



## Tennessee Recycling Coalition's 2020 Recycler of the Year Awards Winners

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The Tennessee Recycling Coalition with its Board of Directors is pleased to present the 2020 Recycler of the Year Awards. TRC's Recycler of the Year Awards recognizes individuals, organizations, schools, and businesses in the State of Tennessee that have demonstrated a commitment to waste prevention and recycling. We commend all of the applicants for their contributions and we congratulate the winners in each category. If you would like more information on the criteria for these awards, listings of past winners, or more information about TRC, please visit our [website](#) for more information.

### **West Tennessee Regional Recycling Hub – 2020 Government Recycler of the Year**

The Recycling Hub was started in 2010 by TDEC, Chester County, and the Solid Waste Department to increase rural recycling in West Tennessee. The Recycling Hub partners with over 11 cities and counties and processes over 6,000 tons a year. The Hub serves 150,000 rural residents and 50,000 urban residents in the region. By introducing the recycling cart program in three cities, the number of participants increased significantly resulting in 50% increase of recyclables brought to the Hub by those cities in comparison to 2018.

In 2018, the Hub launched the “Volunteer to Recycle” slogan and created an education and outreach campaign geared toward educating residents, businesses, and municipalities about the advantages of recycling. The campaign also educates residents on the correct recyclables accepted at the Hub to increase recycling and reduce contamination. The Hub’s Education and Observation Classroom, social media, and community presence are utilized to educate the public on recycling and other environmental issues.

### **The Nashville Food Project – 2020 Non-Profit Recycler of the Year**

The Nashville Food Project brings people together to grow, cook, and share nourishing food, with the goals of cultivating community and alleviating hunger in their city through a just and sustainable food system.

TNFP originated in 2007 as the local arm of a Texas-based nonprofit, Mobile Loaves & Fishes. Since that time, it has served thousands of Nashvillians facing food insecurity through a meal distribution program. In 2011, TNFP was incorporated as an independent nonprofit, shifting the focus on their meals program towards collaborative partnership model and launching an urban agriculture program.

Their 2019 programming offerings consisted of:

- A partnership-based community meals program supported by their urban agriculture and food recovery programs. This program shared 264,868 meals in collaboration with 58 nonprofit partners.
- A food recovery program that diverted 145,037 pounds of edible food from the landfill, in partnership with 6 grocers and food wholesalers, 27 farms, 37 restaurants and caterers, 57 schools and community organizations and 68 individuals.
- An urban gardening program that provided agricultural space, training and resources to 69 families, prioritizing families that face barriers to accessing fresh food.
- A market garden program that supported 7 New American families from agrarian backgrounds in growing produce to sell for personal income total \$35,544.

#### **Florim – 2020 Business Recycler of the Year**

Florim USA, Inc. is an award-winning porcelain tile manufacturer, a leader in the global ceramic sector, and is committed to continued technological innovation in both tile manufacture and sustainability. Located in Clarksville, Tennessee, Florim USA is the largest single-site porcelain tile manufacturer in the United States. At the foundation of Florim USA's industrial operations is concern for and preservation of the environment. Observing environmental regulations through certified environmental and quality management systems, Florim USA is committed to the environment, constantly placing attention on ecologically friendly and sustainable production options.

At Florim USA, sustainability efforts are inextricably intertwined with the company's business and financial goals. Florim USA consistently implements innovative sustainable practices and is continually seeking opportunities for such practices to support those business and financial goals. Utilizing internally generated production scrap, various post-industrial wastes, and post-consumer scrap glass as novel raw materials; landfill diversion of many materials used at the facility; repurposing scrap pallets as well as reuse of our supersacks and recycling 100% of plant washdown water into the production process are a few of the ongoing sustainability efforts at Florim USA. Furthermore, the company is steadfast in the development of sustainable building products, both residential and commercial. Through comparisons of Life Cycle Assessments, porcelain tile is demonstrably more sustainable than other competing flooring and wall covering products

#### **Lipscomb Academy Lower School – 2020 K-12 School Recycler of the Year**

Lipscomb Academy Lower School students and faculty have continued their outstanding Environmental Program in 2019, including projects in which all students participate and a Green Team in which first and second grade students use science lab projects to learn about

sustainability and environmental protection. Results from all of their focused efforts are outlined below.

