



Joe Davis



Matt Budinger

2018 MWMC Above and Beyond Award – Joseph Davis and Matthew Budinger

As Outdoor Educators at Baltimore County Public Schools, Mr. Joseph Davis and Mr. Matthew Budinger have played important and essential

roles in raising the awareness of watershed issues and science for teachers and students in Baltimore County. By helping teachers develop lessons that are focused on the setting around their school and by leading field trips, Mr. Davis and Mr. Budinger have helped thousands of students understand their local watershed and environment and how it connects to the Chesapeake Bay.

Mr. Davis has worked tirelessly his entire career to promote environmental stewardship. As an Outdoor Naturalist, Mr. Davis has encouraged thousands of students to create a common understanding of our unique Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

- Mr. Davis has developed a watershed database for students to contribute data from their schoolyard that can be maintained county-wide and across the years. He conducts environmental education classes in an outdoor setting for several thousand students each year to collect data and learn how the whole county is connected. He visits school sites and encourages students to apply their knowledge from field trips to their school yard site. They analyze their school yard to measure the impact of their school on their local watershed.

Mr. Budinger establishes and adapts the outdoor program goals for the school depending on the needs of the students and requirements of each particular course. He adapts the planning and preparation of programming based on Office of Science directives.

- He also cultivates resources and relationships with stakeholders to provide additional opportunities for students. Mr. Budinger runs dozens of Ecology based field trips that include watershed care and management instruction while leading canoeing programs for hundreds of students.

Mr. Davis and Mr. Budinger were co-developers of the county-wide EcoBlitz where members of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources ran stations for students such as fish shocking, water quality analysis, and fish sampling. The students then analyzed the habitats and developed mitigation solutions for the competition. These practices of students collecting their own data and then analyzing it are at the leading edge of best practices for education and have been shown to increase student success.

- Mr. Davis frequently does evening outdoor programs for teaching staff, students, parents and community members to help them develop an understanding and appreciation for their watershed community.
- Mr. Budinger leads water quality testing field trips and encourages students to translate their experiences to their schoolyard. Mr. Budinger has worked with scientists from local universities to discuss the scientific background for water quality testing and ideas for ways to use water quality testing approaches that incorporate practices used by scientists and are achievable by students.