represent a wide spectrum -- including industry innovations in the purchase of clean energy, town government efforts in the area of land preservation, teaching initiatives about global warming, the promotion of clean energy options by a student, and a regional planning agency's efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled through a bike-to-work initiative. Their achievements go hand in hand with the DOT's goals of increasing transit ridership and reducing vehicle miles traveled to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

The Connecticut Climate Change Leadership Awards Program was developed by the Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change to recognize individuals and organizations that take exemplary actions to reduce global warming pollution and promote the goals of the *Connecticut Climate Change Action Plan*. The Governor's Steering Committee includes the Commissioners of the following Connecticut Departments: Environmental Protection, Transportation, Administrative Services, Public Utility Control, Office of Policy and Management, and Clean Energy Fund.

The awardees were chosen from 17 nominations received statewide. The GSC was established in 2003 and is made up of leaders from key state agencies. It is charged with leading a collaborative effort to develop and implement a Connecticut Climate Change Action Plan (CCCAP).

The Climate Change Leadership Awards Program is an annual program. For more information and to submit a nomination for next year, see www.ctclimatechange.com. The state's climate change website also provides success stories of additional climate change actions throughout Connecticut and provides tips on what individuals, business, towns, and others can do to address climate change. For further information, contact Lynn Stoddard, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, 860-424-3236 or c4info@ctclimatechange.com

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