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## Clayton County Student Wins Water Essay Contest

Tamika High, a student at Forest Park Middle School, is the Clayton county winner in the annual Clean Water Campaign/waterSmart Essay Contest. High, an 8th grader in Ms. Anderson's class, was presented an award and a poster of her essay by District I Commissioner Carl Rhodenizer and Clean Water Campaign Coordinator, Kelley O'Brien.

The two organizations, Clean Water Campaign and waterSmart, teamed up to encourage children and parents to address the growing need to improve water quality and conservation efforts in Georgia. Students researched and shared their thoughts on why conserving water and preventing water pollution is important for the future of their rivers, lakes and streams. The main goal of this program was to encourage students to create solutions to water conservation and water quality in metro Atlanta.

In honoring High with her achievements, Commissioner Rhodenizer reviewed the history of Clayton County's commitment to providing clean water to residents by saying, "Over the years, the Clayton County Water Authority has developed innovative ways of treating and recycling waste materials." He also added, "Clayton County, Clayton County Water Authority and the cities within Clayton County (Forest Park, Lovejoy, Jonesboro, Lake City, Morrow and Riverdale) work cooperatively to protect the county's water supplies and natural stream systems."

Kelley O'Brien, from the Clean Water Campaign, introduced the essay contest winner and said, "Tamika's essay illustrated importance of protecting our water resources." O'Brien also strongly encouraged that the class compete in other water related contests across the state.

"Water is important because we need it. Water gives us the energy to do the things we need to do," High said in her winning essay. "All you have to do is conserve the water, and stop polluting the water."

The contest was open to sixth, seventh and eighth graders in Bartow, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Forsyth, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale and Walton Counties. Winners were selected in each county and an overall winner was selected from the county winners. County winners were awarded a Clean Water Campaign / waterSmart certificate given by their respective elected official at an award presentation. To view the essays go to the Campaign's website ([www.cleanwatercampaign.com](http://www.cleanwatercampaign.com)) and click on the essay contest link.

### **About the Clean Water Campaign**

The **Clean Water Campaign** is a cooperative, multi-agency public education initiative spearheaded by local governments in metro Atlanta, supported by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and managed by the Atlanta Regional Commission. Its mission is to build awareness of water quality problems and solutions in the Atlanta region.

### **About waterSmart**

The **waterSmart** program was initiated by the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority to educate metro area residents about "state of the science" methods for conserving water while maintaining beautiful lawns and landscapes. **waterSmart** tips were developed in conjunction with the Georgia Water Wise Council and the Cobb County Extension Service.