

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact:

Steve Perla, Diocese of Worcester , Catholic School Office (508) 929-4317

Mary Riordan, Holy Name Central Catholic Junior/Senior High School (508) 753-6371

**Holy Name Central Catholic Junior/Senior High School  
Announces Renewable Energy Project**

September 21, 2006 , Worcester , MA – Steve Perla, Superintendent, Diocese of Worcester Catholic Schools, formally announced Holy Name Central Catholic Junior Senior High School 's intention to pursue the construction of a wind turbine on its campus. After years of study and analysis of the various renewable energy options, wind power was determined to be the most effective solution—due largely to the School's windy, hill-top location.

Holy Name CCHS Headmaster, Mary Riordan approached Worcester Polytechnic Institute's ( WPI ) Student Projects Office in December 2003 to conduct a feasibility study of renewable energy options the school could explore. In January of 2004, the project was accepted and posted for student consideration.

It was over a year, however, before the project sparked the attention of student Hans Jensen, whose enthusiasm after viewing the site lead him to enlist three other students: Brian Foley, Tyler Forbes, and Adam Young along with a faculty advisor, Professor Alexander Emmanuel – an electrical engineer – to take on the project.

For the next several months, the students together with their advisor visited the school routinely to construct a wind gathering apparatus on the roof of the school and connect it to computers inside the building for analysis. The team continued to monitor and analyze the data to determine whether sufficient wind power existed on the site to meet the electrical needs of the school.

Holy Name CCHS Headmaster Mary Riordan stated the goal of the project is simple: conserve both financial and natural resources. Having served on the Auburn Conservation Commission for over two decades, Mrs. Riordan had an appreciation of environmental stewardship. She was convinced – having already undertaken a variety of energy-saving steps including installing motion lights, energy saving bulbs and window replacements – that investing in renewable energy was the only way to meet these objectives meaningfully for the long term.

“I view capitalizing on assets as a new direction for all our schools, which in Holy Name's case is its location and ability to produce an alternative energy source” said Steve Perla.

As the WPI team continued their analysis, they along with Mrs. Riordan visited a number of wind turbines throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island – including an extensive site investigation of its use in an academic setting at the Portsmouth Abbey School in Portsmouth , RI .

With all the facts in, the students determined that the school would need a 600 kilowatt turbine that would generate power in the range of 480-690 volts.

As the study continued, Superintendent Perla and Headmaster Riordan met in April with Congressman McGovern who has been extremely supportive of the project. “The active support of Congressman McGovern and his staff has been critical toward moving this project ahead, and we're truly grateful for his leadership and involvement,” Mr. Perla said.

To help fund the necessary experts to pull the project together, the Sisters of St. Anne has given a \$50,000

grant to the school. As a result, the school has been able to secure the services of one of the Northeast's premier wind consulting firms – Sustainable Energy Developments of Ontario, NY. The firm is working with the high school on both the technical and financial packaging of the project.

Most recently, Sustainable Energy Developments has submitted a grant proposal for \$575,000 to the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, the amount needed for preliminary construction and turbine installation readiness. The school has also applied to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) whose approval for such projects also is required. Both responses are expected later this fall.

With the hope of a clear path to pursue the project, Holy Name CCHS will need to raise an estimated \$1.6 million to construct the turbine. The school is exploring and applying

for state and federal energy grants such as the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative's program, as well as those from private foundations. It is also investigating innovative options such as Green Credits, where investors who fund such initiatives receive tax credits.

In addition, the school must secure approval from the City of Worcester including a zoning variance from city Board of Appeals, a building permit from city Engineering Office, and a determination of applicability from the Conservation Commission for the City. The school also is committed to an open process involving the community. Should the construction grant be approved, the school plans to hold public hearings for residents who would like to learn more about the project and its environmental and community impact. “We look forward to working with the City of Worcester and the community and its residents to mitigate any issues they may have”, stated Mr. Perla.

Despite the technical and financial challenges, the project would provide a win-win for the school and the community and set an example of how an innovative public-private partnership can serve the interests of all.

“Building public-private partnerships of this nature is the direction our school system is actively pursuing to meet the current and future needs of our students and the communities we serve,” Mr. Perla noted.

The project also brings significant educational value to Holy Name students and serves as a model of both scientific and human innovation even as it underpins the school's science curriculum.

“There is no doubt that savings tens of thousands of dollars is critical to the school, but as an environmentalist I have a real passion for this project and what it means in terms of being a good steward of the environment,” said Mary Riordan.

“I was so impressed at how seamlessly and efficiently the wind turbine was integrated on the Portsmouth Abbey campus, which is not unlike our own,” Mrs. Riordan added. “It was attractive, and the low-level sound it made actually reminded me of the sound my cat makes when he's happy.”