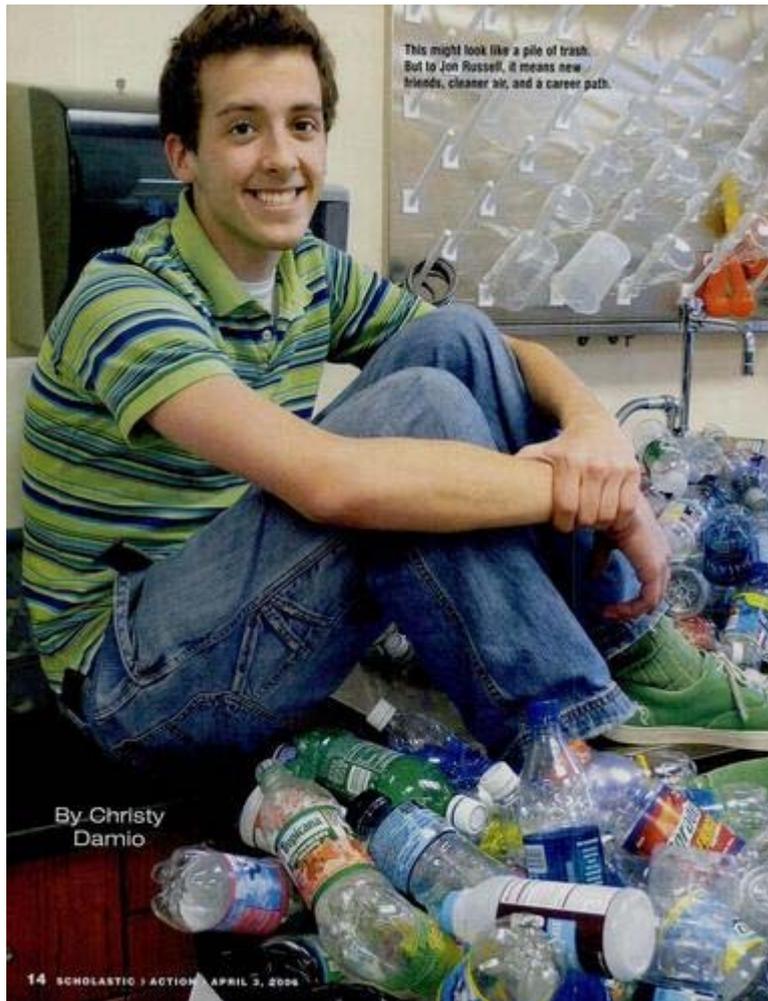


## Dirty Job, Great Rewards

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Looking for a **rewarding** activity? This dedicated teen says you might want to get your hands **dirty**.



*This might look like a pile of trash. But to Jon Russell, it means new friends, cleaner air, and a career path.*

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It's Friday afternoon, and school's out. What will you do for fun?

For Jon Russell, the answer is easy. He and his friends spend Friday afternoons sorting trash from their school's recycling bins. They act as volunteer janitors, and they save resources.

"It's not the best activity, to go trash-picking," says Jon with a laugh. "But it's enjoyable."

## A CLUB FOR CHANGE

Jon has made recycling enjoyable. When he was a freshman at Scarborough High School in Scarborough, Maine, he started recycling at school. At that time, only six students were involved. They couldn't cover the whole school, but they did their best. Most students wouldn't choose to stay after school on Fridays, but Jon and his friends did-and had fun!

Recycling caught on at the school. The next year, there were 12 volunteers. This year, there are 50. Jon, now 17 and a junior, runs the Environmental Club with fellow officers Doug Endrizzi and Laura Wood. The teens roll big blue bins around the school. They collect bottles and paper from the recycling bins in the classrooms.

"We sort it all out and make sure there's no trash in it," explains Jon. Recycling is good for the environment. It's also good for the club. The teens take the bottles to a redemption center. They collect about \$40 a week for the 800 bottles. "That goes to our treasury, the money we use for our school projects," says Jon.

## A PROJECT FOR STUDENTS

Last spring, Jon and his friends wanted to enter the Maine State Science Fair. "I suggested we take a diesel-engine vehicle and convert it to run off biofuel." Jon remembers.

Biofuel is a gasoline alternative made from vegetable oil. Jon, Doug, and Laura wanted to show the advantages of biofuel. Studies show that it's cleaner for the air than gasoline. It's also easier to get without depending on other countries. And it's cheaper!

"Most vegetable oils are under 75 cents a gallon, compared to the \$2.50 to \$3.00 a gallon nationally for gasoline," says Jon.

## A BUS FOR TEACHING

Jon and his friends decided to buy a used school bus and convert it to run on biofuel. Now Jon's idea has become something bigger than a science experiment.

"Our ultimate goal is converting our town's school buses to run off biofuel," he says.

Biofuel can power a diesel engine without much conversion.

"It's not like you need to make a whole new engine," Jon explains. "It's not a very complicated process. It's one that we can do as students, and one that the average citizen can do."



*Teacher Jeff Boyce (center) has helped Doug, Laura, and Jon change their school.*

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Since biofuel is made from vegetable oil, the group can reuse frying oil from their school cafeteria. They can also get oil from local restaurants.

"The oil would go to a landfill otherwise," says Jon. "It's a **great** way to reuse materials that would just be thrown away."

To buy a bus and convert it, the group needed some money. Last summer, Jon applied for a BRICK award from Do Something, an organization that promotes community service. John got the \$500 award.

"It was a simple application process, but it had tremendous **rewards**," he remembers.

## A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Jon has seen the **rewards** of getting involved. He's a solid member of the school community, and he plans to stay that way. "I think I've always wanted to be a teacher," he says. "Since I was little, I've always admired teachers. I think being one would be really fun. I've been so involved with school, I can't imagine having a **job** outside of school."

One teacher who has inspired Jon is Jeff Boyce. Mr. Boyce is the adviser for the Environmental Club.

"He's a **great** teacher," says Jon. "It's wonderful to have an adviser to help you lead a whole group of students in achieving something this big. The club definitely wouldn't be possible without him."

It wouldn't be possible without Jon, either. But as he points out, "You don't have to be the one with the idea. It's **great** just to get involved, to be part of something."