

Winston School students making campus greener



Winston School 12th-graders Raiden Merchant and Hannah Fantel-Galinson (Courtesy)

By Luke Harold

With an effort to eliminate single-use plastics on campus, students at The Winston School in Del Mar are joining a growing youth movement that wants to address climate change.

Students at the 6-12 grade private school also led an Oct. 3 walk-out to raise awareness of climate change, following two climate strikes in September that drew millions of participants around the world, spurred by 16-year-old Swedish activist Greta Thunberg.

Hannah Fantel-Galinson, a 12th grader, said she hopes their climate activism can gain traction and the community will see “this tiny school is making a difference.”

She and her classmates are in the process of getting water bottle refill stations to replace single use cups, as part of a longer-term goal of having a fully eco-friendly campus. Their new initiatives coincide with the latest major warning about climate

change: More than 11,000 scientists from around the world released an analysis in the BioScience journal Nov. 5 titled “World Scientists’ Warning of a Climate Emergency.” They wrote that combating climate change will require “major transformations in the ways our global society functions and interacts with natural ecosystems.”

Local governments have also been taking steps to create a more sustainable future. Del Mar, Solana Beach and Carlsbad teamed up to form the Clean Energy Alliance, which will begin providing more renewable energy to residents and businesses in 2021. Countywide, the San Diego County Association of Governments recently approved a state-mandated Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan, which its 21 members designed to build more housing near public transportation, with the goal of reducing emissions from cars.

Finn Aloy, an 11th grader, said climate change has been one of his biggest concerns for a long time, and much of the work ahead involves educating future generations.

But disputes over how to manage climate change, and whether human activity contributes to it at all, have complicated the way leaders across the United States are responding to it. At the global level, the Trump Administration has withdrawn from the Paris Accord, which set targets for reducing emissions, due to fears of adverse effects to the U.S. economy. Most climate-related legislation in Congress has stalled, with divisions along party lines.

“We need to make more compromise, work through it rather than yelling at each other,” said Winstron School 12th grader Raiden Merchant, whose mother had solar panels installed on the family’s home. “Educating people is hard sometimes, but not impossible.”