



## Media Release

**Audrey Hughes, Hilsman and Clarke Middle Schools, Athens, Georgia (Clarke County School District) recognized for Excellence in Energy**

**For Immediate Release – June 15, 2021**

Manassas, Virginia – The NEED Project is pleased to announce the 2021 recipient of the Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Award is Audrey Hughes of both Hilsman Middle School and Clarke Middle School in Athens, Georgia (Clarke County School District).

The Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Award was created by NEED in memory of long-time NEED teacher and staff member Bob Thompson. Bob was a dedicated teacher, friend, and proponent of science and energy education. His time at NEED enriched many, encouraged all, and improved the way we present and teach about energy in our curriculum and training workshops. Bob was a good friend to many here at NEED and he and his spirit live on in our work. Because of this, NEED established the Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Award that is given each year to a teacher who exemplifies Bob's childlike wonder of science, technology and energy.

The award includes a \$1,000 cash grant to the teacher to use as he/she chooses in the classroom and an all-expenses paid trip to the NEED National Energy Conference for Educators. The award will be presented to Audrey at the National Energy Conference hosted in Albuquerque, New Mexico, July 18-22, 2021.

Audrey goes above and beyond! She leads the science department, serves as the 21<sup>st</sup> Century After School Program Coordinator, is on the School Improvement Leadership Team, is the Science & Energy Team Sponsor, Green School Coordinator, Trash Hunger Campaign Sponsor, Cogent Education Partner for the National Institute of Health, and has served as the UNICEF USA delegate to Africa where she has presented twice. Audrey's passion for energy education spreads to her students as they were instrumental in the school district making district-wide changes to be more energy conscious and implement energy saving measures. The brand-new Hilsman Middle School is the most energy efficient middle school in the district.

Her nomination from Laura McGreevy shares, "Ms. Hughes unwavering commitment to science and energy education has been a beacon for all students who have shown interest and dedicated time to science and energy team projects. Projects that Ms. Hughes has inspired students to take on not only enrich their own science education, but also benefited our entire community."

Audrey's recommendation for this award highlighted her tireless efforts to continue keeping students engaged through the pandemic by providing exciting virtual lessons and virtual field trips. She provides a myriad of experiences for her students regardless of socioeconomic status or other challenging circumstances. Audrey fundraises and brings students to NEED's Annual Youth Energy Conference and Awards in Washington, D.C. each summer.

Congratulations to this dedicated energy teacher and longtime friend of NEED!

For more information about the NEED Project and the Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Award, please contact Mary E. Spruill at (703) 257-1117 or [mspruill@need.org](mailto:mspruill@need.org).

<https://www.NEED.org>

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