



# YES! Accomplishments 2015-2016

With 30 teams and 480 students engaged, the 2015-2016 season of YES! was full of creative and inspiring work. YES! students worked directly with over 500 local community members, businesses, and organizations, nearly 500 non-YES! students, and made 13 connections from the University of Minnesota to impact an additional 17,689 students and 18,172 community members.

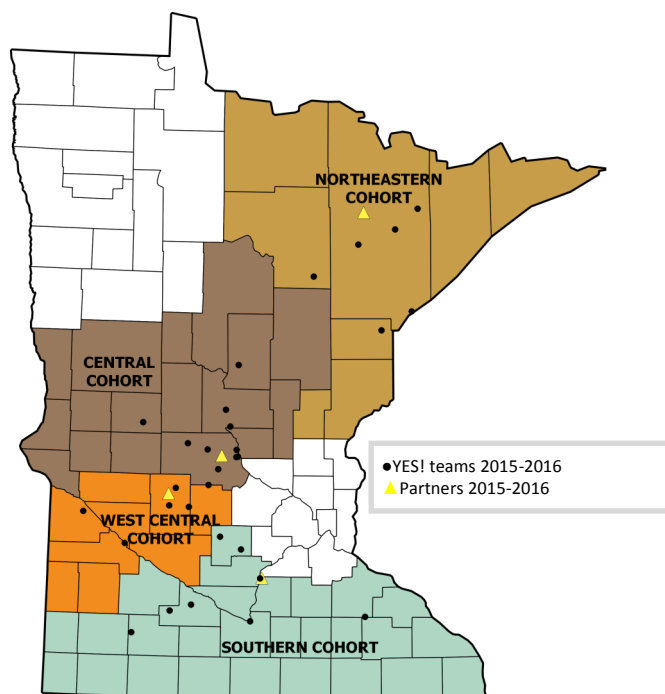
This means that since its inception in 2007, YES! has supported 2,618 students in working with over 4,300 local businesses, organizations, and community members to impact over an additional 125,000 community members and 87,000 students.

It is exciting to think about all of the great things teams accomplished during the 9th season of YES!

During the 2015-2016 season, teams:

- Worked on over 160 different energy action projects
- Represented 80 communities and 20 counties
- Engaged 1,067 volunteers who contributed 60,747 hours of service
- Organized and participated in over 55 educational events in their schools and communities

Celebrate with us as we lift up the impact of the work of these amazing young people through project highlights on the following pages!



Teams participating during the 2015-2016 season:

- |                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Albany                    | • Mesabi East                  |
| • Alexandria                | • Minnesota New Country School |
| • Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City | • New London-Spicer            |
| • Carlton                   | • Northeast Range              |
| • Cherry                    | • Northern Lights Community    |
| • Discovery Woods           | • Pine Island                  |
| • DREAM Technical Academy   | • ROCORI                       |
| • Duluth East               | • Royalton                     |
| • Eden Valley-Watkins       | • St. Cloud Apollo             |
| • Glencoe-Silver Lake       | • St. Cloud North              |
| • Hutchinson                | • Sartell                      |
| • Lac qui Parle Valley      | • Sleepy Eye                   |
| • Little Falls              | • Springfield                  |
| • Mankato West              | • Westbrook-Walnut Grove       |
| • Melrose                   | • 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)

## 2015-2016 YES! Award-Winning Teams

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

### Northeast Cohort

#### Carlton

##### *All-Star/Community Leadership & Education Awards*

Built an aquaponics system, which they used to grow lettuce and basil. They partnered with their special education department to design and build four recycling stations for their school; began an advertising campaign to empower students to recycle; installed a school pallet-garden.

#### Northern Lights Community

##### *Project Impact/Goal Setting & Teamwork Awards*

Continued their greenhouse work by adding a hydroponic component and rainwater collection system; analyzed water quality of Swan River that runs by their school and presented results to their city council; educated their community about Swan River water quality.

#### Cherry

##### *WOW Factor Award*

Worked to build an electric vehicle; developed a Fair Share "Tiger Coffee"



1

**17,689**

*Number of additional students impacted by YES! 2015-2016*



2



3

program; applied for a grant to build a cold weather greenhouse; designed "blow-out doors" for use during tornadoes.

### Central Cohort

#### Albany

##### *All-Star Award*

Collected 300 pounds of shoes, over 100 pounds of holiday lights, and 400 pounds of aluminum cans for recycling; planned and hosted a community-wide event about climate change with Climate Generation; hosted an environmental week for their school.

#### ROCORI

##### *Project Impact Award*

Continued collecting recycling for their entire school; picked up trash and recyclables after their homecoming parade; installed 8 vending misers; worked to decrease waste in their cafeteria through "Sharing Bin" and reusable containers.

#### Sartell

##### *Goal Setting & Teamwork Award*

Developed a YES! Week with many lessons on reducing one's environmental impact; designed a project on bike safety education for 4th graders to encourage more biking to school; worked to purchase a hydration station and addi-



4

tional bike rack for their school; planted a pollinator garden and trees.

#### Melrose

##### *Community Leadership & Education Award*

Collected 4 boxes of shoes for World Wear; improved recycling rates in school by assessing what was being thrown away and where recycling bins were located; acquired additional recycling bins for their school and created labeling system for waste and recycling bins; designed and planted native pollinator garden; organized Earth Week activities including Earth trivia and a coloring contest.

