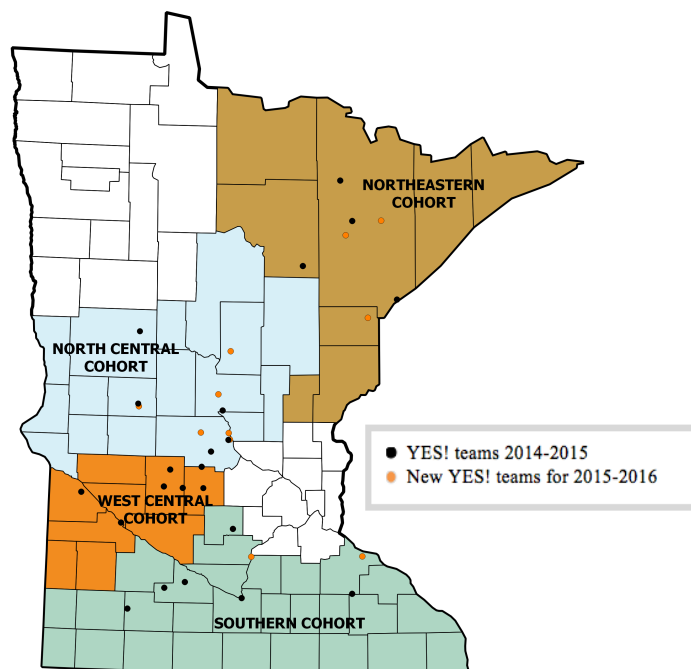




# YES! Accomplishments 2014-2015

With 22 teams and 344 students engaged, the 2014-2015 season of YES! was full of creative and inspiring work. YES! students directly worked with 253 community members, 1,606 non-YES! students, 75 local businesses and organizations, and 17 connections from the University of Minnesota to impact an additional 9,092 students and 7,975 community members.

This means that since its inception in 2007, YES! has supported 2,138 students in working with 3,758 local businesses, organizations and community members to impact an additional 107,612 community members and 69,719 students.



It is exciting to think about all of the great accomplishments of teams during the 8th season of YES!

During the 2014-2015 season, teams:

- Worked on 120 different energy action projects
- Represented 57 communities and 25 counties
- Engaged 2,321 volunteers who contributed 10,360 hours of service
- Organized and participated in over 25 educational events in their schools and communities

Celebrate with us as we lift up the impact of the work of these amazing young people!

## 344

The number of student team members participating in YES! 2014-2015

Teams participating during the 2014-2015 season:

- Alexandria
- Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City
- DREAM Technical Academy
- Duluth East
- Eden Valley-Watkins
- Glencoe-Silver Lake
- Lac qui Parle Valley
- Litchfield
- Mankato West
- Mountain Iron-Buhl
- New London-Spicer
- New York Mills
- North Woods
- Northern Lights Community
- Pine Island
- ROCORI
- Royalton
- Sleepy Eye
- Springfield
- St. Cloud Apollo
- Westbrook-Walnut Grove
- Yellow Medicine East



*YES! empowers youth to partner with their community to create economic and environmental vitality through hands-on learning and team-based projects.*

[www.youthenergysummit.org](http://www.youthenergysummit.org)

## 2014-2015 YES! Award-Winning Teams

(in alphabetical order)

YES! awards were presented in each of the four cohorts (Southern, West Central, North Central, and Northeast).

### Alexandria

*3<sup>rd</sup> Place, North Central*

A transition program for special education students, they chose to create a pollinator garden as a service project. They worked with staff, students, and community members to write 4 grants, securing funding for their 375-plant pollinator garden.

### Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City

*2<sup>nd</sup> Place, West Central*

Completed an energy audit of their school, participated in the YES! World Wear Project by collecting used shoes for reuse and/or recycling, and ran a paper recycling fundraiser to help fund future projects.

### DREAM Technical Academy

*3<sup>rd</sup> Place, West Central*

Analyzed their school's energy use, built a compost tumbler thanks to a grant from Southwest Initiative Foundation, did a waste audit of their school and as a result expect to reduce waste by 25% through composting and better recycling, and participated in the YES! World Wear Project.



