

**Aiken University High School
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April 15, 2008--Good News....from Aiken University High School:

EARTH DAY OPEN HOUSE

Aiken University High School will celebrate Earth Day on Tuesday, April 22 with a special Open House, inviting parents, scientists, city and school district leaders, and environmentalists to stop by, check out our classes, and interact with teachers and young people around the many academic issues that make up Environmental Studies.

Some classes will be involved in outside projects as part of AU's "Outdoor Classroom" concept, such as Kim Thompson's students, who will participate in the Great American Clean-Up. Others will be bringing interdisciplinary thinking into the environmental arena, such as Francesca Bownas-Rayburn's work on environmental poetry. Visitors will be welcomed with refreshments from 8 a.m.-1:45 p.m., and the day will be capped off with a special assembly at 12:30, involving recycling races and skits.

MEMPHIS CONFERENCE

Ninth graders attended the "The Dream Reborn--Green For All" conference in Memphis, Tennessee last weekend. African-American environmental leaders from across the country introduced the concept of building a "green" economy strong enough to lift urban families out of poverty. Van Jones, from Oakland, California, impressed students with descriptions of the economic opportunity to be found in the technologies of the growing new environmentally focused building practices. "This is not the 'save the whales' movement," Jones told the students, outlining specifically urban issues such as the rise in asthma, lead poisoning, and smokestack pollution in city neighborhoods.

Asador Demoz, a Junior at AU, praised the conference for tying historical events commemorating Martin Luther King's death to the pressing economic issues young people face today: "The memorial service for Dr. King was important because it was history in the making." Asador and his classmates attended the national vigil held at the Lorraine Motel, site of King's assassination 40 years ago.

AU PRINCIPAL NAMED ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

The Greater Cincinnati Earth Coalition will present Dr. Virginia Rhodes of Aiken University High School with the "Environmental Educator of the Year" award this Saturday, April 19 at the annual Earth Day celebration at Sawyer Point. The presentation by Mayor Mallory and Coalition officials will take place at 3:45 at the P & G Pavilion. Rhodes and her staff founded Ohio's first urban Environmental Studies school this year, and she believes that "bringing diversity to the environmental table is critical to effort to build a sustainable economy and improve the future of our students."