

IMAGINING TOMORROW: ALTERNATE ENERGY FUTURES

An Education and Outreach Opportunity for Clean and Renewable Energy

"I cannot teach anyone anything; I can only make them think" – Socrates

"Giving an opportunity to students to look up information and make videos and write papers . . . you actually learn it yourself . . . you get involved . . . and it will change your life. . ." – Participating 2007 Student

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CREATIVE WRITING AND VIDEO CHALLENGE ANNOUNCED FOR ALL HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

Contact: Mary Essary, 978.391.4479, mfe.foresightproject@gmail.com,

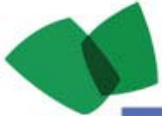
AYER, MA, March 30 2009 – Climate Change, Green Jobs, Clean Technology, Sustainable Energy – all topics in our headlines, but where can we discuss them in our school given existing curriculum constraints? *IMAGINING TOMORROW: ALTERNATE ENERGY FUTURES™* is a video and creative writing competition for high-school students in Massachusetts which offers teachers and students an opportunity to explore these issues within current class curriculum.

Now in its third year, the competition challenges students to submit a near-fiction short story or a video that explores any aspect of these important issues. These can be part of a project in any class from creative writing to economics, media studies, to physics and zoology. Video categories include public service announcements, fiction or documentaries, with time-ranges of micro-docs (under two minutes) to feature-length (twenty to thirty minutes). The deadline for entries is May 20, 2009, with finalists announced by May 27, 2009. All finalists will receive cash awards, with the work being published on the competition website as well as on other venues.

Program founder and director Mary Essary explains "From the *Iliad* to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to *Planet of the Apes*, the arts have always held the power to express the human spirit and to create understanding of what cannot be directly experienced. That is the core belief underlying this program – the opportunities for students, not just to learn for themselves in a meaningful and personal way, but also to create works that help others understand these subjects."

"We have also realized that there is a great need for students to connect directly with the outside world and realize the possibilities that exist for change. The inclusion of documentaries in 2007 opened up a whole new world of discovery for participating students – and for those viewing the works that they produced. For example, the student entries for 2007 published on-line, have had over 25,000 visits in total – an amazing way for students to share with their peers, their families and their communities. We hope that this year new students will continue to explore the businesses, research, and organizations in their area who are involved in this work."

Although any aspect of climate science, clean energy or technology is a suitable topic, this year there are several themes suggested for student or teacher focus:



IMAGINING TOMORROW: ALTERNATE ENERGY FUTURES

An Education and Outreach Opportunity for Clean and Renewable Energy

- *Lost*: To explore inefficiencies in our energy generation, delivery or use. This is particularly appropriate for any ICLEI community which is involved in a community energy analysis, or a community with a “Local” group, a chapter of MCAN.
- *This New House*: As we enter the second generation of thinking about “Net-Zero” housing, what new techniques are being used - and what new jobs are being created?
- *Nature and Our Planet*: A challenge to depict any aspect of the multi-dimensional world of climate change, the dynamics of the weather systems that run our world or the impact of change on species or human populations.
- *Lie to Me*: A media literacy challenge to illustrate how we evaluate information, how to interpret statistics and put them into context, how we discover sources and potential biases in information, and the power of particular word-choices in creating a particular viewpoint.

Complete competition details are available at www.itomorrow.theforesightproject.org. The site also contains resources and starting points for teachers and students, and links to previous winners in the competition. The program is managed by The Foresight Project, a Massachusetts based non-profit organization.

About The Foresight Project

The Foresight Project was founded in 2007. Its mission is to connect students, particularly high-school students, with the potential ramifications of decisions that we make today and how they might affect the world they will live in tomorrow. It currently runs two programs, both in Massachusetts: *IMAGINING TOMORROW: ALTERNATE ENERGY FUTURES™* video and creative writing competition, and Massachusetts Clean Tech Awards, given in conjunction with the Massachusetts State Science and Engineering Fairs to the best student projects on climate science or clean technology; www.ma.cleantech.org.

For information on supporting the program, or to participate as a resource for students in your community or area, please contact mfe.foresightproject@gmail.org.

#