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**9,092**

Number of additional  
students impacted  
by YES! 2014-2015



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### Duluth East

*2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Northeast*

Evaluated and redefined recycling at their school including determining weaknesses of the current program and setting goals for the future.

### Litchfield

*3<sup>rd</sup> Place, West Central*

Participated in "One Vegetable, One Community" for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row by planting and distributing 800 squash plants, collected holiday lights for recycling, and helped organize and execute a Community Clean Up Day.



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science lessons to 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> graders, made and sold granola and beeswax products, grew plants for a bee garden, and explored the feasibility of solar technology at their school.

### Mankato West

*3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Southern*

Distributed 1,250 reusable water bottles to students and staff, upgraded hallway lighting throughout their school, saving their school \$6.50 per day and \$19,500 over the lifespan of the bulbs, and distributed a survey to all staff to analyze electrical usage and habits.

### Mountain Iron-Buhl

*2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Northeast*

Worked on a project to recycle all of their school's milk cartons.

### New London-Spicer

*1<sup>st</sup> Place, West Central*

Collected about 600 pounds of shoes for reuse/recycling to raise funds for a hydration station, taught outdoor

### New York Mills

*3<sup>rd</sup> Place, North Central*

Continued school garden development and maintenance, sold reusable water bottles and hosted a dance to raise funds for a hydration station, hosted a YES! week with dress-up days and trivia, and participated in the YES! World Wear Project.

### Northern Lights Community

*1<sup>st</sup> Place, Northeast*

Eliminated all waste created by milk cartons by installing a used bulk milk dispenser, saving \$200 of milk annually and eliminating 350 milk cartons from the waste stream each week, implemented a composting program involving community farmers, developed a school garden and planned a CSA, maintained the recycling center

1. YES! students posing in front of solar panels at the first annual Northeast YES! Fall Summit, held at Laurentian Environmental Center 2. Mankato West team members proudly displaying their new light bulbs, which will save their school an estimated \$19,500 over the lifespan of the bulbs 3. DREAM Technical Academy learning about recycling at a YES! Winter Workshop 4. New London-Spicer students harvesting greens from their greenhouse 5. Springfield team members displaying their YES! 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Award from this season 6. One of Royalton's newly installed hydration stations with a YES! nameplate 7. Glencoe-Silver Lake students at the MTEEA Supermileage Challenge where they raced 3 vehicles this year 8. The ROCORI team flexing their recycling muscles 9. Participants in the YES! World Wear Project 10. Supermileage vehicles developed by YES! students





at their school and received the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Community Sustainability People's Choice Award from the Iron Range Partnership for Sustainability.

## North Woods

*1<sup>st</sup> Place, Northeast*

Acquired 50 acres of land for their school forest and built a bridge to access land on both sides of a stream in their forest, started a milk carton recycling program and collected the unused milk for a local pregnant sow.

## ROCORI

*2<sup>nd</sup> Place, North Central*

Collected school recycling weekly and continued their assessment of the recycling program, collected used shoes for the YES! World Wear Project, tabled at various conventions, ran a contest for the best graphic design for reusable water bottles to fundraise for their team and promote hydration and health, and installed another hydration station.

## Royalton

*1<sup>st</sup> Place, North Central*

Partnered with Minnesota Power to

"I enjoy participating in YES! because it gives students opportunities to learn about advancements in technology to solve energy use issues and ways to conserve energy in the most efficient ways"



sell LED bulbs and encourage families to audit the energy use of their homes, entered the annual Solar Boat Regatta and Supermileage Challenge, exhibited and showcased their renewable energy and waste reduction projects at the MN School Board Association and CERTs conferences, hosted a YES! week and Eco-Fair, and much more!

