

Side Event:

Empowering youth engagement in climate action, solutions, and policy addressing global challenges

Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 16:45—18:15
Expo 2020 Blue Zone – SE Room 2 (173 pax)

Panelists represent the Youth Environmental Alliance in Higher Education, Climate Leaders Academy, SDSN Australia New Zealand Pacific, Smithsonian Institution, and young ambassadors from Boston University, Colorado College, Moravian University, Monash University, Tennessee State University, and Vanderbilt University.

Speakers:



Nadeem Hamidullah is a recent MBA graduate of Monash University and co-founded Peace Garden Afghanistan organization, aiming to foster education on climate change and its societal impacts. He is interested in climate and gender equality, youth leadership, and the representation of marginalized communities.



Kaaviyan Pathmasiri: Kav is an undergraduate mechanical engineering student at Monash University, whose passion lies in the dynamic and burgeoning energy sector. He is an active member of the Monash Energy Club, a student-run platform connecting peers with the energy industry. His engagement with Monash's branch of Precious Plastics has fueled a commitment to the circular economy, motivating him to apply engineering skills to innovate sustainable solutions for waste management.



Najma C. Thomas is a PhD student and research assistant within Vanderbilt University's department of Civil Engineering. Her interest in civil engineering stems from her love of sustainable infrastructure design. She graduated from a Dual-Degree Engineering program at Spelman College and the Georgia Institute of Technology with a B.S. in Physics and a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, respectively. During her undergraduate studies, she built capability within research-based design as demonstrated through contributions to various projects related to mechanical design, systems engineering, as well as physics through experimentation. Within her prior occupation as a Supply Chain Leader and Manager at Procter & Gamble (P&G), she cultivated her ability to innovate within time restrictive environments in order to make an optimal impact. Currently within her doctoral studies, Najma is researching the capabilities of utilizing smartwatch technology to detect heat stress in construction and maintenance personnel operating in outdoor environments as a means to prevent the onset of heat-related illnesses (HRI).



DaKennya Goines is a graduate student at Tennessee State University, delving into the realm of educational technology. She previously earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science with a focus on geography. Her current interest lies in the area of human geography as it refers to exploring the interconnectedness between communities, cultures, economies, and their environmental impact. As a current member of CLA (climate leadership academy) her geographical and community engagement interest has deepened, and she has an ignited a sense of urgency for educating the youth while expanding her understanding of climate action.



Zoraiz Zafar is a Mathematical Economics major at Colorado College with professional interests in economics Consulting and research interests in environmental

economics. He also has a strong interest in addressing the issue of debt sustainability in less developed countries through the SDG 17: Partnerships framework, particularly focusing on how impact investing and microfinancing initiatives can play into this problem. The prospect of implementing this concept in the South Asian countries of Pakistan and Sri Lanka is something that particularly fascinates him.



Sasha Gilmore is a third-year PhD student at Boston University in the Earth & Environment department. Her passion has remained rooted in environmental justice and climate action. She graduated from Dartmouth College with a B.A. in Environmental Studies. Growing up in a low-income community of color in Los Angeles, CA., she has always been conscious of our changing environment and what her community was exposed to. Her projects have revolved around Greenland flora and fauna and the impacts of warming temperatures, to the urban heat island effect in marginalized communities in Boston. Her current dissertation work focuses on marine and terrestrial heatwaves and the effects they have on coastal communities' subsistence living in Indonesia. After completed her doctorate, she plans to enter a field that will allow her to work alongside those in the most vulnerable positions, while leveraging what she has learned to uplift their voices in the sphere of climate action.



Allison Ludlow: As an undergraduate student at Moravian University studying environmental science and journalism, Allison is dedicated to promoting public awareness of climate-related challenges and sustainability initiatives through scientific outreach. As a contributor to the Moravian University Magazine and a member of the Marketing and Communications Department and through an internship with the Lehigh Valley Alliance for Sustainable Communities (Pennsylvania), she has had the opportunity to share her passion for conservation and sustainability with the local community. Additionally, her study abroad experiences in Costa Rica have provided an opportunity to share the cross-cultural knowledge that is necessary to promote an intersectional approach to achieving sustainability goals.



Lucy Kramer is originally from Indiana and is currently an undergraduate student and Bonner Fellow studying anthropology and philosophy at Colorado College. She also an artist and writer, and has a special interest in indigenous peoples, non-market approaches, and NDCs.



Dr. Carol O'Donnell is the Senior Executive and Director of the Smithsonian Science Education Center, dedicated to transforming K-12 Education through Science™ in collaboration with communities across the globe. Carol serves on numerous national and international committees dedicated to STEM education, including the Federal Coordination in STEM Education (FC-STEM) whose purpose is to advise and assist the Committee on STEM Education (CoSTEM) and the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy in developing strategic investments in STEM education across Federal agencies in the US; the InterAcademy Partnership Science Education Global Council, an appointment by the US National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; and the UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development Working Group for Digital Learning. Carol began her career as a primary school teacher and served as a group leader and program officer at the US Department of Education.

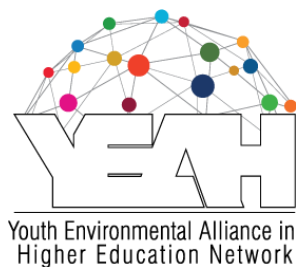
Moderator:



Dr. Diane Husic, Founding Dean of the Center for Scholarship, Research and Creative Endeavors at Moravian University (Pennsylvania, USA). She is also Professor of Biology and the director for the Environmental programs at Moravian, teaching courses related to climate change, environmental health, environmental science, and sustainability. Her research

focuses on the ecological restoration of a contaminated site and ecological monitoring for climate change impacts along mountain landscapes. She has attended the COPs since 2009, currently serving on the RINGO steering committee and task forces for the Technology Executive Mechanism. She is also a co-founder of the Camaquiri Conservation Initiative in Costa Rica – a 500-acre rainforest preserve for education and research, and she serves on the board and chair of the conservation science committee for Hawk Mountain Sanctuary – an organization that is a global leader in raptor science and conservation.

Panelists will provide perspectives on the role of education in preparing the next generation of environmental stewards and leaders who are global citizens with sustainability mindsets. Student representatives from several campuses and countries will describe unique ways in which they are moving knowledge into action – sharing insights and sustainable solution-oriented ideas. Besides amplifying youth voices globally, they serve as catalysts for change through knowledge sharing and action in their home communities. Additionally, panelists will share ideas for improving education to better prepare students to be not only good environmental stewards, but leaders, innovators, and problem solvers in the sustainability and climate spaces.



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