



**2024**

## **Case Studies**

**District Sustainability Awards**

**Clean Energy DC Award**

*The summaries are edited portions of the original award applications.*

Prepared by:

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# Congratulations to All of Our Winners!

I am pleased to present the 2024 District Sustainability Award Winners. This year, we have six awards presented to eight winners. I am also pleased to announce our partnership with Destination DC (DDC) to present the awards at DDC's *Sustainability Summit* in March. This partnership highlights the vital, but often overlooked, link between sustainability, tourism, and economic growth. This partnership also represents our commitment to ensure the District continues to be the most healthy, green, and livable city for all residents and visitors.



Richard Jackson

In February, Mayor Muriel Bowser announced a \$400 million plan, *RevitalizeDC*, to re-energize the local economy. The goals include attracting new residents and businesses to downtown DC. The Sustainability Awards recognize the individuals, businesses, and organizations that have committed to making the District their home and have made a real difference in our city.

You can read more about the District's sustainability goals at [sustainable.dc.gov](https://sustainable.dc.gov) and check out this year's progress reports for our trio of sustainability and climate plans: *Sustainable DC*, *Clean Energy DC*, and *Climate Ready DC*. The winners' case studies are available at [doee.dc.gov](https://doee.dc.gov).

Congratulations to all of our winners!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Jackson', written in a cursive style.

Richard Jackson  
Director  
Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE)



# Oyster Oyster

1440 8th Street, NW

<https://www.oysteroysterdc.com/>



Chef Rob Rubba (Photo:  
Oyster Oyster)

**Oyster Oyster** is rooted in sustainability; they focus on seasonal, local plant-forward meals that support regenerative, organic farms in the mid-Atlantic region. Chef Rubba states, “We view our kitchen as being a zero-waste culture.” Scrap and trim vegetables become delicious non-alcoholic beverages for our menu.

Oyster Oyster has created a closed-loop packaging systems with their local farmers, where no single-use containers are used. The restaurant has no single-use containers or plastics; even no plastic wrap is used. Anything that doesn’t make it to the plate ends up in their compost program with the compost crew.

To reduce waste, they omitted all single-use cans and bottles of beer and cider, opting for kegged draft options. The restaurant still serves bottles of wine. So recently, they purchased a bottle crusher for their wine bottles. The wine bottles are crushed into fine sand, and with the help of local ceramic artists at Material Things Studio, they have turned their spent wine bottles into plateware for the restaurant. The menus at the end of the meal are printed on recycled paper that is embedded with wildflower seeds. They encourage their guests to plant their menus and promote pollinators.

As a co-founder of *Bakers against Racism*, Chef Rubba has put a lot of time and effort into campaigns to bring awareness to inequity and organize people so they can help in this area. Chef Rubba shared, “...for the public to have an understanding of what is right and what is wrong and how we all can contribute to a more sustainable system is a dream. We are just one restaurant, and we hope to inspire other businesses and neighborhoods to make the choices that will help our city thrive.”



(Photo: Oyster Oyster)

# Rocklands Barbeque and Grilling Co

2418 Wisconsin Avenue, NW

www.rocklands.com



Rocklands Crew next to Food Truck  
(Photo: Birch Thomas)

**Rocklands Barbeque and Grilling Co** is a family restaurant that has been serving real wood-smoked barbeque since 1990. Rocklands has been a member of the DC community for over 30 years and the restaurant is currently enrolled in the Destination DC membership program.

The restaurant sources quality products that offer customers better nutrition, a higher value, and a lower impact on our planet. The restaurant serves local invasive catfish or kosher meats from DelMarVa. They only use real wood – no coals with chemicals. They conduct quarterly energy audits

in all their stores to increase energy efficiency. One of the restaurants has a solar array and operates using solar energy. Rocklands recycles and composts at all their locations to keep trash from landfills and help create nutrient rich soil.

Last year, Rocklands diverted roughly 20 tons of food scraps from landfills by composting. Their packaging and supplies are made with materials considered more environmentally friendly. They give back to their community through fundraising events and donations, averaging \$20,000 in donations last year. Rocklands partners with local producers and sells DC made products such as beer, sweets, and sauces.

Rocklands partners with and donates to local non-profits that focus on local inequities outside of their control as a restaurant, such as DC Central Kitchen, Hope for Henry and A Path to Light.



The Chopped Pork Sandwich  
(Photo: Birch Thomas)

# SiStained8, LLC

<https://sistained8.com>



Najwa Womack presenting to students  
(Photo: C. Riddick)

**SiStained8, LLC** is a creative community compost education company. Its sole purpose is to empower the local community with understanding the art form and know-how of aerobic composting as a critical method of progressive climate change mitigation. Starting about nine years ago, they began making use of a dormant community compost bin in the East of the River community. “My conscience just feels better knowing that my food waste is not going to a landfill,” says participating community composter, Arkilah.

