

Students model 'green' designs in botanical fashion show



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Above: Students Rider Murillo (left) and Alessa Calderon from West Miami Middle Community



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Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden recently hosted the annual Fairchild Challenge Botanical Fashion Show, featuring accessories that middle and high school students designed and made entirely from plants.

Student models wore their horticultural creations -- shoes, purses, hats, belts, parasols and jewelry -- as they descended the garden's majestic "Stairway of Style" at the visitors' center before a panel of judges. Elementary school students also staged a parade of animal species (masks).

Hundreds of teachers, environmental supporters and the local community attended the Dec. 3 fashion show; 140 high school students from 30 high schools and 169 middle school students from 28 middle schools competed.

Now celebrating its 10th anniversary, Fairchild Challenge is a multidisciplinary, environmental education outreach program for elementary and secondary school students. The program encourages students to appreciate the beauty and value of nature.

Each year before the "green" fashion show, students are asked to research and design horticultural accessories and to provide in a written statement the scientific and common names and useful properties of the plants, as well as their origins.

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Rd., one of the premier conservation and education-based gardens in the world, is a recognized international leader in both Florida and international conservation.

For more information visit: www.fairchildgarden.com.

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