

# Young Students Spend the Day Learning to Conquer Plastics in the Ocean with Ocean Conservation Experts

*Initiative is part of new transformational marine sciences curriculum rolling out in schools across Florida*

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- A group of 60 students from New River Middle School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, recently spent the day collecting trash on the beach that they measured, sorted and cataloged to learn more about the devastating effect that plastics have on the ocean ecosystem. All non-biodegradable trash did not go to waste either, as the students turned these items into treasure by creating a piece of artwork as the last task before ending the session.



Five students pose with their cleanup tools and show the trash they've been able to remove

Leading the activities were ocean experts Jessica Harvey, co-chair and project manager of the

[Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation](#) (GHOF); Bob Powell, founder and CEO of [Brightmark](#), a California-based global waste solutions company with a mission to reimagine waste; Derek Burkholder, Ph.D., research scientist and director of Nova Southeastern University's (NSU) Marine Environmental Education Center (MEEC); and Katherine O'Fallon, marine science magnet coordinator at New River Middle School. The ocean experts and students gathered at NSU's MEEC, which reopened to the public following the lockdown during the pandemic.

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*Jessica Harvey*

“It is critically important to inform, educate and engage

young students on the importance of preserving our oceans and marine life,” said GHOF’s Co-Chair Jessica Harvey. “If we show them at an early age how plastics in the ocean can affect the ecosystem, then they’ll have a better understanding of how they can help us in preserving our ecosystems for future generations.”

This particular educational unit, known as [Plastic Pollution, Plastic Solution](#), is part of a new transformational marine sciences STEAM curriculum, developed by the GHOF and rolling out in schools across Florida. The curriculum is built on the videos, articles and papers from world-renowned scientist, conservationist and artist Dr. Guy Harvey that cover decades of scientific research. It comes to life with highlights of the usefulness of plastic, its chemistry and the drawbacks of post-use plastic, focusing on microplastic pollution. The showpiece of the unit is Brightmark’s plastics renewal technology, which is complemented by traditional mechanical recycling.

“By 2050 there will be more plastics in the ocean than fish,” said Bob Powell, Brightmark’s founder and CEO. “We’re really delighted, together with the GHOF, to develop the Plastic Problem Plastic Solution learning unit so that future generations can learn about the impact that we’re having on the oceans, on humans and on animals as well, thus making the world a better place.”

With dynamic educational initiatives such as this, the GHOF is making marine and environmental science more enjoyable and engaging by implementing virtual field trips that include diving with sharks, investigating mangrove environments, witnessing sea turtles nesting and examining the impacts of pollution, climate change and overfishing on the marine world.

The GHOF conducts scientific research and hosts educational programs aimed at conserving the marine environment. The Foundation also funds affiliated researchers working to better understand our ocean’s ecosystem and educators fostering the next era of marine conservationists. The GHOF will help ensure that future generations can enjoy and benefit from a properly balanced ocean ecosystem. For more information, visit [www.GHOF.org](http://www.GHOF.org).

About Brightmark: Brightmark is a global waste solutions company with a mission to reimagine waste. The company takes a holistic, closed-loop, circular economy approach to tackling the planet’s most pressing environmental challenges with imagination and optimism for the future. Through the deployment of disruptive, breakthrough waste-to-energy solutions focused on plastics renewal (plastic waste-to-fuel) and renewable natural gas (organic waste-to-fuel), Brightmark enables programs specifically tailored to environmental needs to build scalable project solutions that have a positive impact on the world and communities in which its stakeholders live and work. For more information, visit [www.brightmark.com](http://www.brightmark.com).

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About Guy Harvey: Guy Harvey is a unique blend of artist, scientist, diver, angler, conservationist, and explorer, fiercely devoted to his family and his love of the sea. His childhood passion for the ocean and its living creatures not only inspired him to draw but fueled a burning interest that prompted a formal education in marine science. Having graduated with honors in Marine Biology from Aberdeen University in Scotland in 1977, Guy returned home to Jamaica to resume his education, earning his Ph.D. from the University of the West Indies in 1984. Though he gave up a budding career as a marine biologist for that of a highly acclaimed artist, Guy has continued his relentless pursuit to unravel the mysteries of the sea, traveling the world to better understand the habits and habitats of the marine wildlife he paints. For more information, please visit [www.guyharvey.com](http://www.guyharvey.com). Follow Guy on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/DrGuyHarvey](https://www.facebook.com/DrGuyHarvey), on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/DrGuyHarvey](https://www.twitter.com/DrGuyHarvey), and tune in to see Guy's latest expeditions on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/user/DrGuyHarvey](https://www.youtube.com/user/DrGuyHarvey).

About Nova Southeastern University's Marine Environmental Education Center: The mission of the Marine Environmental Education Center (MEEC) is to provide outstanding marine education, interactive learning, and research with a focus on endangered sea turtles. Our vision is to be a premier marine environmental education facility that engages residents and visitors by increasing conservation awareness and action in a way that ultimately results in greater protection of our marine and coastal environments. For more information, visit <https://hcas.nova.edu/carpenter-house-meec/index.html>.

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