

# Celebrating a CT Green School Program Worthy of Best Collaboration

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Dr. Jewel Mullen, Mayor Pedro Segarra, Christina Kishimoto, Peter Holland, Nate Allen, and the Steering Committee

Over the past three years, we've been proud to work closely with several federal agencies and more than 80 different NGOs to help develop and support the [U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools](#) recognition award. There's widespread agreement in Washington that this collaborative program, which has brought so many different stakeholders together, is an historic milestone program in the green schools movement, and we tip our hats to the U.S. Department of Education for their incredible leadership and success.

ED-Green Ribbon Schools is inspiring and mobilizing schools and communities around the country. A shining example is Connecticut's [Green LEAF Schools program](#), which is facilitating the kind of collaboration that drives the green schools movement at the state and local level. Jointly led by four Connecticut state agencies, working in tandem with more than 25 different supporting partners, including key support from the Institute for Renewable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University and the Connecticut Chapter of USGBC, Green LEAF Schools provides technical resources to schools in the Nutmeg State as well as a pathway to apply for the prestigious ED-Green Ribbon Schools award.

The Center for Green Schools' [Best of Green Schools 2012](#) list awarded Green LEAF Schools "[Best Collaboration](#)," and I had the honor of presenting this award at a recent press conference alongside Peter Holland, Vice President of State Government Affairs from our Connecticut-based Founding Sponsor, United Technologies Corporation. The event was held at the LEED Platinum [Environmental Sciences Magnet School at Mary Hooker](#), in Hartford, and brought together the commissioners and representatives from Green LEAF's four supporting state agencies, as well as Hartford [Mayor Pedro Segarra](#), Hartford Schools Superintendent [Dr. Christina Kishimoto](#), and dozens more who are actively involved in this noteworthy program. As part of the celebration for Green LEAF Schools, the commissioners also recognized the Connecticut nominees for this year's ED-Green Ribbon Schools award.

Connecticut [Education Commissioner Stefan Pryor](#), formerly director of sustainability initiatives for Mayor Cory Booker of Newark, NJ, stressed the importance of healthy, high-performing schools as a critical component in the education of our next generation. His remarks were reaffirmed by [Department of Energy and Environment Commissioner Dan Esty](#) – a sustainability legend in his own right – when he noted that, "Sustainability is an inspiration, and there's no better place to start than with our own children." The morning after the event, the four commissioners leading Green LEAF Schools sent [a letter to every superintendent in Connecticut](#) encouraging them to prioritize sustainability and strive to be nominated for an ED-Green Ribbon Schools award.

At the Center, we operate with the vision of green schools for everyone within this generation. We know this is an ambitious goal and one that we can only achieve by working together. Congratulations again to everyone in Connecticut for providing a model of outstanding collaboration so that every child may learn in a healthy, safe and efficient school.

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