

WASTE TO WIN CHALLENGE REPORT



20 24

Eco-Warriors



Introduction

Pollution is a pressing global issue that poses significant threats to the environment and human health, with approximately nine million deaths each year attributed to pollution-related illnesses. In Guyana, the improper disposal of waste, particularly plastics and hazardous materials, contaminates water sources, degrades soil quality, and harms marine life, impacting both urban and rural communities. The excessive use of plastic products has led to polluted rivers and coastal areas, adversely affecting local fisheries and the livelihoods of communities dependent on these resources. This situation underscores the urgent need for effective waste management strategies to ensure a healthier environment and population.

In response, Policy Forum Guyana has launched the ‘Waste to Win Challenge’ in collaboration with Cevons Waste Management, a competition focused on collecting aluminium cans and plastic from children aged 11-16. This initiative aims to foster environmental awareness and responsibility from a young age, teaching participants the importance of recycling and waste reduction. By engaging youth at a formative stage, the competition helps instil sustainable practices that can last a lifetime. Moreover, it provides educational opportunities, equipping participants with practical knowledge about the environmental impact of waste and the benefits of recycling. Through teamwork and community engagement, the Waste to Win Challenge empowers the next generation to become proactive stewards of the planet, paving the way for a more sustainable future and a cleaner environment for all.

Aims

The primary goals of this project are to engage youth in environmental conservation and foster sustainable practices. The objectives are as follows:

- **Raise Awareness:** To educate youth aged 11-16 about the environmental impact of plastic and aluminum pollution, fostering a greater understanding of the importance of sustainable waste management practices.
- **Encourage Environmental Stewardship:** To instill a sense of responsibility and ownership among young participants regarding the protection and preservation of their local environment.
- **Promote Recycling and Waste Reduction:** To increase the collection and proper disposal of plastic and aluminum waste through a competitive and engaging platform, ultimately reducing pollution and promoting recycling habits.
- **Foster Community Engagement:** To involve schools, families, and community members in a collective effort to reduce waste and promote sustainability, thereby strengthening community bonds and encouraging collaborative environmental action.
- **Develop Lifelong Habits:** To cultivate environmentally friendly behaviors among the youth that will continue into adulthood, contributing to a long-term cultural shift towards sustainability.
- **Support Local Environmental Initiatives:** To align with and support local environmental policies and initiatives, such as Policy Forum Guyana's "Change Lifestyles, Not Climate" pledge, by demonstrating the effectiveness of youth-led actions in achieving broader sustainability goals.

Competition Overview

The Waste to Win Competition, in partnership with Cevons Waste Management, rewarded the highest number of collected aluminium cans and plastic bottles over a two-month period, from August 5th to October 12th. This initiative aimed not only to promote recycling but also to raise awareness about the environmental benefits of proper waste management.

A kick-off video was produced to detail the competition rules, providing clear guidelines on collecting, sorting, and reporting cans and plastic bottles. Registration for the competition closed on September 30th, 2024, at 6:00 pm, and schools registered via a Google Docs form or WhatsApp. Participants were required to submit a count of their collected cans and plastic bottles every two weeks, with the option to report more frequently. The verification of cans and bottles was conducted by representatives and volunteers from Policy Forum Guyana at the schools and homes of the participants between October 1st and 5th. At the end of the competition, an award ceremony was held to announce the winners and distribute prizes to all participants, celebrating their contributions to environmental stewardship.

Media and Publicity

Policy Forum Guyana promoted the competition through multiple channels, utilizing its social media platforms to share updates and encourage participation. Prior to the event, the Waste to Win Challenge was actively promoted across Policy Forum Guyana's social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and LinkedIn, ensuring wide visibility among our online audience. Additionally, the event details were distributed to PFG's mailing list. The competition's progress was highlighted on social media, showcasing participants' achievements and encouraging broader community involvement. Flyers and posters were distributed to local NGOs, community groups, and businesses.

On September 12, 2024, a radio interview was also done on Hits and Jams Radio Station 94.1 FM, during the Hangout Program hosted by Feliz Robertson to promote the Waste to Win Challenge.

Participation

The Waste to Win Competition featured two categories: aluminum cans and plastic. A total of 28 teams registered to participate, with 19 teams competing in the aluminum can category and 27 teams in the plastic category. While not all teams were directly affiliated with schools, participants represented 16 secondary schools in the competition. Though the competition encouraged teams of two to enter, two teams consisted of a single participant. This broad participation reflects strong engagement from both schools and independent teams, contributing to the overall success of the initiative.