## Sleepy Eye

*1<sup>st</sup> Place, Southern*

Continued many projects from previous years related to energy conservation, recycling, education, and organics recycling feasibility at their schools, implemented new signage and reorganized their recycling program based on a MnTAP solid waste

assessment, dismantled 20,000 lights from their town's holiday light displays and replaced with LEDs and collected 1,224 pounds of holiday lights from their community for recycling, hosted various educational events and more!

## Springfield

*2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Southern*

Created a YES! week including an energy fair and dress-up days with energy themes, collected 930 pounds of holiday lights for recycling, organized a clean water fundraiser, implemented environmental education events in elementary classrooms, and participated in the YES! World Wear Project.

## St. Cloud Apollo

*2<sup>nd</sup> Place, North-Central*

Partnered with Tri-County Organics to begin a lunchroom composting program, created a compost awareness film entitled "do the rot thing," diverted an estimated 50% of lunchroom waste from landfill to an organics recycling facility, implemented Earth Week activities, and communicated with school staff about eco-friendly school supplies.

## Westbrook-Walnut Grove

*3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Southern*

Placed recycling bins throughout their district, raised funds by developing and selling products such as: bracelets and lanyards made from some of the 8,000 plastic bags they collected, solar LED jars, bird feeders made from recycled plastic bottles, reusable t-shirt bags, and solar battery chargers, continued to enter data from their city buildings in the state's B3 database, and continued to oversee their school's wind turbine and oil recycling site.

**7,975**

*Community members  
impacted by YES!  
teams this year*

## World Wear Project

YES! teams reduced, reused, recycled, helped people around the world and helped fund their team projects by participating in the World Wear Project. World Wear is a unique fundraising platform that partners with various organizations throughout the United States to collect used shoes and clothes. World Wear then processes the collected items and is able to write a check for the value of the collected material.

This year, 8 YES! teams participated in this project in various capacities, collecting used shoes that will be reused and/or recycled in return for “Prairie Woods bucks” that they can use towards their YES! team fee next year. In total, they collected over 1,700 pounds of tennis shoes!

“I participate in YES! to make a difference in my community. There is no greater feeling than giving back to the people who support me so much”



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### Recycling

10,000 pounds of scrap metal  
8,000 plastic bags  
2,000 pounds of holiday lights  
1,700 pounds of shoes  
181 cell phones

## Educating their Peers and Communities

15 YES! teams did projects that involved educating their peers and community members. At least 6 of the teams did YES! weeks at their schools, which included dress-up days with energy themes, trivia, activities, games, learning opportunities, and inspiration. One team planned and implemented environmental education events in elementary classrooms and chaperoned these students on a field trip to the Children’s Museum of Southern MN to learn about the impacts of plants and agriculture on the environment. Another worked in partnership with Tri-County Organics to begin a lunchroom composting program that included creating a short film to raise awareness entitled “do the rot thing.” Yet another traveled to Kansas where they met with well over 500 fans and talked to them about Supermileage, YES! and STEM education.

## Creative Fundraising

YES! teams were creative in the ways that they raised funds to supplement the project seed funds they received by participating in YES! In addition to the World Wear Project, teams: organized a clean water fundraiser that included a silent auction and brunch, helped fund their projects through a community-based recycling initiative that resulted in 10,000 pounds of waste scrap metal being recycled and raised \$4,700 for their team, and grew enough greens in their greenhouse for their school lunch program and sold 5 CSA shares to local families to raise money in order to maintain operations and make their program sustainable in the future.

### Community Support

253 community members  
1,606 non-YES! students  
75 local businesses and organizations  
17 connections from the University of Minnesota



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## Supermileage Vehicles

2 YES! teams participated in the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Minnesota Technology and Engineering Educators Association (MTEEA) Supermileage Challenge. The Glencoe-Silver Lake team drove 3 vehicles in the competition (one they built this year for the E-85 division and two they improved from past years and entered into the Stock and Modified divisions). One student commented, “building a high-mileage vehicle from scratch was a very enjoyable experience. I hope to have more real-life experiences like it in college”.

According to their coach “the team performed beyond expectations at the competition” and earned a second-place finish with their vehicle that achieved a top MPG of 456 and an average MPG of 425.



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