

Weekly Community Recognition 5/3/13

Pavan Gowda, a 13-year-old Fremont resident has been passionate about the planet for as long as he can remember. He says he has always understood the critical danger of living on a polluted planet and the importance of nursing it back to health. "All I want is my generation and future generations to live," he says.

Pavan is on a self-propelled mission to educate people about pollution and his efforts are beginning to gain some well-deserved recognition. He received the 2012 EPA President's Environmental Youth Award, which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awards to kids nationwide who promote a healthy ecology.

The now 7th-grader at Centerville Junior High, founded the "Green Kids Now, Inc.," a nonprofit organization seeking to raise awareness on green issues, when he was eight. Pavan has also authored two kids' books and written blogs for the EPA and other websites and has been a correspondent for an Australian youth radio program. He has created a list of criteria that schools across the nation can follow to qualify for the international Green Star Award, and he hosts an annual "Green Kids Conference," a fair, which drew 800 people last year, that teaches students and their families about environmental issues.

According to his mother, Pavan's curiosity about green issues has never wavered. She says that from the beginning, when he was little and full of questions, she has always taught him to find the answers himself. At a very young age, he began interviewing park rangers about duck habitats and geese migration around Lake Elizabeth in Fremont, and from there his curiosity only grew.

As if he could fit any more into his already busy schedule, Pavan is now creating a sculpture comprised solely of plastic caps. He hopes to use the artwork to let people know that not only are the caps not recyclable, but it is because of this that they also become an environmental hazard.

Last week, Pavan's work garnered yet another well-merited honor—the John Muir Association presented him the Youth Environmental Conservation Award. "Now it will be easier to reach out to more kids and do even more," he says of his awards. "Now people will take me more seriously."

All I have to say is WOW! This young environmentalist couldn't be more deserving of the awards and recognition he has received recently, and those that are sure to come in the future. I am humbled by his genuine passion for the cause, and am blown away by his obvious sense of concern, his ambition and his incredible initiative. I would like to commend Pavan for choosing to dedicate himself to improving the lives of people near and far. Future leaders like Pavan Gowda play a monumental role in the future of our planet. By taking action when he saw a need, Pavan will forever change the lives of so many. Thank you, Pavan, for your selflessness and dedication to our environment. I, like so many, have a lot to learn and hope to eventually lead by your example.