Participant Information		
School	Group Name	Participants Name
	Bacchus Sisters	Alicyon Bacchus, Shavon Bacchus
New Central High School	Plastic Dynamics	Shania Dehnert, Deondra Benjamin
New Central High School	ECO Collective	Joyanna Gibson, Bethany Agdomar
Brickdam Secondary School	Brickdam Secondary School Environmental Club	Asha Alleyne, Katura Alladin
St Roses High School	Environmentalist	Isabella Loy, Varsha Persaud
	Recycle Influencers	Eeshwari Lall, Mariana Sooklall
St Joesph High School	Recycup	Yadesh Narine, Jasmine Forde
St Joesph High School	Twin Flame	Sabastian Khan, Amelia Hassan
	Piggott Boys	Triston Piggott, Trivon Piggott
Queens College	Environmental club	Zaralinda Easton, Angelina David
Queens College	Beverage Enthusiasts	Imani Daniels, Kaya Walrond
Queens College	Plastic Patrolers	Giovanni Garnett, Neuel Bancroft
Queens College	Earth Life	Malea Rampersaud, Rhiann London
Queens College	Interact club of Queens College	Sophia Miranda, Robin Walcott
Queens College	KenNa's Eco Haven	Keanna Greaves, Naveah Stewart
Queens College	Bluesclues	Sian Jeune, Angel Peters
	The Gentle Brothers	Josiah Gentle, Jonathan Gentle
Bishop's Highschool	Tree Huggers	Percival Chester, Shane Birkett
	KB	Kayla Hopkinson, Destiny Jackman
	Lusignan Learning Centre	Christine Roopnarine, Arianna Budhoo
	Lusignan Learning Centre	Jenecia Jackson, Goordat Sookchand
	Lusignan Learning Centre	Geeta Tiwari, Darian Ganesh
	Lusignan Learning Centre	Daimon Ganesh, Udesh Diaram
President's College	President's College Environmental Science Club	Kimora Wilson, Vinica Duncan
	Plastic Bottle Group and Aluminum Group	Lynicia Barclay, Amoya Allen
Wisburg Secondary School	The Alternative Waste Management Group	Anthony DeJonge
	The Mini Kimmy's	Hemraj Persaud, Anisa Premsook
	Clean Sweep Masters	Dorrel Hutson

Partnerships and Collaborations

To ensure the successful execution of the Waste to Win Competition, Policy Forum Guyana actively sought donations and support from various organizations and stakeholders. While Cevons Waste Management served as the primary sponsor, additional contributions were required to cover various aspects of the competition. A diverse group of sponsors stepped forward to assist, including PBS, Amazon Agri Centre, Unique Electrical & General Store, Mings Products & Services, Hand in Hand Guyana, The Gift Center, Seabra's Farm, Fleet-Man Solutions Inc., Health Depot Pharmacy, Reid Learning Institute and Business Consultancy, Darthan Investments, Ansa McAl Distribution Inc., Ibis Law Chambers, Banks DIH, and Our Universe Rising.

To acknowledge and express gratitude for their generous support, Policy Forum Guyana presented small tokens of appreciation to these sponsors at the time of their donations. Their contributions were instrumental in ensuring the competition's success and expanding its impact.

Waste Collection and Impact

- Amount and types of waste collected.
- Impact on the community and environment.

Judging and Results

The judging process for the Waste to Win Competition was designed to ensure fairness and transparency, with clear criteria focused on the quantity of aluminium cans and plastic bottles collected by each team. Throughout the competition, participants were required to submit regular updates on the amount of waste they had collected, with Policy Forum Guyana representatives and volunteers conducting verification visits at the end of the count period. This ensured the accurate reconciliation of the waste counts. After the counts were verified, the competition results were finalized by October 7th, 2024. The winners were selected based on the highest total t of aluminium cans and plastic bottles collected in their respective categories. This method ensured that the judging process was objective and based on measurable results.

