

'A man who cannot save the bay fast enough'

[By PAMELA WOOD, Staff Writer](#)

Keith Campbell puts his money where his mouth is.

Campbell got super rich through the investment world - he acknowledges making a "ridiculous amount of money" - and has funneled a significant chunk of his profits into helping the environment.

Since 1998, his Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment has spent \$50 million on environmental efforts, most of them involving the Chesapeake Bay. He's the single largest private source of funds for bay restoration.

And last night, Campbell, who often remains out of the limelight, was honored with a special award from the Maryland League of Conservation Voters.

"I feel very lucky," Campbell said in an interview before the ceremony at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis. "I've been given an opportunity to make more money than I desire to take with me."

So he spends that money on the environment, often funding small groups that need a boost to get going. He has supported the bay's riverkeepers, small watershed groups and more.

Seeing those little groups flourish has been one of the most rewarding parts of his philanthropy, Campbell said.

In 2008 alone, the Keith Campbell Foundation gave nearly \$5 million to environmental causes. The grants often are enough to pay for an entire employee's salary, or in the case of the National Wildlife Federation, the grant was enough to establish an entire new office.

The grants pay for public television specials, environmental conferences, living shorelines, a radio show about climate change, new canoes at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, tracking fish kills in Virginia - and the list goes on. The Maryland League of Conservation Voters has been a grant recipient.

Chuck Fox, a top Environmental Protection Agency official working on the bay, said that the existence of riverkeepers and many small groups is due mainly to Campbell's philanthropy.

"This is a man who cannot save the bay fast enough," Fox said of Campbell.

In addition to his own work with the foundation and his company, Campbell & Company, Campbell is chairman of the board of trustees for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. CBF also has benefitted from Campbell's generosity.

In his acceptance speech, Campbell said some people with a lot of money consider it "stupid money" that allows them to get away with dumb things.

"I don't want to do stupid things, I want to do the right thing," said Campbell, who lives in Towson.

The League of Conservation Voters also honored U.S. Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski with the John V. Kabler Award, given annually in honor of a late founder of the league.

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