

2026 NEO Youth Climate Summit: By the Numbers

Event Participation:

- **Goal:** 500 students attending!
- **421** registered students
- **361** students attended; **31** different schools represented
- **58%** CMSD students; **25%** private school students; **1%** homeschooled students; and **74%** public school students
- **41%** of students are 8th graders (a new addition this year!)
- **50** volunteers, representing close to **20** organizations, including **15** repeat volunteers from 2025 and **2** returning Laurel School grads!

Community Engagement:

- **7 sponsors**, including:
 - Remaining 2025 funding from Earth Rising Foundation;
 - 2 returning funders;
 - 3 individual donors;
 - And Laurel School providing the remaining gap funding
- **17** unique breakout sessions designed by students and partner organizations
- Internationally recognized youth climate activist speaker, Leah Thomas

Planning Team:

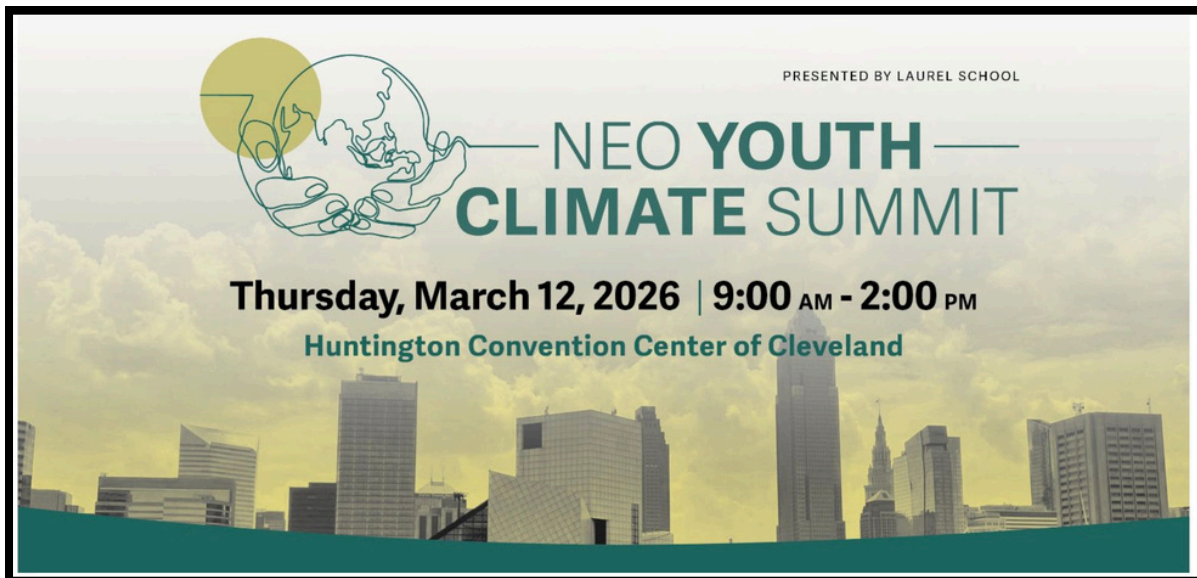
- **30** students from **8** schools
- Supported by **9** adults from **6** different organizations

Networking & Collaboration:

- Representatives from **30** organizations participated in:
 - Student Opportunities Fair
 - Breakout session collaborations
- A Summit Celebration Wrap Party hosted in collaboration with Trust for Public Land
 - **15** attendees, representing over **10** organizations

Want to help plan our 2027 and 2028 future summits? Want to be a sponsor?

Email info@neoycs.org to get connected with the team!



2026 Program Guide

Keynote Speaker:



Leah Thomas

Leah Thomas is a celebrated environmentalist based in Los Angeles, CA. Coining the term "eco-communicator" to describe her style of environmental activism. Leah uses her passion for writing and creativity to explore and advocate for the critical yet often overlooked relationship between social justice and environmentalism. Her work includes consulting with brands like Apple and TAZO, projects with Meta, KEEN, TEVA, Indie Best Selling Book *The Intersectional Environmentalist*, and working on the communications team at Patagonia.