Total for the Waste to Win Competition				
School	Group Name	Participants Name	Date Counted	Category
			Plastic Bottles	Aluminium Cans
	Bacchus Sisters	25/09/2024	14,086	623
New Central High School	Plastic Dynamics	01/10/2024	3044	
New Central High School	ECO Collective	01/10/2024	1,937	646
Brickdam Secondary School	Brickdam Secondary School Environmental Club	01/10/2024	3085	
St Roses High School	Environmentalists	02/10/2024	1,033	95
	Recycle Influencers	02/10/2024	1,106	
St Joesph High School	Recycup	02/10/2024	1,396	24
St Joesph High School	Twin Flame	02/10/2024	654	31
	Piggott Boys	03/10/2024	698	141
Queens College	Environmental club	03/10/2024	1229	266
Queens College	Beverage Enthusiasts	03/10/2024	212	69
Queens College	Plastic Patrolers	03/10/2024	1127	2
Queens College	Earth Life	03/10/2024	944	
Queens College	Interact club of Queens College	03/10/2024	1292	387
Queens College	KenNa's Eco Haven	03/10/2024	1969	
Queens College	Bluesclues	03/10/2024	415	101
	The Gentle Brothers	03/10/2024	76	
Bishop's Highschool	Tree Huggers	04/10/2024	1914	162
	KB	04/10/2024	309	547
	Lusignan Learning Centre	04/10/2024		1490
	Lusignan Learning Centre	04/10/2024	1146	
	Lusignan Learning Centre	04/10/2024	1944	
	Lusignan Learning Centre	04/10/2024	1996	
President's College	President's College Environmental Science Club	02/10/2024	402	37
	Plastic Bottle Group and Aluminum Group	02/10/2024	315	227
Wisburg Secondary School	The Alternative Waste Management Group	03/10/2024	825	169
	The Mini Kimmy's	02/10/2024	103	317

	Clean Sweep Masters	05/10/2024	1120	294
Totals			44,377	5,628

Award Ceremony

The award ceremony for the Waste to Win Competition took place on October 19th, 2024, at Regency Suites from 1 pm to 3 pm, honouring the remarkable efforts of all participants. Seventy persons were in attendance which included participants, parents, teachers, sponsors and staff of Policy Forum Guyana.

Each team member received a certificate of participation, and the top three teams were awarded an array of exciting prizes. For first place, each member of the winning team received a Lenovo Idea pad laptop, Wayne’s Plastic Predicament book, Eco Snake and Ladder game, glass straws, a reusable shopping bag, a laptop sleeve, and a medal. The second-place team members each received a Fire tablet, Wayne’s Plastic Predicament book, Eco Snake and Ladder, glass straws, a \$10,000 voucher from Giftland Office Max, and a medal. The third-place team members were awarded a headset, Wayne’s Plastic Predicament book, Eco Snake and Ladder game, glass straws, a \$5,000 voucher from Austin’s Bookstore, and a medal.

All participants were recognized with additional prizes, including glass straws, eco-friendly notebooks, and the Eco Snake and Ladder game. Special prizes were also awarded to teams collecting over 290 cans and 1,300 plastic bottles, with further recognition going to the Piggott Boys and St. Rose’s High School Environmentalists for their clean and organized plastic bottle collections. Each member of these teams received their respective prizes.

Policy Forum Guyana Booth

At the award ceremony, Policy Forum Guyana (PFG) set up an engaging booth that showcased its wide range of educational and interactive products aimed at promoting environmental awareness and sustainability. Among the featured items were the 1.5°C Lifestyle Kit and the 1.5°C Training Kit, which provide practical resources for adopting sustainable practices. Attendees could also explore the River Guardians Board Game and Eco Snake and Ladder, both designed to make learning about environmental stewardship fun and engaging.

Additionally, the booth displayed bottles collected and upcycled from the Glass It Up Competition held in 2023, emphasizing the importance of recycling. Visitors were invited to learn more about the Eco Uno Card Game, which promotes eco-friendly messages, as well as PFG's 1.5°C Lifestyle Brochure and informative flyers about the organization’s mission and projects. The booth also included contact cards for networking opportunities, past project reports for those interested in PFG's initiatives, and educational puzzles to stimulate young minds about environmental issues. This interactive display not only highlighted PFG's commitment to sustainability but also encouraged participants and attendees to embrace eco-friendly practices in their daily lives.

Conclusion

The Waste to Win Challenge implemented by Policy Forum Guyana has proven to be an impactful initiative in addressing pollution in Guyana by actively engaging youth in the collection of aluminium cans and plastic bottles. With a total of 44,377 plastic bottles and 5,628 aluminium cans collected over a two-month period, the competition not only raised awareness about the environmental impact of waste but also instilled sustainable practices among participants.

