

Trash to Fashion Show

During the month of June this year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) partnered with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to host and conduct 'waste upcycling' workshops with fifteen (15) secondary schools in Region four. These workshops introduced more than four hundred (400) students to basic upcycling techniques to transform solid waste; particularly waste packaging into useful products. As an incentive, students and teachers were given the chance to apply their knowledge and skills to create fashion pieces for display at a fashion show based on the theme 'Trash to Fashion' on September 29, 2015.



Winner of the Creative Award

This project aimed to educate, raise awareness and stimulate students and teachers to think critically about creative solutions to help address the waste management issues within their schools and communities. Culminating the project, the Fashion Show was set in the cool landscape of the Promenade Gardens, where students, teachers and other invited guests anxiously lined the catwalk to view the creations of 'Trash to Fashion.' Chairperson, Mrs. Candacie Brower-Thompson, Senior Environmental Officer of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), opened the event wearing a tibusiri straw and leather gown, a creation by popular fashion designer Carol Fraser. At the brief opening ceremony, remarks were made by Ms. Sharifah Razack, Director of Education at the EPA, Mr. Minuro Ito, JICA representative, and Mr. Kashir Ahamad Khan, Honorary Consul General, Japanese Consulate, and Mr. Emoule McDonald of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, under the Ministry of Presidency. Throughout the event the audience was treated to the sweet sound of theme appropriate steel pan music wafting the air.

Nine (9) secondary schools, stretching from Ann's Grove on the East Coast of Demerara to Covent Garden on the East Bank of Demerara, gracefully displayed their vibrant and creative pieces. Judging from the cheers and wows from the audience the creations were a display of sheer talent, creativity and enthusiasm. The first piece to appear on stage was from Annandale Secondary was a waistcoat made from a type of soft drink bottle labels complemented with matching slippers. Meanwhile, the judges kept their eyes fixed on the catwalk to decide on the creations that deserved the distinction of being the most creative, most marketable and the crowd favorite (WOW!).

Beterverwagting Secondary copped the distinction of being most creative with a well structured paper fan dress displaying the colours of our national flag the “Golden Arrowhead.” The most marketable piece was from Brickdam Secondary - a simple, weather-proof dress made from plastic and accessorized with a handbag made from woven paper rolls and plastic. The audience raised their ‘wow’ several decibels as Covent Garden Secondary stepped on the catwalk in a dress and umbrella artfully adorned with over a hundred foil “snack” packets. Other participating schools were St. Stanislaus College, Bladen Hall Secondary, Christ Church Secondary, and Golden Grove Secondary schools. All schools received certificates recognizing their participation in the event.



Now that's how you party!
Wonderful creation from Covent Garden secondary

The Fashion Show reinforced the need to find creative ways to manage our waste and to stimulate an understanding that many of the environmental issues we face can be managed with simple, innovative actions. The EPA and its partners hope to continually present events of this nature in an effort to foster life-changing environmental education.

Ms. Naoko Kanda, Senior Volunteer of JICA was instrumental in the development of the workshops as well as the fashion show. While volunteering at the EPA, Ms Kanda's work showcased the high value of using art and creativity in environmental education.



The First piece to appear on stage from Annandale Secondary



A pair of beautiful newspaper dresses from St. Stanislaus



Ms. Carol Fraser presenting a certificate to a participant



Winner of the Marketable award



Winner of the WOW award