

ENERGY PROS



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Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School students smile for a photo in front of the White House during their trip to Washington, D.C. last week for the annual NEED Conference.

ASFMS students travel to D.C. for national NEED Conference

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COVENTRY — Students at Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School in Coventry returned from a Washington D.C. trip this week for the 38th annual National Energy Education Development (NEED) Youth Energy Conference and Award ceremony, where they won the award of Rhode Island Junior Runner Up for their project "Collaboration with the Coventry Community through the NEED Project."

For the past two years students at ASFMS have been dedicated to educating students, staff and other members of the Coventry community about long-term sustainable actions to make sure there's enough energy to meet today's needs. According to teachers Anne Marie Printer, Jennifer Pietros and Linda Grandchamp, the students have displayed citizenship through increasing community awareness of the importance of reducing energy consumption.

Twenty eighth grade students attended the trip,



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ASFMS students pose with their energy presentation in Washington, D.C.

along with Printer, Pietro and other chaperones.

"The students had an opportunity to work with teachers and student leaders from around the country to explore energy and how it fits into their lives through various STEM hands-on activities," said Pietros.

Pietros, Grandchamp and

Printer wish to thank Shannon Donovan, the teacher adviser of the NEED program at Scituate Middle School and leader of professional development in the program for the entire state. Donovan helped get ASFMS started with the NEED project by having students from Scituate High School

teach students at ASFMS about energy. They also wish to thank the companies that sponsored the students, allowing them to attend the conference in D.C.: Amgen, Contech and UHaul on Sandy Bottom Road. Their

See **ENERGY**, page A6

Energy

Continued from page A1

support, Pietros said, allowed several students to go on the trip who might not otherwise have been able to.

"Between the plane fare and the conference we wouldn't have been able to go without support of Amgen and Coriotech," said Grandchamp.

On Friday, June 22 the conference involved challenges where students were asked to address real world problems. Saturday involved an Energy STEM Student Presentation block and teacher workshop. On Monday, June 25 students received their awards. The remainder of the trip was spent visiting famous landmarks and historical sites.

"They did a lot of energy workshops where they had to take a school and make it net zero energy usage," said Printer. "Putting solar panels on the roof, shrubbery, using geo thermal energy. They had to figure out how to make a school in Mexico more energy efficient."

Other 2018 NEED Conference award winners include West Warwick High School, which took home National Senior Rookie of the Year, and Western Coventry Elementary School, which was a National Elementary Finalist under teacher Kerri Luchka. Students who attended the conference met peers from around the country.

"There were kids from Kentucky,



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Coventry students from ASFMS and Western Coventry Elementary pose for a photo at the conference Saturday.

Pennsylvania," said Pietros. "And Rhode Island was very well represented."

"They just had a wonderful experience," said Printer. "They walked by the Whitehouse, the monuments, the museums. They just had a really wonderful experience. The kids have been absolutely wonderful and really highly engaged in the project."

As part of the conference students from different states bring with them

items to trade and share with their peers from other states. ASFMS students brought along coffee syrup and Del's lemonade, both of which were a big hit.

"It's so important in today's age with all of the issues with climate change to reduce our carbon footprint and look for more renewable energy sources," said Pietros.

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