Energy Education efforts garnered awards for the Green Team, and in April they received both the Tennessee Primary School of the Year and the National Primary School of the Year awards from the National Energy Education Development Project.

Recycling efforts not only gathered the largest number of recyclable items in school history, but also earned \$250 in gift cards for those in need in the Nashville community, and encouraged the participation of nearly 400 households in the community in recycling efforts at home.

Water quality efforts included fundraising by the students in addition to the educational campaign for the SEED School (2- to 5-year-olds), resulting in a gift of \$500 to Healing Hands International for repair of a well in Zorange, Haiti to restore clean water to that community.

Community education efforts spread through the students to their families, who are encouraged to recycle at home, and to the community at large, who are encouraged to not only recycle at home but to bring items to Recycling Day that cannot be recycled through the current monthly curbside recycling program through Metro Water Services.

### **Tennessee Tech University – 2020 Higher Education Recycler of the Year**

In 2019 inspired by the motto “Purple Pride Goes Green”, the Office of Sustainability at Tennessee Technological University (TTU or Tech) led a holistic approach to improve sustainable management of the natural environment on campus. This approach included passing policy changes to preserve green space, supporting and expanding campus gardens, instituting an integrated sustainability-oriented system for landscape development and pest management, and earning multiple certifications.

The mission of the Office of Sustainability is to create a more environmentally friendly campus that provides mentoring and support through the integration of research and engagement for a sustainable campus. Its work is guided by the Sustainable Campus Committee. Its members are appointed by the TTU President and include students, faculty, and staff.

### **Keith Street – 2020 Tom Hattle Memorial Award**

Keith Street is the solid waste director of Putnam County. He is retiring at the end of 2020 and has made significant contributions to recycling in Tennessee. As solid waste director, Keith has helped with market studies on curbside and shingle recycling as well as managed, operated, and developed Putnam County’s solid waste and recycling program to date. During his career, Keith has worked with several different companies from tire recycling, to glass recycling, to setting up waste to energy plants. Keith was specifically instrumental in helping start a shingle recycling program in Putnam County. For six years, the program pulled over 30,000 tons of material from the landfill. This project trained the area businesses how to look at recycling in a positive light and the benefits of moving materials locally. For Keith Street, his job has been

much more than just a job. His job was a way to protect the public health in his county. His job was to educate, to help reduce cost for the county, and to provide infrastructure for the residents. As Keith looks to retire, the final measure of a true leader is how they leave. Keith is not only leaving a position; he is leaving a leader that he has trained. A man that is able to do his job with no lapse in service, growth, education, and motivation to continue to look for ways to change the status quo and look for ways to increase recycling or develop infrastructure or change the overall picture of waste in their community.

### **Brown Forman – Clifton Mill – 2020 Innovator of the Year**

The Brown-Forman Clifton Mill has been in Waynesboro, TN since 2001. They produce over 200,000-barrel sets of staves each year from the 10 million plus log feet of white oak purchased locally. The mill is a 2-shift operation with 62 employees comprised of 56 hourly technicians and 6 salary administrative and management positions. During the Covid crisis the mill has been able to maintain production by keeping employees safe. Temperatures are taken prior to each shift, and masks, gaiters, and hand sanitizer have been supplied to the employees as well.

The Brown-Forman Clifton Mill has been recycling since it started producing staves in Wayne County TN in 2001. The mill recycles used oil, cardboard and metal from the garbage, as well as byproducts from operations in the form of sawdust, wood chips. They also utilize the unusable portions of the white oak logs in the winter to fuel the furnace to heat the mill.

### **Refurban– 2020 Video Recycler of the Year**

[Link to Video](#)

Please visit our website (address below) for more details about the awards and our organization.