

**Washington HS students taking sustainable energy and clean water to Zimbabwe**

*School plans to take 30 students to African nation in November*

*Oct. 17, 2017* — Booker T. Washington High School students are planning to travel to Zimbabwe next month to install student-designed wind turbines and water-filtration systems for the developing nation.

The engineering students have spent the past nine months working with their counterparts from Rydings College, a co-ed day and boarding school in Zimbabwe, to develop the turbines and filtration systems. Next month, a group of 30 are scheduled to travel to Zimbabwe to install and test the systems.

“The opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the people in Zimbabwe is once in a lifetime,” Washington High School Principal Carlos Phillips II said. “We are excited about the chance our students have to put everything they’ve learned to work in a real-life way. However, we are working hard to raise the funds to pay for the students. Hopefully, that will happen.”

More than 9,000 miles apart, the two schools formed a partnership last year when Phillips met Rydings Headmaster Jona Kondo during a STEM conference in Zimbabwe. Phillips, who was there as a keynote speaker, said he quickly noticed the need for clean water and reliable, sustainable energy.

As part of the partnership, 36 Rydings students came to Houston in March to help design and build four 250-watt, vertical-axis wind turbines and four portable water-filtration systems. Next month, Washington students plan to make the reverse trip to help install and test the systems.

“We determined that we shared a common teaching philosophy that encourages students to find solutions through self-directed learning using problem-based projects,” Phillips said. “We agreed that the students from our two schools should collaborate to devise a solution for these critical problems faced by many in Zimbabwe.”

Once the systems are installed, they will serve as a model for future development throughout the country.