



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: April 10, 2012
District: 10 - Stockton
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Middle School Wins National Award

Stockton – On Tuesday, April 3, 2012, Morada Middle School from Stockton, California placed first in the 10th Annual Garrett Morgan Sustainable Transportation Competition for their grass-pellet fueled Hybrid School Bus. The winning team was led by their teacher Aaron Saas and sponsored by the California Transportation Department (Caltrans) Stockton office.

Six teams, three sponsored by Caltrans, competed in this year's national competition. This is the third year Caltrans' Stockton office sponsored this school and the first time their team has won the award. Other participating schools hailed from California (Oakland, Rio Dell and Garden Grove), Maryland (Rockland) and Mississippi (Tupelo).

"These young people have put a lot of time and effort on presenting an idea that is both innovating and extraordinary," said Caltrans District 10 Director Carrie Bowen. "This is an excellent competition as it builds transportation leaders for the future. We are extremely proud of these kids and what they have accomplished."

On June 24th, Morada Middle School will be recognized at the annual Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) Awards Banquet in San Jose, Calif. where they will receive a plaque and a \$1,000 check for their classroom.

Every year Caltrans sponsors middle school classes that prepare and present their sustainable transportation in a national videoconference competition. Caltrans' District liaisons meet throughout the year to recruit, enroll and assist schools as they prepare for the competition. MTI provides the workbooks to each enrolled class in November, and district engineers and other transportation professionals begin to assist the classes as they prepare their projects. Projects are entered in February, and then presented to their peers and dignitaries. This year's keynote speakers included former United States Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, Chief Executive Officer of the Orange County Transportation Authority Will Kempton, Acting Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty and current U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood.

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The Garrett Morgan Symposium is administered by MTI and is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Garrett A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Futures Program. This program is named in honor of Garrett Morgan, who was an African American inventor responsible for several inventions in the early part of the 20th Century, including the original three-way stop signal. The program is designed to increase middle school students' awareness of transportation issues, interest them in careers in transportation, and motivate them to take the math and science classes in high school needed to prepare for management and engineering majors in college.

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