Leah has been named to several notable lists—including Forbes 30 Under 30 2024, TIME100 NEXT, INSIDER's Climate Action 30, Marie Claire's Creators to Watch, EBONYPower 100, and InStyle's The Badass 50—and is an established public speaker who has presented at Apple, Google, 1% for the Planet's Global Summit, Meta, Dreamforce, Elon University, UCLA, and more. Her writing has appeared in a variety of publications, including *Vogue*, *Elle*, *Marie Claire*, *Teen Vogue*, *The Washington Post*, and *Highsnobiety*. She has also been featured in *Harper's Bazaar*, *W Magazine*, and CNN as well as ABC News, NBC, The Weather Channel, and numerous podcasts.

Summit Schedule

8:30 AM: Arrival, Check-In, & Registration

9:00-9:30 AM: Welcome Remarks & Community Activity

9:30-10:05 AM: Keynote Speaker + Q&A with Leah Thomas

10:15-11:10 AM: Morning Breakout Sessions

11:15 AM-12:30 PM: Lunch; Volunteer/Opportunity Fair + Student Poster Session

Summit Schedule

12:35–1:25 PM: Afternoon Breakout Sessions

1:30–1:55 PM: Closing Remarks

2:00 PM: Departure

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 10:15-11:10 AM

Women in Politics, Room 207A (2nd Floor)

In this session, students will learn how they can address the climate crisis, starting in their own community, while looking through the valuable lens of legislation and initiatives. Hearing from two elected women at the local and state level, students will gain insights into the intersectionality of women, politics, and the environment, equipping students with the tools needed to use their voices for environmental change through an interactive solutions-based activity.

Led by: Students Esther Tan & Claire Witalec, Laurel School with Courtney Zimmerman of Cuyahoga Falls School Board and Representative Juanita Brent of The Ohio State House

Community Lab for Upcycling & Building, Room 207B (2nd Floor)

In this interactive session, participants will explore how upcycling can serve as a practical and creative response to real community needs. Students will learn to assess local challenges, collect recyclable and upcyclable materials, and design purposeful projects that transform waste into functional solutions. Through hands-on mini projects, participants will experience how accessible and engaging upcycling can be, while considering ways to implement sustainable building and reuse practices in their own communities.

Led by: Student Acoy Miller & Principal Aziz Ahmad, Intergenerational Schools

Fishing for Trash - Cleaning Up Ohio's Waterways, Room 207C (2nd Floor)

In this session, students will learn about the history of pollution/littering in Northeast Ohio's communities and waterways and the issues that are still currently affecting these communities. Participants will get the opportunity to discuss the ways in which they have seen these issues affect their own communities and how they can have detrimental effects to the health and wellbeing of a community. At the end, they will get to test their knowledge with a Jeopardy style quiz!

Led by: Students Mack Gilbert & Kaisa Strautnieks, Laurel School

C.A.R.E.S. - Collective Approach for Restoring our Ecosystem, Room 302 (3rd Floor)

This session engages youth in hands-on coral, fish, and substrate monitoring, empowering the next generation of marine scientists and ocean stewards through real-world reef conservation. Explore how engaging youth in marine monitoring builds real-world scientific skills, deepens environmental responsibility, and creates pathways into blue-economy careers.

Led by: Greg Hood, Scuba Instructor and Marine Conservation Leader, SYATT & The Ohio State University

From Local Communities to Global Impact - International Partnerships for Climate Action, Room 304 (3rd Floor)

International connections are necessary to make meaningful change. In this session, students will explore how to bridge local initiatives with those across the world to facilitate cross-cultural collaboration. Students will hear from a speaker who promotes advocacy and international partnership in countries across the world and participate in an activity that teaches them to mobilize people towards a common goal. By the end of the session, students will be equipped with a global mindset and the blueprints to launch their own initiative.

Led by: Student Hannah Rosenfeld, Laurel School & Joe Cistone, IPM

From Sky to Shore - Connecting Air Quality and Lake Erie's Future, Room 307A (3rd Floor)

What does the air we are breathing above us have to do with the water that is beside us? More than we can even begin to imagine. In this session, we will explain the direct relationships between pollution from emissions, climate change, and atmospheric contaminants that affect the quality of water in the Lake Erie watershed. We will also highlight a number of youth-driven methods that help to lower our total environmental impact, which will protect both the air we breathe and the water we drink.

