

School Going Green with St. Mary's Graduate at the Helm

Posted by [TBN](#) On 07/31/2008

When Kim Summers graduated from St. Mary's College of Maryland with a bachelor's degree in human development in 1988, she didn't foresee that her teaching career would lead her down an environmental path, from one "green" school to another. As the recently appointed principal of St. Mary's County's new Evergreen Elementary School, Summers will help develop "a deeper understanding of the environmental issues we're currently facing." The school will open in August 2009 as the first green school in the county. Summers' alma mater, St. Mary's College, is also a school of green firsts, including Goodpaster Hall, the first major green building built by the state of Maryland.

Summers, who served on the committee that designed Evergreen Elementary School, in Leonardtown, views her new position as "a tremendous honor" and "an incredible challenge." She credits her two sons with raising her awareness of environmental issues. "I want to do my part to make sure the earth is here for them." As principal, Summers hopes "to cultivate students as the next generation of leaders who will live environmentally-conscious lives."

"As an administrator, I have often drawn from my experiences at St. Mary's College and set the bar high for my staff," Summers said. Her undergraduate experience contributed to her organizational skills, drive, and desire to achieve. "My experience at the college was absolutely fantastic," she said. After receiving her degree, Summers taught for a year and then went on to earn a master's in education from the University of Maryland. Summers served as an instructional resource teacher at Oakville and Dynard Elementary schools and a class room teacher at Mechanicsville and Lettie Marshall Dent Elementary schools before deciding to pursue a career in administration. The path from teaching to administration was natural; "it all just fell into place" for Summers, who decided to pursue a career in administration because she wanted to make a difference on a larger scale.

Larry Hartwick, supervisor of design and construction for St. Mary's County Public Schools, describes a green building as "one where the design, construction, and operation of the facility is focused on the efficient use of resources and minimal impact on the environment." According to the U.S. Green Building Council, a green school is "a school building or facility that creates a healthy environment that is conducive to learning while saving energy, resources and money." The construction of Evergreen Elementary will follow guidelines set forth by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design to use sustainable, renewable, and recycled products. A LEED-certified building helps the environment by reducing waste, conserving water and energy, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Rachel Clement, one of two sustainability fellows at St. Mary's College, believes that a green school should provide "opportunities for those who work in the building to learn and practice sustainable choices."

Evergreen Elementary, the first new elementary school in St. Mary's County since 1980, has been designed to serve as a teaching tool for conservation and environmental stewardship. During the building process, 75 percent of construction debris from the site will be recycled. The school's design for sustainability will help decrease water consumption by 90 percent and energy consumption by 25 percent. An Environmental Learning Lab located on the second floor will give students first-hand experience in renewable energy and water conservation practices. The school will also boast a green vegetated roof, which will reduce storm water runoff; cisterns, which will collect 15,000 gallons

Copyright © 2019 thebaynet.com. All rights reserved.