



Medina Academy should be recognized with the Most Valuable Recycler (MVR) Award because our impact goes far beyond the number of cans collected—we have focused on spreading awareness, building partnerships, and inspiring diverse communities to take part in recycling.

1. **Multilingual Outreach:** A team of five middle and high school students translated *The Girl Who Recycled a Million Cans* into Arabic, now in production as an e-download on the Recycling Society's website. This will allow Arabic-speaking families anywhere in the world to engage with the message. We are also partnering with Arabic-language schools locally (such as [Ardmore Elementary, Bellevue](#)) for book readings and exploring additional translations, including Pashto, to expand reach and ensure inclusivity.
2. **Local Community Engagement:** Our students actively engaged the local community by visiting businesses and restaurants to spread awareness, collect cans, and establish ongoing collection points supported by posters and signage. These include [Shahana Steakhouse](#) in Bellevue, [Port of Peri-Peri](#) locations in Bothell and Kirkland, [MAPS](#), Redmond, and the [Together Center](#) in Redmond. The Together Center, which houses more than 15 nonprofits, has been especially impactful—serving as a high-visibility hub where hundreds of visitors learn about aluminum recycling and the Million Cans competition.
3. **Expanding Impact Through Strategic Partnerships:** We have reached out to King County to explore integrating the Million Cans curriculum into the [Green Schools program](#), helping scale this initiative to 53 other schools. In addition, we are in discussions with [Recology](#), the waste management company for the City of Redmond, to confirm that aluminum is recycled and how our school can help if there is a gap.
4. **Workplace Engagement:** Our families extended this initiative into their workplaces, including companies such as Microsoft, Amazon, Meta, and the University of Washington etc. By encouraging colleagues to participate, they helped expand awareness and increase can collection far beyond the school community.
5. **Social Media & Student Voice:** We leveraged social media to amplify our message and inspire others. 4th graders created and shared a video explaining the Million Cans initiative and [thanking Scuba Jess](#) for the books. Community Service Club students [gifted drinks in aluminum cans to local service workers](#) and have been going back to collect empty cans from [Fire stations](#) etc. Social Media Club produced videos emphasizing that [caring for the planet is everyone's responsibility](#). [Our youngest recyclers](#) also encouraged the community to donate more cans. These student-led efforts extended our reach and brought more people into the movement.
6. **Expanding Beyond Aluminum:** Our learning has extended beyond aluminum recycling to other materials as well. Community Service Club is passionate about keeping other heavy metals like copper out of landfills and organized a [used wire](#)

[recycling drive](#) to responsibly collect and recycle copper-containing materials, further broadening our environmental impact.

Through multilingual outreach, strong community partnerships, workplace engagement, and student-led advocacy both in person and online, Medina Academy has created a model that inspires others and drives meaningful recycling impact well beyond our school.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Medina Academy Students, Staff and Community.