

## **Reduce the Juice expands program**

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A sum of \$150,000 will flow into the coffers of Reduce the Juice (RTJ), an energy conservation project started in Shelburne two years ago, after the Ontario Trillium Foundation announced funding for the program.

The grant will be distributed to the program over two years, allowing the group to continue its conservation work in Orangeville and expand into Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo.

Since its inception in 2004, the university student-led RTJ initiative has worked in three high schools in Shelburne and Orangeville, building green energy systems, such as solar and wind, to generate electricity.

During the summer months, RTJ employed high school students in its door-to-door community campaign encouraging residents and business to reduce consumption by five per cent.

"This funding is great news," says Randy Dryburgh, RTJ board member. "It recognizes that by building renewable energy systems in their schools and helping their communities save energy, young people can help create a better future starting where they live."

Dryburgh says the Trillium grant allows the group to do more work locally and expand into other communities "to build energy leadership among youth."

The hope is that RTJ will give these communities the tools to continue energy conservation efforts in the future.

Last summer, RTJ's team of 12 high school students and three university students challenged Orangeville residents to reduce their electricity use despite the summer heat. RTJ members pounded the pavement to get word of the challenge out, and set up displays at events to make their message visible to the community.

"It was the perfect summer job," said Sara Wicks, RTJ team leader who is studying at the University of Guelph. "We had the chance to talk about important environmental issues, like global warming, and to show people that right at home, through conservation, they can be part of the solution to such problems."

Previous funding has enabled the group to build a renewable energy trailer, which serves as a mobile platform to demonstrate how green energy systems work in the home.

Funding provided through the Trillium grant will further allow RTJ to hire full-time staff and create projects in schools across Dufferin, Waterloo and Wellington. Outreach in these communities are planned to begin this summer, says Dryburgh.

"More and more schools and communities are realizing that the solutions to our energy problems, including climate change, must begin locally and must include young people," says Dryburgh. "That's the Reduce the Juice approach so we anticipate lots of cooperation and support as we expand to other communities."

For more information on Reduce the Juice, visit [www.reducethejuice.ca](http://www.reducethejuice.ca) or contact Dryburgh at 519-323-1074.