SiStained8 has a proud history of making compost education a priority with youth, adult, and senior affiliated programs and also representatives on both a local (Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)) and government level (United States Department of Agriculture). SiStained8 has begun creating equitable change by providing compost education lectures to senior citizens in the Saratoga, Northeast DC community, presenting to youth at DPR Summer Camps including Deanwood, Turkey Thicket, Ferbee-Hope and Rosedale recreation center locations and providing gardener educators with instructions on how to creatively engage their underserved students with compost knowledge.

SiStained8 is addressing inequities in DC through first prioritizing the engagement of youth populations in environmental (green) education and activities. Their work in Wards 7 and 8 could not come at a better time where youth populations do not always have a nurturing community that community composting can provide, albeit negative influences, through consistent program engagement.



(Photos: N. Womack)



## The Festival Center

1640 Columbia Road, NW  
<https://festivalcenter.org/>



Ribbon Cutting

**The Festival Center**, established in 1989 by the non-denominational Church of the Saviour in Washington, D.C., functions as a dynamic hub that blends religious and secular justice-centered programming. Situated in the Adams Morgan neighborhood, the Festival Center serves as a landmark and home to numerous organizations, fostering a generative environment for justice movements. 90% of their partners are BIPOC-led, emphasizing a commitment to supporting marginalized individuals. Notably, the School for Liberation, operating within the Center, educates and trains faith leaders, contributing

to efforts aimed at bringing about positive change in Washington, D.C., and across the nation.

The Festival Center further facilitates social impact by renting out spaces for offices, community meetings, educational classes, events addressing social issues, and a year-long service program connecting volunteers with local non-profit organizations.



The building's aging infrastructure, particularly the HVAC system, had previously incurred high annual electric bills exceeding \$50,000. Through collaborations with New Columbia Solar, the Center designed a system comprising 88 rooftop panels and 19 additional panels in awning style for enhanced energy production. The Festival Center is ahead of D.C. regulations requiring all new buildings to be fully electric in three years. The 19,000-square-foot center will surpass energy efficiency standards for buildings of its

size by 2033.





## Zoe Fisher, Anna Mayer, Maia Riggs

Co-Leaders and Student Advocates

**Zoe Fisher, Anna Mayer, Maia Riggs** were nominated for their exemplary environmental leadership in the student community. These students are leaders of the Sunrise Movement at School Without Walls High School. They have successfully mobilized students across the District to advocate the State Board of Education to pass a resolution for a *Green New Deal for Schools*.

The *Green New Deal for Schools* includes five demands: sustainable infrastructure, free and healthy meals, climate disaster plans, pathways to green jobs, and comprehensive climate curricula. If implemented, all DCPS schools would have all five demands, which we see as imperative to an equal, climate-change-prepared DC.

## Anna Mayer, Maia Riggs, and Zoe Fisher

Activists for the student-led Green New Deal for DCPS initiative.



Anna, Maia, and Zoe with other DCPS student activists, members of the SBOE, and the unanimously passed GND4S Resolution.

The students testified at State Board of Education public meetings in November and December 2023, and January 2024. Their written testimony is public record and on the State Board website.

# The Catholic University of America

620 Michigan Avenue, NE

<https://www.catholic.edu>



The Catholic University of America, recognized as the national university of the Catholic Church and the sole higher education institution established by the U.S. bishops, is at the forefront of championing a sustainable future through initiatives such as the West Campus Solar Array Project. Pioneering global environmental efforts, the University stands among the earliest institutions to commit to the Laudato Si' Action Platform, a Vatican initiative offering practical solutions to address our pressing climate crisis.



President Peter Kilpatrick, Engineering Dean John Judge, Dr. Nieh, and engineering students were on hand for a tour of the West Campus solar array in October of 2023. The tour was led by Clay Tharrington, Construction Manager of Sun Tribe Solar. Image by Patrick G. Ryan, University Photographer.

In 2009, Catholic University installed 2,600 solar panels on several campus buildings. At that time, it was one of the largest installations in the District of Columbia. These rooftop and canopy solar panels have a combined 677 kW of installed capacity.

In 2022, Catholic University broke ground on a new solar array on the University's campus in partnership with Standard Solar. The new array will be the Washington metropolitan region's largest urban solar array. The 7.5 MW DC (6 MW AC) ground-mounted solar array is currently under construction

with an opening date in Spring 2024. In addition to generating renewable energy, Catholic University has offset 100% of its electricity usage through the purchase of renewable energy credits since 2012.





For additional information about the District Sustainability Award Winners, please contact the Department of Energy and Environment, Urban Sustainability Administration, at (202) 535-2600.



DEPARTMENT  
OF **ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENT**

 **WE ARE  
WASHINGTON**  
 **DC** GOVERNMENT OF THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
**MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR**