



## Connecticut Climate Change

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### **Gov. Rell Recognizes Eight Climate Change Leaders in 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Program of Governor's Steering Committee** *Recipients to be honored at May 12 ceremony at Aetna in Hartford*

Governor M. Jodi Rell today announced that eight individuals and organizations are being honored with the 2009 Connecticut Climate Change Leadership Award for their innovative efforts to address global climate change.

Governor Rell said, "The Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change is pleased to honor this impressive slate of award winners this year. Our honorees include a large corporation, a small business, high school students, a college, a town energy task force, two individuals, and a non-profit organization that serves communities of faith. These individuals and organizations demonstrate, once again, that we have leaders at every level of our society who play a crucial role in advancing Connecticut's effectiveness in addressing global climate change."

Recipients of the 2009 Climate Change Leadership Award will be honored at a ceremony May 12, 11:30 a.m. at the Aetna Customer Center, Hartford. Those being honored will include:

- Aetna Inc, **Hartford**
- Amity High School Global Warming Club, **Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge**
- Connecticut College, **New London**
- Cornwall Energy Task Force, **Cornwall**
- Heidi Golden, **West Hartford**
- Interreligious Eco-Justice Network, **for work statewide**
- Roger Smith, **for work statewide**
- Zane's Cycles, **Branford**

Amey Marrella, Deputy Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and Chair of the Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change, said, "The awards we are presenting today remind us that government cannot successfully address the issue of climate change on its own. The true solutions to this challenge require the continued commitment of the types of individuals, businesses and organizations we are honoring here."

Aetna, which will host the ceremony, will receive an award for many actions the company has taken to reduce its carbon footprint. These actions include the eco-conscious design of its new Customer Center which recently received a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED is the USGBC's rating system for designing and constructing the world's greenest, most energy-efficient and high-performing structures.

### **Background on the Governor's Steering Committee and the Leadership Award**

The Connecticut Climate Change Leadership Awards Program was developed by the Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change to: recognize individuals and organizations that have taken exemplary action in the past year to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change, increase awareness of climate change solutions and Connecticut action on climate change, and recognize individuals who make a significant impact by engaging a larger group to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The awards were first presented in 2006. This year's award recipients were chosen from 28 nominations received statewide.

The Governor's Steering Committee, established in 2003, includes the Commissioners of the Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation, Department of Administrative Services, and the Department of Public Utility Control, the Under Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, and the Chairman of the Board of the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund. This committee is charged with leading a collaborative effort to develop and implement a *Connecticut Climate Change Action Plan* and the *Connecticut Global Warming Solutions Act*.

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](http://www.ctclimatechange.com). This site also provides success stories of additional climate change actions throughout Connecticut and provides tips on what individuals, businesses, 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](mailto:c4info@ctclimatechange.com)

***Details of the accomplishments of the 2009 Climate Change Leadership Award recipients can be found on the following pages.***

**Details of accomplishments:  
2009 Climate Change Leadership Award Recipients**

**Aetna Inc  
Hartford**

As a health care company, Aetna is dedicated to helping people achieve health and financial security, and believes that fostering a healthy environment is an important part of this mission. Aetna is committed to limiting its environmental impact by reducing its energy consumption and the use of other resources, and to identifying emerging environmental issues that the company can help address in recognition of the positive impact a clean environment can have on the health of its members. Aetna has implemented a multi-faceted campaign to save energy, reduce waste, and protect the environment. The company has:

- Accelerated and broadened a company telework initiative to cut vehicle mileage. Nationwide, Aetna's telework, initiative is saving an estimated 2 million gallons of gas a year.
- Implemented incentives to encourage greater employee carpooling, decreasing parking needs.
- Achieved LEED Silver certification for the Aetna Customer Center for its management of energy, lighting, water and building materials, as well as incorporating a variety of other sustainable strategies such as eco-friendly cleaning practices.
- Increased recycling through an employee awareness campaign. Aetna-owned facilities, including its Hartford headquarters, recycle paper, cardboard, glass and plastic bottles -- recycling an estimated 191 tons per month.
- Awarded a contract to install approximately 1,000 solar panels on the Atrium building and began renovation of the Atrium building following LEED guidelines (will seek certification in 2009).
- Recycled/reused 30,000 tons of concrete, steel, equipment, and asphalt through the environmentally responsible demolition of an old parking garage.
- Began the renovation of its cafeteria to include energy efficient kitchen equipment and the use of washable dinnerware and flatware.
- Installed EnergyStar devices and automatic shut-off switches to minimize power consumption.
- Became a signatory to the Business Roundtable's "Climate RESOLVE" initiative to manage greenhouse gas emissions.

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**Amity High School Global Warming Club  
Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge**

These high school students have created and sustained a three-year effort to address global warming in their tri-town region, resulting in:

- Success in signing up over 500 households and businesses for CTCleanEnergyOptions at many community events in all three towns.
- Success in requesting the Orange Board of Selectmen to purchase clean energy.
- Earning solar photovoltaic systems under the CT Clean Energy Fund's "Clean Energy Communities" program through clean energy sign-ups: a 3 kilowatt system for Amity Regional School District #5 (comprising Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge), 3 kilowatts for Beecher Road School (Woodbridge), 9 kilowatts for the Bethany Community School, 4 kilowatts for the Bethany Fire Headquarters, and 2 kilowatts for the old Bethany Fire House.
- A contest at the high school to see which household can lower their electric bill the most between November 2008 and March 2009.
- Letters to the CT General Assembly to support climate change legislation.
- Fund raising for local land trusts.

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**Connecticut College  
New London**

Connecticut College has created a comprehensive program that is reducing and offsetting the college's carbon footprint, including:

- A 3-year purchase (2006-2009) of Green-e certified 100 percent wind Renewable Energy Certificates to offset 100 percent of the college's electricity purchase, totaling approximately 15,000 megawatt hours per year.
- Development of campus-wide comprehensive environmental sustainability baseline assessment, energy audits and renewable energy assessments.
- Lease of two Zip Cars that are shared by the College staff, faculty and students to reduce the number of vehicles on campus.
- A feasibility study of wind power potential on campus.
- Installation of a 10 kilowatt solar array on one residence hall.
- An annual inventory of campus greenhouse gas emissions since 1999.
- Carbon sequestration through an afforestation project in Costa Rica.
- An offset of gross campus emissions by 50.5 percent.
- Participation as a charter signatory to the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment to carbon neutrality.
- Student-led energy conservation initiatives resulting in 12 percent energy reduction in dorms.
- Building renovations following LEED guidelines.
- The construction of an environmentally sustainable Fitness Center, seeking LEED certification.

- An Environmental Model Committee made up of students, faculty and staff and responsible for developing programs and policies that integrate environmental sustainability into all aspects of campus life.

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### **Cornwall Energy Task Force Cornwall**

The Cornwall Energy Task Force is comprised of a selectmen-appointed Chairperson and volunteer citizens. They work to advise the selectmen on energy issues, and to promote clean energy and climate-friendly actions in the local community. Actions and results include:

- Success in signing up over 30% of the town's households for the CTCleanEnergyOptions program, earning an 8 kilowatt solar photovoltaic system under the CCEF's Clean Energy Communities program. This is the greatest proportion in any town in CT and any town registered in the nation with the EPA's Green Power list.
- Events and presentations to promote greater understanding of energy and conservation, including a Phonathon for the CTCleanEnergyOptions program, presentations on Kilowatt Conservation, an Energy Information Booth for numerous town fairs, a Halloween Party, a Sign Up Venue at election events and farmers' markets, and a Solar Christmas Tree.
- Presentations to surrounding towns to institute new Town Energy Committees and to help inspire those communities with innovative programs.
- Middle School outreach to contribute solar energy curriculum, kits, poster art competition, and a field trip for 7th-8th graders to Talcott Mountain Environmental Center.
- Creation of a library corner on energy (that includes books, films, Kilowatt Meters to borrow and application information on incentive programs), a "Ride with a Friend" ride- share program, and a webpage on the town site.

