

# Université Laval reclaims top spot at Shell Eco-marathon Americas after tight race with rival University of Toronto

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NOTE: Please follow this link to the multimedia site for videos, photos and event B-roll: <http://bit.ly/1tSHngh>

Mater Dei supermileage team breaks own 2013 UrbanConcept category record with best run of 901 mpg; teams say goodbye to Houston one last time

Houston - After a nail-biting weekend of Université Laval and University of Toronto vying for the best mileage in the last Shell Eco-marathon Americas to take place in Houston, Université Laval's Alérion Supermileage team ultimately took top honors with an impressive achievement of 2,824 miles per gallon (mpg). With that kind of mileage, the Alérion Supermileage vehicle could travel from Houston all the way to Detroit - host city for Shell Eco-marathon Americas 2015 - on less than a half gallon of fuel.

Though Université Laval has dominated the competition five of the previous six years, they were almost dethroned by the University of Toronto due to some surprising friction problems that developed in the Laval team's vehicle's electrical system. Ultimately, however, the team overcame the obstacles and brought home the top \$2,000 prize once again.

"Our team is very excited with the results of the weekend," said team captain Audrey Lainé. "Initially we had issues with our engine, but we came together as a team to fix it and are extremely satisfied. The University of Toronto and Mater Dei High School had very close scores to our team, which made the weekend even more exciting."

In the UrbanConcept category, Mater Dei High School from Evansville, Indiana, achieved a solid 901.48 mpg with its gasoline vehicle Elroy, breaking its previous record of 849 mpg and scoring the top prize of \$2,000 for the UrbanConcept category for the third year in a row. The school's other entry, a Prototype battery electric vehicle, captured that energy category with 537.16 miles per kilowatt-hour (m/kWh).

Other top achievements included:

- \* Prototype diesel: The No Spark Plug Allowed team from Sullivan High School in Sullivan, Indiana, set a new record achieving 1,899.32 mpg with their vehicle Black Diesel.

- \* Prototype ethanol: The Tatonkatoo team from the University of Colorado Boulder in Boulder, Colorado, achieved 1,771.37 mpg with their vehicle Tatonkatoo.

- \* Prototype hydrogen: The UCDenver team from University of Colorado Denver in Denver, Colorado, achieved 37.37 m/kWh with their vehicle Archetype.

"We look at Shell Eco-marathon as a way to spark a passion for engineering among young people, as well as fuel the conversation around future energy challenges," said Wolfgang Warnecke, Shell Chief Scientist Mobility. "Each year we see new technologies that have been developed by these bright young minds, and we hope someday to see these innovations make their way into everyday vehicles."

Tech Advances Galore

Over its 30 various "editions," Shell Eco-marathon has seen radical changes in car design and the use of new technologies. For example, this year's electric-

battery vehicle of Saint Thomas Academy of Mendota Heights, Minnesota, sported a 3D-printed steering wheel that the team designed to improve upon its previous touchscreen steering wheel. Team captain Ian Nichols noted that the 3D-printed wheel includes a button for radio communication between the driver and the rest of the team, as well as an easily accessible throttle near the top right of the wheel.

St. Paul's School from Covington, Louisiana, created the seat in its UrbanConcept diesel vehicle Indy, inspired by Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark, by creating it from kombucha, a vegetable leather grown from yeast, sugar water and bacteria. Team member Marcus Garner said the team wanted to build fuel-efficient vehicles that incorporate natural materials and are also visually appealing.

Other technical advances included an entirely student-designed computer system developed by the Cedarville University team that measures factors like wind resistance and wheel speed in order to provide the team with real-time data to guide their driving strategy. Additionally, Rice University's vehicle, Alpha Centuria, was made to be ultra-lightweight with carbon fiber and composite materials, and Brazil's Universidade Federal de Itajuba team added solar panels this year to make its electric battery vehicle even more energy efficient.

#### Ingenuity, Flexibility are Key

Anything can happen with the vehicles, so teams must be ready to react and move quickly on alterations, or come up empty-handed. The team from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign learned, just nine days before the start of the competition, that its UrbanConcept hydrogen vehicle, EcoConcept, would not start due to a broken fuel cell. A last-minute decision was made to switch the vehicle to a gasoline-powered engine, a major challenge because the team's only experience was on hydrogen engines. They completed the changeover Saturday night during the competition but, despite their best efforts, couldn't complete a run this year.

#### Goodbye Houston, Hello Detroit

This year marked the eighth edition of Shell Eco-marathon Americas and the fifth year in Houston. The students will now gear up to take the Motor City by storm April 10-12, 2015. To drum up excitement for next year's event, Sullivan High School's winning vehicle will be displayed in Detroit's Henry Ford museum, and will be transported there by fuel efficiency expert Wayne Gerdes in the back of a 2014 RAM 1500 Laramie Limited using a new test market pilot fuel: Shell Diesel FIT.

New global partners HP, Michelin, The Linde Group and Southwest Research Institute assisted the student engineers by offering expertise, products and collaborative opportunities. The new partners added considerable value to the event, particularly with regard to innovation, technology, sustainability, mobility and tackling future energy challenges.

For more information on all 2014 events across the globe, including the complete Americas 2014 roster, schedule and official rules, please visit the Shell Eco-marathon website at [www.shell.com/ecomarathon](http://www.shell.com/ecomarathon).

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We also produce and sell petrochemical building blocks to industrial customers globally, and we are investing in making renewable and lower-carbon energy sources competitive for large-scale use. In the U.S., we operate in 50 and employ more than 20,000 people delivering energy in a responsible manner.

#### About Shell Eco-marathon

Shell Eco-marathon is a global program that challenges high school and college student teams to design, build and test the most energy-efficient vehicles. With annual events in the Americas, Europe and Asia, this innovation competition pushes future scientists and engineers to travel the farthest distance using the least amount of energy. Visit [www.shell.com/ecomarathon/americas](http://www.shell.com/ecomarathon/americas) to learn more about this program.

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