

Summer 2013

# THE COMMON GOOD



Tom Nappi

By the time you read this, I will have enlisted the help of an inaugural congress of environmental educators to begin development of a meaningful, results-oriented stream restoration program for Maryland students.

It's an idea that came to me because of the great work so many classrooms are already doing in the streams and creeks around their

schools. I firmly believe that by pulling together our environmental science, math and social studies teachers, forward thinking administrators, and colleges professors seeking to engage students in their communities, we can, in pretty short order, have every school — public and private — adopt the stream or streams that run through their communities and develop long-term restoration plans for them.

Through their studies, our children have already learned that there is no easy button to make the Bay better, no magic wand for

reversing the damage we have done. But — thanks in part to the work of the Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature — they are also learning that to make the Bay healthier, we must start with our local waterways.

I believe we can create a lesson that connects our actions with the health of the Chesapeake Bay that raises the bar for environmental literacy while giving our young people real-world experience in and responsibility. I believe that we can be the first state in the nation to use our schools as platforms — to crowd-source the talent and energy of our young people — to lead the regenerative work that will ultimately allow our Bay to come back.

Our goal is to have this program in place for the 2013-14 school year, and as we move forward, I hope you will join the larger conversation. Our scientific experts, conservationists, river keepers and watershed groups will all be critical partners as we engage our young people in a truly meaningful stream restoration program that will produce results over the long term.

The work will not get done in the course of one school year. It might not get done in four years. But, over time, by restoring buffers, repairing stream banks, and monitoring water quality and aquatic animals, we can create a lesson that goes far beyond learning. And we can do enough good work to be able to look over our shoulders five, ten or fifteen years from now and see real, measurable improvements in our State's life's blood — our waterways.



Martin O'Malley  
Governor