

CHS Teacher Peter Stetson Recognized for Environmental Education

Stetson was recently honored by the Southern Rhode Island Conservation District.

By [Lauren Costa](#) | November 1, 2012



Peter Stetson, an environmental earth science teacher at [Coventry High School](#), was recently recognized by the [Southern Rhode Island Conservation District](#) (SRICD) for providing important environmental information to his students through his creative and hands-on teaching approach. He was presented with the SRICD's "Excellence in Conservation Education" award at the district's annual dinner meeting on Oct. 22, held at Matunuck Oyster Bar.

The award is intended to give recognition to outstanding efforts of those delivering conservation, environmental, or agricultural education to the public. Nominees may be formal or non-formal educators who have developed innovative programs, reached a large number of people, written quality curricula and implemented creative classroom projects.

Stetson, who has been teaching for 30 years, is continuously finding ways to enrich his lessons and introduce students to up-and-coming environmental topics. As advisor for the Coventry Envirothon Club since 2000, he prepares teams of five students for state competition to test their skills in environmental, forestry and soil science issues. CHS won the state championship in 2004 and 2009 to qualify for the National Envirothon Championships.

According to Cynthia Kwolek, SRICD Agriculture and Forestry Technician, Stetson was chosen for the award based on his outstanding contributions to conservation and environmental education as well as his dedication to the Rhode Island Envirothon.

"Peter is an outstanding educator, not only in our District, but in the State as well," said SRICD Director Eric Scherer, who, along with advisory board members, selected Stetson for the honor.

Aside from classroom lectures in his biology and earth science classes, Stetson has given his students the opportunity to test soil, [raise and study trout](#), and grow plants in the school's greenhouse. A garden will soon be built outside of his classroom, allowing his classes to plant, study and maintain the crops and eventually donate them to the Coventry Food Bank.

Stetson has also shown students how to map outdoor trails using a compass, tape, GPS and computers and is currently in the process of establishing a new course at the high school to teach geospatial technology, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and remote sensing technology.

In 2007, Stetson was named Southern Rhode Island Conservation Teacher of the Year and was [recognized by Marcal Small Steps in 2011](#) for creating a recycling program at the high school. He also

continuously seeks out grants to supplement his lessons and create more learning opportunities for students.

"I have so much fun teaching the kids," said Stetson. "It's great to see them discovering new things."