"I learned the power of what just 5 people can do to make a difference in my community"—YES! Student

#### Discovery Woods

##### *WOW Factor Award*

Put up signs throughout their school to remind teachers and peers to shut off lights and recycle; expanded their outdoor recycling program to include indoor worm bins; educated students and community members about

1.YES! students with local foods at Northeast YES! Fall Summit 2.Cherry team members receive \$1,000 grant for climate change project 3.Pine Island students at Wolf Ridge ELC 4.New London-Spicer student with hydration station 5.Lac qui Parle Valley students with greenhouse harvested greens 6.Mankato West student with fresh compost 7.Royalton students spreading wildflower seeds at Crane Meadows 8.St. Cloud North students planting native plants 9.New London-Spicer students harvesting greens from their greenhouse 10.Westbrook-Walnut Grove students building a solar pop can heater 11.Jenna Totz and Kristen Poppleton of Climate Generation 12.Albany students at the Climate Stewards Convening





5

vermicomposting; hosted a green marketplace and plant sale to raise money for projects; installed a school garden.

## Royalton

### *Community Involvement Award*

Presented at NJPA's "Building the 21st Century Workforce" on skills students learn by participating in YES!; planning a trip to Italy to share their projects and learn sustainable best practices; planned and implemented a community Eco Fair; worked on improving recycling efforts; and more!

## West Central Cohort

### New London-Spicer

#### *All-Star/Project Impact Awards*

Focused on local foods through growing and harvesting at their school; collected 93 pounds of holiday lights for recycling; hosted a YES! week; worked to protect water ways through a tree trench living filtration system and educational pieces; and more!

### Lac qui Parle Valley

#### *Goal Setting & Teamwork Award*

Maintained school's passive solar greenhouse; grew greens for 5 CSA shares and school's lunchroom program; maintained used oil recycling site in Madison; removed buckthorn at Lac qui Parle Mission State Park.

### Yellow-Medicine East

#### *Community Leadership & Education Award*

Worked on community garden with local elementary school; have 8 stu-



6



7

dents registered to have 6 ft x 10 ft garden plots where they can plant a variety of produce; worked to start an apple and pear tree orchard for use in school lunch program; designing a school greenhouse.

## ACGC

### *Community Involvement Award*

Collected 97 pounds of holiday lights, 47 pounds of shoes, and 53 pounds of clothes for recycling; \$25,000 Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District grant recipient; participated in LED fundraiser through Clean Energy Resource Teams; worked to improve local foods access in community; and more!

"YES! can do the little things that build the community up" — YES! Student



8

## Southern Cohort

### Westbrook-Walnut Grove

#### *All-Star/WOW Factor Awards*

Collected 207,056 pop tabs for Avera McKennan Ronald McDonald House; collected over 26,800 plastic bags for recycling; designed and built solar pop can heaters and trombe walls; continued to check school trash cans for recyclables weekly; continued to monitor 6 Bottle Bins for recyclables, enter city data into the B3 database, and maintain used oil collection site in Westbrook.

### Sleepy Eye

#### *Community Leadership & Education/ Goal Setting & Teamwork Awards*

Continued and expanded recycling activities including collecting 900 pounds of holiday lights for recycling; continued many projects from previous years including community and educational events; worked to reduce waste and conserve energy; hosted an Earth Week that included Climate Generation presentation.

### Glencoe-Silver Lake

#### *Project Impact Award*

Researched, designed, financed, fabricated, and tested a one-person rechargeable electric vehicle for the MTEEA Supermileage Challenge; placed 3rd at the supermileage challenge for E-85 class, 3rd in modified class, and 6th in electric car; showcased vehicles and provided education to attendees at local community and state events; collected 14,000 lbs of steel for recycling.

Read more about these and other teams' projects at [www.youthenergysummit.org](http://www.youthenergysummit.org)

18,172

Community members impacted by YES! teams this year

## Focus on Climate Change

YES! received funding in the fall of 2015 from The McKnight Foundation to bring climate literacy to YES! students across greater Minnesota.

### McKnight Foundation Project Funding

YES! offered \$7,000 to YES! teams whose projects engage and empower youth to make an impact in their school and/or community on climate change. Through a competitive process, 7 teams received awards of \$1,000:

- Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City coached by Gabra Lokken: Solar Lights & Garden
- Cherry coached by Rick Pierce: Electric Vehicle
- Glencoe-Silver Lake coached by Mike Sundblad: Electric Vehicle with Solar Power Station
- Minnesota New Country School coached by David Rice: Local Foods Festival
- New London-Spicer coached by Teresa Copley: Energy Wise Local Food
- Springfield coached by Amanda Meyer: Solar Sidewalks
- Westbrook-Walnut Grove coached by Patrick Merrick: Solar Thermal



### Team Hosted Albany Climate Convening

The Albany YES! Team hosted a public convening about local climate change impacts and solutions with assistance from Climate Generation (CG) on February 23, 2016.

It included a keynote by CG Director of Education Kristen Poppleton, storytelling panel that featured YES! student accounts of personal impacts of climate change, solutions workshops, and a resource fair. One of the solutions workshops was led by youth from the Albany team where they educated attendees on composting at home.

“The convening was a great opportunity to showcase the spectrum of solutions to climate change that the Albany students and community can engage in”—Kristen Poppleton, Climate Generation Director of Education



### Collaboration with Climate Generation: A Will Steger Legacy

Climate Generation delivered the Keynote at the Fall Summits held at Saint John's University on September 30 and Laurentian Environmental Center on October 14. Jenna Totz, Curriculum Coordinator, assisted YES! Staff in delivering three regional winter workshops tying team projects to climate change solutions.



Funding for YES! was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Natural Resources and by The McKnight Foundation.

THE  
MCKNIGHT  
FOUNDATION