

## 10 South Fork students spend day with leaders

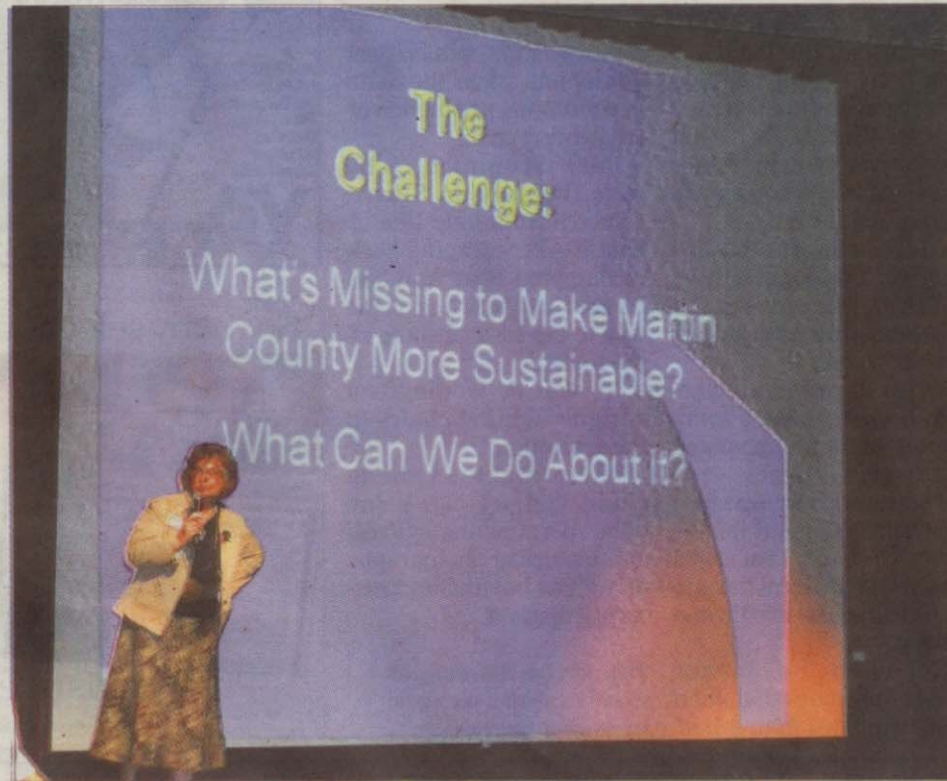
YOURNEWS • MARTIN COUNTY • WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2010

**BY JESSICA LAYNE**  
YourNews contributor

Through the Sustainable Martin Alliance, eight leaders from Martin County organizations volunteered their time recently to give Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate students from South Fork High School an opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of their community from a sustainability perspective.

During the highly acclaimed "Martin County 101: It's Different Here" education program, speakers offered information under a sustainability framework that included four key elements: the natural environment, the built environment, the economy and social systems.

The presenters were Stacy Ranieri from The Firefly Group; John Wakeman from the Environmental Studies Center; Boyd Gunsalus from the South Florida Water Management District; Scott Berry from the Children's Services Council; Dan Martinelli



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Nikki Van Vonno, from Martin County's Growth Management Division, talks to South Fork High School students during the Martin County 101 workshop March 24.

from the Treasure Coast Wildlife Center; Nikki Van Vonno from Martin County's Growth Management

Division; Brian Powers from the Indiantown Gas Company; and Crystal France from the Business

Development Board.

Having covered global sustainability issues in two classes previously, Stella

Boland, AP human geography teacher at South Fork, invited the Sustainable Martin Alliance volunteer speakers to address her students.

"I always try to present a global framework and then apply it at the local level," Boland said. "This is why this workshop is so perfect for my students. In fact, if we repeat this next year, every student graduating from South Fork in the IB program will have gone through this program."

Martinelli used plants and animals as part of his presentation. He discussed the economic and social impacts of various native versus exotic vegetation and wildlife, and the unintended negative impacts exotics can have on native species. Among the items popular with students were a baby alligator and a bofu marinus, commonly known as a bofu toad.

To register for the program, or for more information, call (772) 287-5272 or email [info@fireflyforyou.com](mailto:info@fireflyforyou.com).