

# Project Title Bottle Cap Mural

**School** Wakefield High School

**Contact(s)** Sean R. Tracy (sean.tracy@apsva.us)

## Brief summary of the project

Students from the Environmentally Conscious Organization of Students (ECOS), sustainability club, organized multiple clean-up efforts around South Arlington. Different students took the lead on different clean-up events, but some included removing trash from the football stadium after Senior Night celebrations, land and kayak-based clean-ups of Four Mile Run with the Four Mile Run Conservatory Foundation. The kayak-based events involved removing litter directly from the river and the banks.

During these clean-up efforts students collected bottle caps. In the end we had hundreds of caps of varying colors and sizes, that students sorted. Students spray painted them shades of green and used them to create a approx. 3x3ft "Trash Art" display of our sustainability club logo (a leaf with a green W for Wakefield inside it). The wood for the mural was procured from left over supplies for theater dept. sets and it was cut by the engineering teacher. Painting was aided by the art dept.

We ended up with a large logo that represented our clean-up efforts throughout the year and was created by cross-curricular cooperation. It is currently on display in the science hallway at Wakefield High School (second floor).

## Getting Going

**How did the project start?** Several students who were in both the sustainability club and art clubs wanted to use their abilities to display how much waste we, the community, produce.

**Who were important people to contact at the beginning?** Kurt Moser at Four Mile Run Conservatory. Contacts at other clubs such as Interact and NHS.

**What are the threshold resources that need to be identified at the beginning before proceeding further? (For example, robust parent volunteer network, elevated loading docks, nearby outdoor spigot.)**

Clean-up events: gloves, waste bags, snacks, and water.

Mural: Spray paint (we decided on two shades of green), and white background paint for the board. Wood, band-saw, hot glue.

**What are the policies (if any) from APS or elsewhere that may affect the project and need to be considered?** We just needed access to a display case.

**What budget and/or funding sources were needed? NONE!**

## Implementation

**Did you pilot or test the project and then scale it up? If so, describe your process.** It all started with students organizing clean-up events and collecting the bottle caps.

**As you rolled the project out, how did you present this to students and encourage their participation?** I offered NHS and Senior Project volunteer hours for clean-up participants. Several students cross collaborated with other groups such as the STEM and the Interact Clubs.

**Approximately how many students were actively involved, and how many were affected?** 12-15 students helped on this.

**What obstacles were overcome? Are there continuing obstacles? What lessons did you learn from doing this?** We had several clean-up events cancelled/rescheduled due to weather. Also, finding a space to spray paint and cut the wood got difficult.

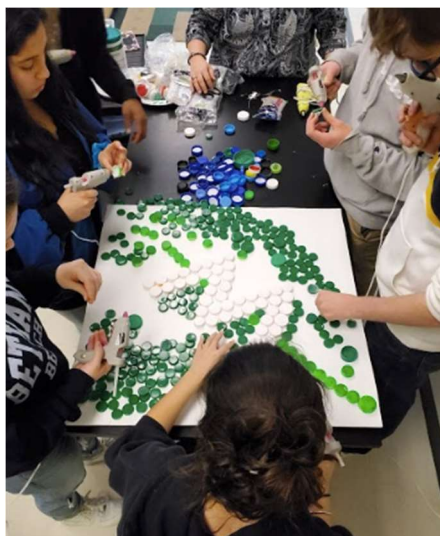
**Will the project continue into future years? If so, how will you keep continuity? Do you plan modifications?** At this point, this display is done, but in future years students could create other works of art.

**What effect has it had on the school?** This is new art-work on display. It also opened lines of communication between the sustainability club and other groups such as Art and Theater Depts. and the STEM and Interact Clubs.

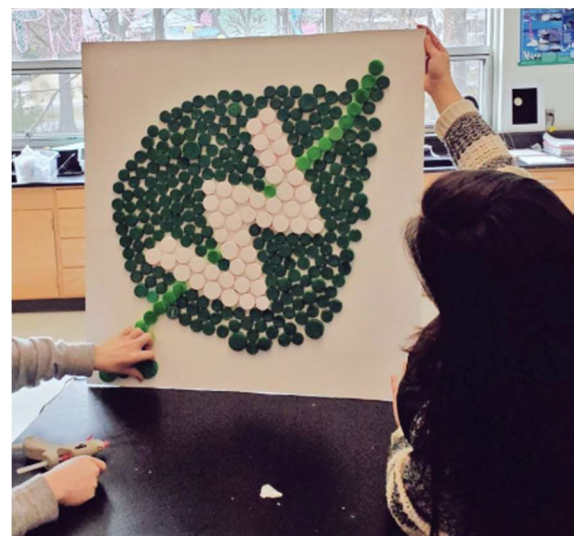
**Are there photos that could help others visualize how this worked for you? If so, please insert them here.**



*Figure 1 - ECOS Logo*



*Figure 2 - Art in progress*



*Figure 3 - Finished piece*

# Replication

**Do you have resources you used that would be helpful for someone trying to replicate this project? Would you be willing to share them?**

Kurt at Four Mile Run Conservatory is always looking for volunteers.

<https://www.fourmilerun.org/>

**What else should someone wanting to implement a similar project at their school know?**

It takes a lot more bottle caps than you think. Our final project had over 300.