The collaboration with Cevons Waste Management and support from various sponsors were pivotal to the competition's success, underscoring the importance of community involvement. The enthusiastic participation of youth highlights the potential effectiveness of recycling programs in Guyana, suggesting that with the right policies and frameworks, such initiatives could thrive and contribute significantly to waste reduction and environmental sustainability.

By fostering a sense of responsibility and ownership among youth, the initiative cultivated lifelong habits that contribute to environmental stewardship. As participants develop a deeper understanding of environmental issues and their roles in addressing them, they become proactive stewards of the planet, paving the way for a cleaner and healthier environment for all. The Waste to Win Challenge serves as a model for future youth-led environmental initiatives, demonstrating the power of education, teamwork, and competition in fostering a culture of sustainability and reinforcing the need for robust recycling policies in Guyana.

Appendices

i. Competition Promotion - Posts on Social Media

The competition was promoted on Policy Forum Guyana's Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and LinkedIn pages. A poster was made outlining the details of the competition along with a kick off video.

- Facebook Post: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/h1hfno3qdHPMANMu/>

Policy Forum Guyana
August 6 · 🌐

Get ready to join the fun! Participate in Policy Forum Guyana's new competition, the **'Waste to Win Challenge,'** in collaboration with **Cevons Waste Management Inc.**

Grab a friend and register today.

Exciting prizes to be won 🏆
Laptops
Tablets
Gift Vouchers & so much more

Requirements

1. Eligibility: Children 11-16 years old.
2. Groups: Participants must enter the competition in pairs.
3. How to Register: Participants can register via a Google Doc form (<https://forms.gle/5ELCECTspEWfj4Mp9>) or WhatsApp (707-3511).
4. Deadline: Registration closes on September 17th, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

Additional Guidelines are found in the poster below.

#competition #SustainableLiving #recycling #plastic

WASTE TO WIN CHALLENGE
GUIDELINES

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Collection Process:

1. Distribution of Bags: Upon registration, schools can start storing the collected items in their own bags until further notice.
2. Collection Period: The collection of cans and bottles will take place from September 20th-26th by Cevons Waste Management.

Reporting and Verification:

1. Bi-Weekly Reporting: Schools are required to submit a count of their collected cans and plastic bottles every two weeks, along with pictures to Policy Forum Guyana's email (policyforumguy@gmail.com) or WhatsApp (707-3511). Schools may report more frequently if they wish.
2. Verification: Policy Forum Guyana representatives and volunteers will visit schools to verify the total amounts collected.

Social Media Engagement:

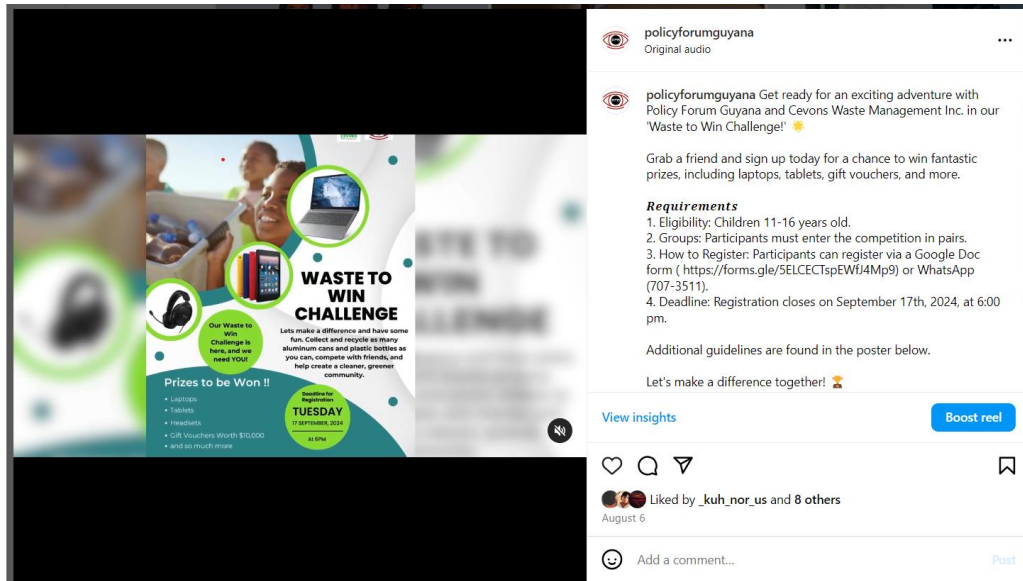
1. Photo Sharing: Schools should post pictures of their collection activities, including students collecting aluminum cans and plastic bottles.
2. Tagging: Schools must tag Policy Forum Guyana in their posts on social media platforms. Facebook and Instagram at Policy Forum Guyana. (@pfmguyana)

Evaluation and Results:

1. Winners Announcement: The winners will be determined based on the total amount of aluminum cans and plastic bottles collected.

