

Beachwood Marketing Students Showcase Green Dream

Northeast Ohio is going green, if the students from Beachwood and surrounding high schools have anything to do with it. They call it the emerging three E's: education, economics and the environment.

Their tagline is "The Green Dream." And their mission? "Creating a greener tomorrow, today. One decision, one person, one day at a time—a plan so simple, it starts with one."

That's just a glimpse at a marketing project where 20 seniors planted the seeds of environmental consciousness that could blossom into a green movement across Ohio schools.

Marketing students from Beachwood, Mayfield and Richmond Heights participated in a Junior Achievement program sponsored through the Mayfield Excel Technical Education Career Consortium.

Greg Perry, marketing teacher at Beachwood High School, asked the students to identify a project that could make a difference. They chose to protect the environment and explore the possibility of "making a green living." Perry then introduced the components of a successful marketing plan and challenged students to forge public and private partnerships to support the core concept of creating eco-friendly environments at work, home and school.

Because successful marketing starts by raising awareness, students put together an eco-friendly expo. Nearly 70 companies showcased environmentally friendly products and services at the Beachwood Community Center, attracting 3,000 attendees from Ohio and beyond.

The product of the Green Dream is a "green" classroom that will showcase eco-friendly products that maximize cost efficiency and learning outcomes. Through the expo, students generated an estimated \$196,000 in funding and in-kind products to construct the classroom at Beachwood; it will be ready for the 2008-09 school year. On their own merits, these 20 students also generated \$976,000 in college scholarships.

How does this improve learning? "Research shows that ninth-graders drop out of school at high rates because they don't see how education will benefit their lives. Many pursue illegal entrepreneurship ac-



tivities that result in crime and incarceration," says Eric Troy, associate director of 21st century skills at the Ohio Department of Education (ODE).

Initiatives like the Green Dream connect learning to the students' world. ODE and the Ohio Department of Development are teaming together to launch an entrepreneurial initiative for grades 6-12 to address dropout prevention. "We're trying to take the energy that goes into negative activities and put it into creative, entrepreneurial opportunities for students to be positive, contributing citizens in their communities," Troy says.

The Small Business Development Centers of Ohio network has a history of working with high school and college students throughout the state to mentor and connect them to business and community leaders, according to Michele Abraham, state director of the SBDC network.

"It's our youth who will build our future and ensure a robust economy for the state of Ohio," Abraham says. "We applaud the students of Beachwood for their innovation and commitment to the Green Dream project, and we look forward to collaborating with the Ohio Department of Education on this project."

SELLING SOCIAL CHANGE

Call it social entrepreneurship. Perhaps it's marketing social change. Rich Markwardt, superintendent of Beachwood City Schools, agrees these students model the

district's mission "to develop intellectual entrepreneurs with a social conscience."

"We are showing people that kids like us can drive the whole nation," says Andrew Bankhurst, a senior at Beachwood. He believes global warming, scarcity of natural resources and other environmental concerns can be addressed by today's youth.

Ethan Rush, a graduate of Mayfield High School who plans to major in finance at Kent State University this fall, says the project made his senior year productive and meaningful. "Our senioritis was the Green Dream," he says. Rush spearheaded the marketing project with his classmates and hopes it will spread across Ohio.

HUB FOR ECO PRODUCTS

As part of the Green Dream marketing plan, students reached out to the local community. They garnered the support of the chamber of commerce, city officials, Beachwood Mayor Merle Gordon, local marketing and design experts, and—eventually—local, national and international companies.

"We believe we could serve as a catalyst for economic revitalization for northeast Ohio," Markwardt says. He says four factors converged to make this possible: the area's industrial infrastructure, an educated workforce, an abundance of natural resources and a depressed economy.

This led to the Beachwood Chamber of

Commerce's involvement. Vince Adamus, the chamber's CEO, plans to use the city's 11,000-square-foot office space as an incubator for startup green companies. "With a focus on green technology and green energy, northeastern Ohio can be a center for sustainability and innovation," Adamus says. "This is the point where the train is leaving the station, and we're going to be on that train."

For example, collaborative Green Dream partners include aluminum recycling company Aleris International Inc., whose Chairman and CEO Steven J. Demetriou agreed to underwrite the expo; Chris Hixson of Incite Creative and Sean Higgins of the Bubble Process, who designed the logo, Web site and marketing tools; Herman Miller of Global Office Furniture and National Office Furniture, which are donating eco-friendly furniture to the classroom; Doty & Miller Architects, which assisted with the classroom design; and Technical Consumer Products Inc., which donated 4,500 compact fluorescent bulbs at the expo. An estimated 40 companies are donating products to the Green Dream project and Ultimate Green Classroom.

REAL-LIFE LEARNING

"This is a great example of 21st century learning skills—integrating innovation, creativity, problem solving and collaboration," Troy says.



Markwardt believes the project demonstrates the importance of multidisciplinary approaches to learning, including foreign languages, humanities, social sciences, science, technology, mathematics, engineering and communications. "This project allows students to show creativity, innovation and global competence and empowers teachers to think outside the traditional curriculum," he says.

"This is a life-changing experience," says senior Griffin Weisberg.

Perry estimates at least 3.5 million people have seen or read about the Green Dream. Aside from garnering a televised

spot on PBS, the team has been invited to appear on GreenEnergyTV.com and to present at the Global Youth Enterprise Conference, Great Lakes Bioneers, National Entrepreneurship Consortium and National School Board Association.

"The Ultimate Green Classroom will be an educational showcase. Plus, it's going to be really cool, innovative and globally recognized. The Green Dream is not a one-shot deal. It's become a very assertive business model to be replicated across the state, nation and the globe," Perry says.

For more information, go to www.thegreendream.org.

U.S. Hydrogen Corp.

In August 2007, American Hydrogen Corp. signed a worldwide exclusive license agreement with Ohio University for the rights to commercialize a breakthrough advanced energy technology developed by Gerardine Botte. The process, which electrolyzes ammonia to produce hydrogen that can be used for fuel, can produce hydrogen less expensively than any other known process to date—and is completely clean.

Botte's technology reduces the cost of one kilogram of hydrogen from \$8 to less than \$2, all while eliminating a common pollutant and producing only nitrogen and hydrogen as byproducts. American Hydrogen Corp. plans to commercialize the invention by marketing ammonia catalytic electrolyzers for the on-demand production of hydrogen for fuel cells.

American Hydrogen Corp., a wholly owned subsidiary of Houston-based American Securities Resources Corp., is committed to developing a sustainable

business that contributes to the growth of Southeastern Ohio. In February 2008, the company announced it would establish a manufacturing facility in a 31,600-square-foot warehouse at the East Meigs Industrial Park. The facility will be equipped with two production lines for the assembly of fuel cells and electrolyzers. The facility itself will be environmentally friendly, with the goal of zero waste and on-site power generation.

The Small Business Development Center assisted American Hydrogen Corp. by providing important local business contacts, giving insight into the regional manufacturing industry and compiling necessary documents. As a result, the SBDC has played a role in helping the company move this breakthrough technology from the labs of Ohio University into the worldwide marketplace.

For more information, contact American Hydrogen Corp. at (740) 593-9155.

