



# Loudoun County Public Schools Media Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 7, 2024

**ASHBURN, Va.** - Belmont Ridge Middle School's Spectrum Program for gifted and talented students received a surprise guest on Monday, January 29. Topper Shutt, chief meteorologist for WUSA9, presented teacher Jeri Williams and community business partner Farzaneh Riar, with a \$5,000 check in recognition of their efforts in the 2024 Eco Challenge.

In cooperation with Washington Gas, WUSA9 seeks to identify middle school classes that are doing their part to create a green future by exploring ways to lower carbon footprints. Williams strives to make her classes a progressive initiative that merges education and environmental stewardship.

"These experiential learning activities empower students to be the future change-makers of sustainability," stated Orblynx Academy owner Farzaneh Riar. "This innovative initiative serves as a tangible demonstration of sustainable alternatives, enlightening and inspiring others in the community, and exemplifies the power of collaboration in nurturing environmental stewardship among our youth."

The Spectrum Program is an opportunity for kids to learn about science, ecology, and the arts and for them to be a part of the global conversation about sustainability. It strives to spark students' creativity and innovative thinking by allowing them to work hands-on with biomaterials and create their own sustainable products.

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