

MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 18, 2018

Syracuse City School Wins OCRRA's Annual Mastri Recycling Excellence Award

Bellevue Elementary School stands out with student-run recycling program

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (September 18, 2018) — On Friday, Sept., 14, [Bellevue Elementary School](#) received the prestigious Mastri Recycling Award for demonstrating excellent recycling habits throughout their school.

The school has recycling covered in all classrooms and hallways AND they have a cafeteria food scrap composting program too. Students take a hands-on role in the recycling program, collecting the building's recycling and bringing it to a central location for pick up. In addition, they are learning and experiencing the compost process by amassing their cafeteria scraps and composting them as part of the science curriculum.



Students and staff at Bellevue Elementary receive the 2018 Mastri Recycling Excellence Award from OCRRA for their outstanding recycling and composting efforts.

“Students at Bellevue Elementary are learning the life-skill of recycling and composting first-hand,” said Theresa Evans, OCRRA recycling specialist. “They bring that lesson home and teach others, which makes our entire community better environmental stewards.”

OCRRA established the Mastri Award to recognize excellence in school recycling programs and remember the dedication and passion of Dr. Vonnell Mastri. Mastri was a former educator at Onondaga Community College and a City of Syracuse appointee to the OCRRA board of directors at the time of her death in 1996.

Each year, to honor her, OCRRA declares a city school the winner of the Mastri Recycling Excellence Award. Applicants are competitively graded by OCRRA personnel.

“The students were the driving force behind the green movement at Bellevue. We estimates how much food was being wasted during lunch and the students used that data to write a public service announcement that rallied the students and raised awareness

throughout the school,” said John-Henry Jackson, Bellevue Elementary School teacher and recycling program facilitator. “We saw increases in the amount of recycling that took place because the students color coded cafeteria receptacles for: trash, recyclables and compostable items. They also started a WE SHARE table for unopened food items. The students then used the compostable matter to create on-site compost bin which they tended throughout the school year.”

“Students, administration and the stellar custodial staff, especially Head Custodian Mike Hodgson, make for a great team at Bellevue Elementary. Congratulations to them all,” said Andrew Radin, OCRRA director of recycling and waste reduction. “Kudos to all the schools who applied for the Matri Recycling Award, each year the selection process for this award is quite challenging.”

City schools interested in learning about applying for the 2019 Matri Award should contact OCRRA Recycling Specialist, Theresa Evans, at (315) 453-2866, ext. 1210.

About OCRRA: *OCRRA is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation created by the New York State Legislature in 1990 to deliver a comprehensive solid waste management and resource recovery system to Onondaga County residents.*

OCRRA’s system includes: a strong recycling and composting program, a foundation for local waste disposal at the Waste-to-Energy Facility, two convenient trash and recycling drop off sites, a robust education component and programs for hard to manage materials, such as household hazardous waste, batteries, fluorescent bulbs and other mercury-containing devices.

OCRRA’s award-winning programs are funded by trash drop-off fees and the sale of electricity generated at the Waste-to-Energy Facility in Jamesville, NY. Learn more and get involved at www.OCRRA.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#).

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