Our Waste to

- Instagram Post of Kick Off Video: https://www.instagram.com/reel/C-Vn3X6tZjr/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==



- Radio Interview

The radio was shared on the Hits and Jams page and reshared to Policy Forum Guyana’s followers on Facebook. The interview gained 3,600 views.

Link for Radio Interview:

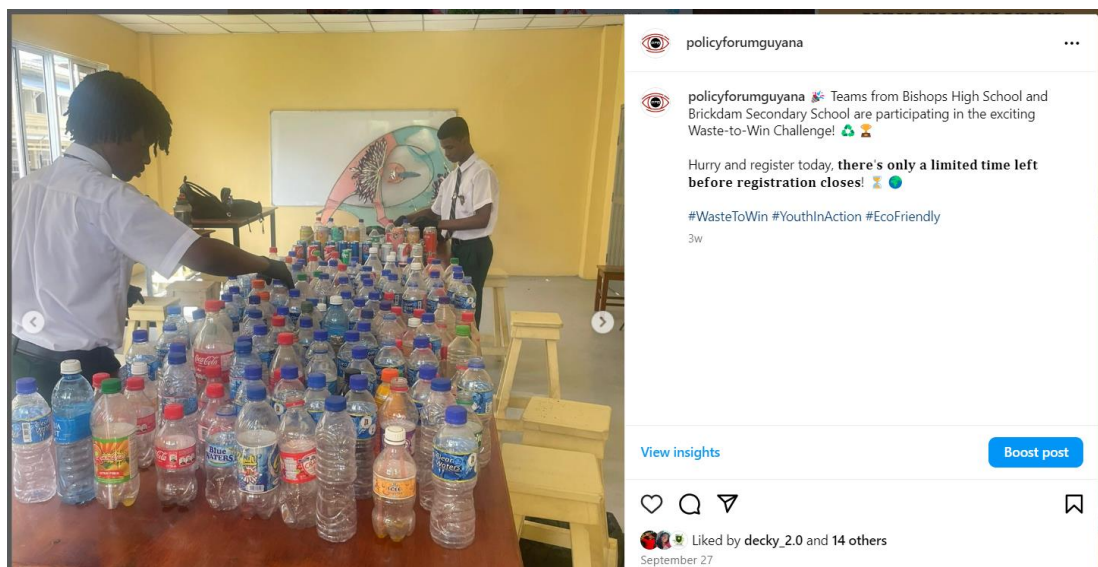
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/ZgQkYRUU4TZcBr73/>

- Participants Activities

To highlight the competition's progress and motivate others to participate, social media posts showcased participants actively involved in the collection process.

Link:

https://www.instagram.com/p/DAbB1VRoOcq/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==



Link:

https://www.instagram.com/p/DAtDeGOpdCQ/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==



- Sponsorship Posts

To express our gratitude and inspire further contributions, we shared photos highlighting our sponsors' generous support, along with the thank-you tokens presented as a gesture of appreciation.

Link:

https://www.instagram.com/p/DAi9wGetvbA/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==



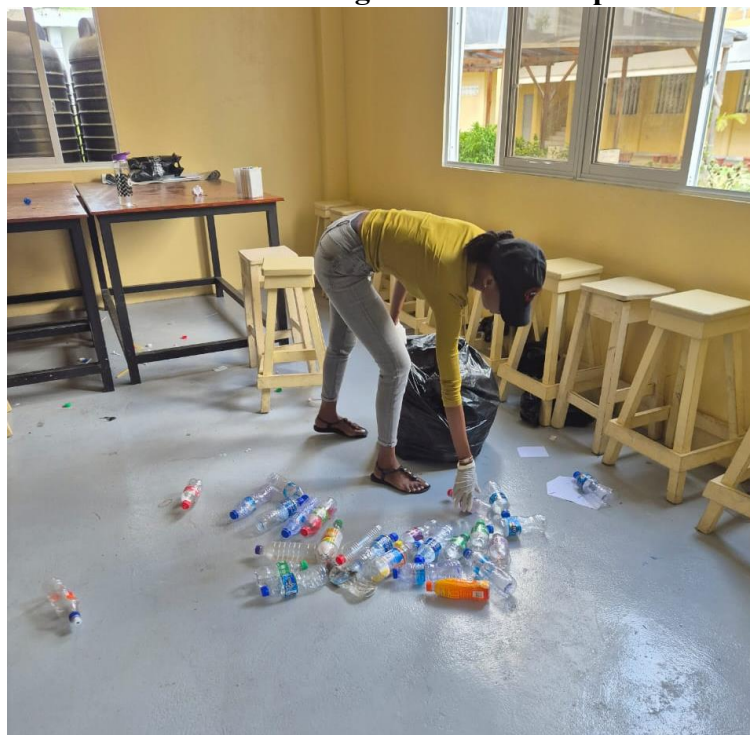
Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/DAA-9tztCA2/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA

