



Maryland Department of Planning

Sustainable _____ Attainable

Press Release

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Area Students Tackle Sustainable Planning in State Competition

Sustainable Growth Commission Collegiate Contest Participants Focus on Community Solutions

BALTIMORE, MD – Redesigning the streetscape in Easton’s historic Hill District with a better pedestrian environment and stronger connections to the rest of the city could help residents achieve ecological, economic and social goals. That was one of several creative strategies put forward by student teams participating in last month’s Sustainable Growth Challenge collegiate competition run by the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission.

The top teams – from Morgan State University’s Landscape Architecture Program, the Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville and Johns Hopkins University’s Environment, Energy, Sustainability & Health Institute – will be lauded February 24 as part of the commission’s third annual [Smart Growth Forum and Awards Ceremony](#).

The ceremony also will highlight the Sustainable Growth Awards – eight recipients for leadership and projects that promote smart growth – and feature keynote speaker Ed Rendell, former Pennsylvania governor and Philadelphia mayor speaking on “Reinvesting in Infrastructure, Rebuilding Communities.”

The challenge, run by the Commission’s Education Workgroup, invites undergraduate and graduate students in planning to identify and solve community land use issues throughout the state. From a pool of university teams, nine student groups presented panels and narrated PowerPoint presentations before a jury of selected commission members and state agency staff in January in Annapolis.

Winning team Morgan State presented solutions for a community in Easton that lags behind the city’s general prosperity. The team’s streetscape redesign is a comprehensive approach to even out social disparities, help Hill residents better connect to retail, reduce flooding, and lessen their pollution impact on the Chesapeake Bay. Students from the Community College of Baltimore County-Catonsville created a watershed analysis model, earning them second place, and a Johns Hopkins team won third with a presentation about aquaponics in a food desert area of Baltimore City. The winners will receive cash awards courtesy of the Maryland and Howard County Association of Realtors for sustainability enhancements or education at their universities.

This was the second year of the student challenge, which the commission hopes will inspire student planners to consider sustainability in their professional endeavors.

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor

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[Learn more](#) about the Sustainable Growth Challenge. [Register](#) to attend the free Smart Growth Forum.

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