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### **Heidi Golden West Hartford**

Heidi Golden is a citizen volunteer and ecologist who, in part, studies climate related issues in the Arctic. Heidi spearheaded efforts in West Hartford to bring the public schools together in an energy conservation competition, resulting in the following:

- A conservation committee with the superintendent to gain support from principals and the school community.
- A system to measure and track energy savings in West Hartford schools.
- The Conservation Challenge website to promote the competition, provide feedback on energy savings for each school, and promote awareness on energy efficiency.  
<http://www.whps.org/conservationchallenge/>
- An educational program for teachers and students to increase their awareness of ways to save energy.

- Successful implementation of the Conservation Challenge in November 2008. West Hartford schools competed to reduce their energy use over the previous year's baseline. At no cost to town, the Challenge resulted in cumulative reductions in one month of 185,000 kilowatt hours and total savings of \$31,000 for participating schools.

Heidi is also an active member of Sustainable West Hartford, a volunteer group of citizens promoting sustainability in West Hartford, and a Board Member of the CT Partnership for Sustainability Education.

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### **Interreligious Eco-Justice Network: Connecticut's Interfaith Power and Light for work statewide**

The Interreligious Eco-Justice Network: Connecticut's Interfaith Power and Light was founded in 2000. It is an active network of nearly 550 congregations in Connecticut promoting environmental stewardship. Accomplishments include:

- Energy stewardship classes for congregations called "This Old House of Worship" at 25 houses of worship in 2008. Over the past 5 years, this program has been offered in 56 congregations in CT and is now operating in MA and RI as well. Participating congregations report reductions of 5 to 50 percent in energy use. Graduates offered additional audits to congregations in their communities.
- Sales of high efficiency light bulbs in 12 congregations in 2008, with approximately 6,000 compact fluorescent lights distributed to date.
- Energy audits at congregants' homes through the CT Home Energy Solutions program.
- Small Business Advantage audits at 6 congregations in 2008.
- Cheshire United Methodist saved \$1,300 on summer cooling and was recognized as a "Summer Saver."
- Education, inspiration, and influence to effect change.

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### **Roger Smith for work statewide**

Over the past six years Roger Smith has been very active and effective in mobilizing citizens and other organizations to support clean energy, energy efficiency and strong public policy to address climate change in Connecticut. In efforts that reach well beyond his duties as coordinator of the CT Climate Coalition and campaign director of CT Clean Water Action, Roger:

- Created a diverse statewide network to promote and support action on climate change and energy.
- Engages stakeholders to take local action on a wide range of climate-related issues including clean energy, energy efficiency and diesel pollution.
- Connects individuals with existing networks, resulting in effective new projects with significant impact.

- Conducts many presentations throughout the state to empower individuals and communities to address climate change.
- Mobilizes communities to engage in the CT Clean Energy Fund's Clean Energy Communities Program and provides support to participating communities, including seminars with local energy task forces on clean energy and energy efficiency.
- As a volunteer, has helped share best practices among municipal clean energy task forces.
- Coordinated the creation of a comprehensive municipal energy plan for the town of West Hartford that is intended to serve as a model for other communities.
- Works with students on college campuses on climate and sustainability issues.
- Worked to involve citizens in national precedent-setting public policy in Connecticut, including state global warming legislation in 2004 and 2008, the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and energy efficiency provisions of the 2007 CT energy law, and 2007 legislation to clean up diesel school buses.

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### **Zane's Cycles Branford**

In 2008, Zane's Cycles designed and built a new 15,000 square-foot bicycle shop. The project focus was to implement as many climate friendly components as possible. Environmental impacts were considered in all decisions, including the quality and integrity of the building envelop, dual flush toilets, the type and quality of the trees used in the landscaping. State-of-the-art energy features will produce 60% of shop's energy needs through the following:

- Solar thermal hot water system.
- 22 kilowatt photovoltaic solar electric system.
- Wind mill.
- Vapor lock exterior to the building.
- High efficiency heating.

Environmental stewardship has been a priority since 1981 when Zane's Cycles first opened its doors in a 900 square-foot downtown Branford location. Zane's Cycles started with the recycling of cardboard and scrap metal, and, over 28 years, moved on to generating on-site clean energy from the sun and wind and daily practices to continuously reduce the business's carbon footprint.

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