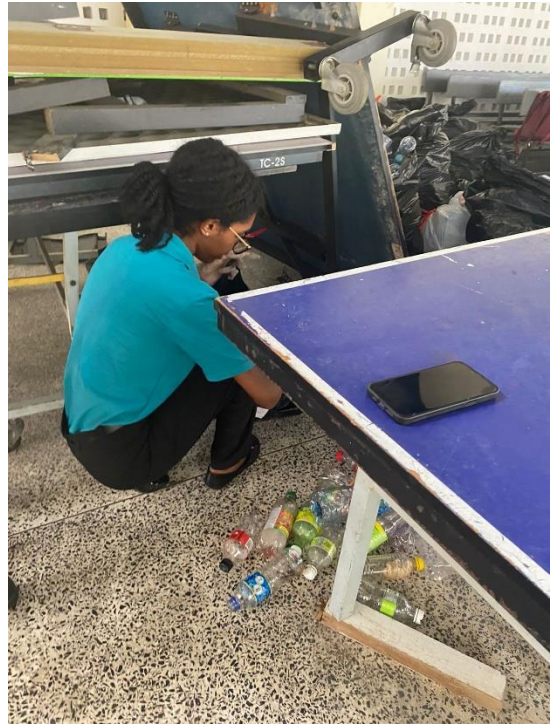


ii. **Count Verifications**

To ensure accurate counts of plastic bottles and aluminum cans submitted by participants, Policy Forum Guyana conducted on-site verifications from October 1st to 5th. After tallying the items, participants confirmed and approved the final counts.

Pictures taken during the verification process





iii. Prize Giving Ceremony

Pictures from Prize Giving Ceremony

Winners of the Waste to Win Competition



Participants with Sponsors



Guardians of Participants with their Tokens of Appreciation



iv. Post Event Promotion

- Press Release

A comprehensive press release highlighting the successful outcomes of the event was distributed to the media, sponsors, and partners of Policy Forum Guyana. The release showcased the event's impact, celebrating the collective efforts and contributions that made it possible. This press release was then published in the Stabroek News at

<https://www.stabroeknews.com/2024/10/21/news/guyana/young-eco-warriors-shine-at-waste-to-win-awards-ceremony/>

News Room Guyana also published an article at

<https://newsroom.gy/2024/10/23/almost-30-000-plastic-bottles-collected-by-students-in-plastic-pollution-competition/>

- Posts on Social Media

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/97E9J9Tj1FPWNK2A/>



Link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/uNgA4bQL9feEsKsR/>



Policy Forum Guyana is with **Health Depot Pharmacy** and **16 others** at **Regency Suites**.
2 days ago · Georgetown · 🌐

🌍👏 Celebrating the Eco-Warriors of the "Waste to Win Challenge"! 🌍👏

Yesterday, we proudly recognized the efforts of over 60 students from schools across Regions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10, who together saved 28,321 plastic bottles and 7,736 aluminium cans from entering Guyana's landfills! 🌱♻️

These young environmental champions have shown that, with teamwork and dedication, we can tackle plastic pollution. 🙌👏

Thank ... See more



v. List of Volunteers and Staff Present

1. Benita Davis
2. Jasmine Crawford
3. Britney Semple
4. Ashley Matai
5. Christal Craig
6. Siddi Nandkishore
7. Shevona Strain
8. Shankar Cyril
9. Anjali Maharaj
10. Tyrese Pearson
11. Juwel Van Buckley
12. Joshua Van Buckley
13. Jedidiah Smith
14. Padmini Dudnath