

United States Senate

March 3, 2014

Brian Sievers
Physics Teacher, Alan B. Shepard High School
13049 S Ridgeland Ave
Palos Heights, IL 60463

Dear Mr. Sievers

I write this letter to congratulate the students at Alan B. Shepard High School on their incredible accomplishment of successfully executing the designs of their solar-powered biodiesel project.

As a strong proponent of STEM education, I find it commendable the way these students have poured themselves in to this project. Not only do they volunteer their time after school and on the weekends to cook biodiesel and maintain the system, they have also developed a deep understanding of the complex chemical and physical principals that are at the foundation of the biodiesel project. Moreover, these students are committed to protecting the environment by recycling materials like leftover cooking oil from a local pizzeria, as well as by cooking a clean biodiesel with no harmful emissions, and by turning any products left over from the cooking process in to usable soap for the school.

Additionally, I support the unique, successful, and mutually beneficial collaboration between the Shepard students and the city of Crestwood, Illinois. By allowing the students to utilize the city public works building, Crestwood is helping them practically apply what they learn in the classroom and foster skills that they can use in future careers in STEM fields. Plus, Crestwood is receiving the added benefit of getting free biodiesel to fuel a few of their own vehicles, which translates into savings for the taxpayers.

I applaud all of you on this tremendous feat and wish you great success in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,



Mark Steven Kirk
United States Senator