


# Imagining Tomorrow: Alternate Energy Futures™

## A Short Story Contest for Massachusetts High-school Students

Presented by NESEA  Northeast Sustainable Energy Association

### *About the Author* — Colleen M. Ottomano, “Shadow of the Past, Glimmer of the Future”



Colleen M. Ottomano is 15, and a sophomore at Hopkinton High School in Hopkinton, MA.

A devoted equestrian, artist and academic. She enjoys riding her horse (My Lucky Shamrock), relaxing outside with her Sheltie, Holly Lynn, and loves to be around all kinds of animals (including her cat and bird).

Colleen enjoys painting and drawing in and out of school. She has received a Departmental Award for Art and has received an honorable mention at the Congressional Art Show, in painting. She plans to continue her art throughout high school, and into the future.

She is an avid sci-fi fan; enjoys reading science fiction novels, especially Star Wars and Anne McCaffrey; and watching her favorite TV show, Stargate:SG-1 and Atlantis. These stories sometimes prompt her to write stories, like this one.

In addition to these hobbies, she also excels at school. Colleen enjoys Science (Biology and Physics in particular), Math, French (languages in general), and many of the other subjects she is learning. She has received the Department Awards for French and History; and she is a member of the “La Société Honoraire de Français. She is also a Senior Girl Scout and is currently working on her Gold Award.

In her Afterward Colleen writes: “There are many questions we must ask ourselves today. How will our actions affect the future? Are we thinking with the future in mind? I believe that we must think of the future every day. If we don’t, what will become of us? Will the ice caps entirely melt and flood us? Or will it get so hot that all of the water evaporates into space? Look at Mars- it used to have water, but where did it go? We must take the reactions of the Earth seriously as well. Perhaps our actions of drilling for oil, destroying forests, and releasing CO<sub>2</sub> caused the tremendous tsunami in the Indian Ocean and the hurricanes in the Gulf Coast of the United States. We need to work together to solve these issues.

Eventually, the Earth’s resources of oil and coal will run out. Even though it is tempting to say we will find a ZPM in Antarctica, it is extremely unlikely in this universe. Therefore, we must find a solution for ourselves. What technology can we use to prevent emissions? Water-powered cars are promising, but how far in the future is that? As Thomas Jefferson once said, “Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.” I believe we should listen to him and start in our own homes. Even if you believe you cannot change the world (which you can), you can turn off the lights in you own home, recycle, and ride your bike instead of driving to school.

We can make a difference, and it is time to start today.”