



**ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**NEWS RELEASE** *for Immediate Release*

**No. 2026 – 094**

**April 22, 2026, 9 a.m.**

**St. Mary's County Recognizes Sustainability Award Winners**

**LEONARDTOWN, MD** – The Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) and the Commission on the Environment are pleased to announce the winners of the 2025 St. Mary's County Sustainability Awards:

- **Student/School:** Dr. James A. Forrest Career & Technology Center, Natural Resources Management Class
- **Nonprofit:** St. Mary's County Garden Club
- **Farm/Agriculture:** Goodman LLC

The **Sustainability Awards** recognize outstanding students, restaurants, businesses, nonprofits, and farms in St. Mary's County for their environmental stewardship, resource conservation, community engagement, innovative best practices, and pollution prevention efforts. All six nominees for the 2025 calendar year demonstrated an impressive commitment to improving the local environment.

**Student/School Award: Dr. James A. Forrest Career & Technology Center – Natural Resources Management Class**

Students in the Natural Resources Management class at the Dr. James A. Forrest Career & Technology Center demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to protecting and restoring the local environment. They supported oyster restoration efforts led by the St. Mary's River Watershed Association by collecting oyster shells and constructing oyster reef balls. They also contributed to oyster spat growth projects by monitoring and analyzing shell growth to assist with habitat restoration research.

As founding partners in the Bay Observation Box (BOBs) water monitoring project, they played a vital role in collecting environmental data and promoting watershed awareness. On land, students participated in invasive species removal, shoreline restoration, and educational outreach projects. During the 2024–2025 school year, they served as the primary workforce behind creating the Gateway Garden, a native plant pollinator garden in Lexington Manor Passive Park.

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They also volunteered at the Leonardtown Library's Front Yard native plant garden, assisting with composting, planting native species, weeding, and other landscape improvements. Their commitment to sustainability extended to composting projects that enrich soil used to grow native plants. In addition to restoration work, students educated and inspired others through exhibits at local festivals and library events, natural resource lessons for elementary students, and support for school gardens and educational programs.

**Nonprofit Award: St. Mary's County Garden Club**

The St. Mary's County Garden Club (SMCGC) received the 2025 Sustainability Award in the Nonprofit category. Its Conservation & Environmental Committee provides monthly updates on regional conservation issues and organizes civic environmental activities supported through both funding and member participation.

In 2025, their work focused on three native gardens they helped establish and maintain: the Front Yard native garden at the Leonardtown Library, a garden at the St. Mary's County Animal Resource and Adoption Center, and the Leonardtown Parkette on Leonardtown Square.

SMCGC members also helped re-launch Leonardtown's Butterfly Trail, hosted public presentations and displays on native plants, supported a native plant swap, and mentored natural resource management students. Their continued commitment promotes ecological awareness and sustainable gardening practices throughout the community.

**Agriculture/Farming Award: Goodman LLC**

Goodman LLC was selected for the 2025 Sustainability Award in the Agriculture/Farming category. Serving Southern Maryland since 2021, the company expanded to a roadside farmstand in St. Mary's County in 2024, increasing access to native plant species.

By making native plants more readily available, the business supports pollinators, sustains niche species, promotes balanced ecosystems, and encourages lower-maintenance, resilient landscapes. Their approach is defined by expertise and environmental commitment, offering guidance on sustainable practices such as pollinator-friendly plantings, soil health improvement, and environmentally responsible land management strategies.

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In addition to the award winners, three organizations received **Honorable Mentions** for their environmental work: the Mount Zion United Methodist Church Green Team, Friends of St. Clements Bay, and the Association of Southern Maryland Beekeepers.

Award recipients were selected based on demonstrated efforts to improve the environment and for initiatives that exceed standard practices. **Awards will be presented** at the annual St. Mary's County [Earth Day Celebration](#) at Summerseat Farm on **Saturday, April 25, 2026**.

For more information on the Commission on the Environment, please visit [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/COE](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/COE) or [www.Facebook.com/GreenInStMarys](https://www.Facebook.com/GreenInStMarys).

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