Led by: Students Michael Cacioli, Danny Yuhas, and Aiden Yu, Gilmour Academy

Nature Knows Best: Eco Innovation through Biomimicry, Room 307B (3rd Floor)

Students will explore how nature has continuously provided an efficient, sustainable, and trailblazing guide for human innovation. In this session, you will dive deep into biomimicry's significance through a brief presentation followed by a Q&A. We will then conclude with a hands-on activity and student-led discussion to reinforce student understanding.

Led by: Students Chloe Ng, Yamini Sridhar, & Katie Spellacy, Laurel School and Dr. Lara Roketenetz, University of Akron Field Station

Stylish and Sustainable - The Negative Side of Fast Fashion and Applicable Solutions, Room 308 (3rd Floor)

Just trying to dress yourself can feel like an ethical dilemma. It can feel overwhelming to disengage from fast fashion in an affordable and practical way. In this session, we'll cover the negative impacts of fast fashion, including the wasteful and dangerous practices used by fast fashion companies during production, health issues that result from microplastics in fast fashion garments, and the pollution that garments and textiles cause once discarded. We will navigate how to make environmentally conscious fashion decisions by discussing ways to prolong the life of garments, including how to repair and upcycle clothing. Together, we'll learn how to make decisions as consumers while being both stylish and sustainable.

Led by: Aidan Meany, Found Surface & Students Violet Gonzalez, Zoe Pierce, Gray Olson, Lakewood H2O "Help to Others" Program, Lakewood High School

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS: 12:35-1:25 PM

Climate Disasters & Global Health: Global Health Solutions for a Changing World, Room 207A (2nd Floor)

Explore how climate disasters around the world, such as droughts in central Africa, earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, and the recent Los Angeles wildfires, impact global health issues ranging from mental health concerns to poor water quality to disease outbreaks. Analyze international case studies to dive deeper into the direct effects of climate disasters on an entire community's health and quality of life. Lastly, collaborate with peers to study national and global responses to climate disasters, while brainstorming creative and effective solutions to ongoing climate emergencies.

Led by: Students Asalé Jones and Jannah Kazmi, Laurel School

Enough With the Waste – Let the Wind do the Work. America, It's Clothesline Time! Room 207B (2nd Floor)

Line drying laundry is one of the simplest, most overlooked climate solutions hiding in plain sight. In this session, we'll explore how a basic household habit can cut carbon emissions, reduce energy demand, and dramatically lower the release of microplastics into our air. By connecting everyday choices to big-picture climate impacts, we'll show how small actions scale - especially when adopted across communities. Participants will also take part in an interactive activity that highlights how quick and effortless line drying can be, and how youth leadership can help normalize low-tech, high-impact climate solutions.

Led by: Student Shannon Mullaly, Home-School Student

Build Your Own Park - Cleveland's Native Resources and Nature Conservation, Room 207C (2nd Floor)

In this session, students will be informed on the environmental role of local metroparks. Through a hands-on "build your own" activity, students will investigate components of a successful space for enrichment and conservation of our community's native species and resources. This will be accomplished in a case study, interactive fashion.

Led by: Student Ana Rubio-Calvillo, Laurel School & Western Reserve Land Conservancy

***SPECIAL SESSION* The Fight For The Environment in State Politics, Room 302 (3rd Floor)**

From data centers to renewable energy, this session will unpack the top environmental debates currently unfolding in Columbus. We'll examine the political landscape, uncover the challenges that are slowing progress, and discuss practical strategies for getting involved. Come and discover how you can play a pivotal role in shaping Ohio's environmental future.

Led by: Ohio State Senator Kent Smith

From Macro to Micro - The Ripple Effect of Plastics, Room 304 (3rd Floor)

In this session, you will delve into the far-reaching effects of both macro and microplastics on our ecosystems, closely examining microplastics under a microscope. Through collaborative brainstorming, you will explore innovative solutions to address this pervasive issue. A guest speaker will share invaluable expertise, sparking a deeper discussion on the necessary individual actions and systemic reforms needed to combat plastic pollution on a global scale.

Led by: Students Carina Kosla and Diya Anand, Youth Eco Impact at Brecksville/Broadview Heights High School

The Work of the Youth Environmental Press Team, Room 307A (3rd Floor)

In this session, students will take a step into youth environmental journalism and writing professionally. Diving into the work of the Youth Environmental Press Team, participants will explore published works by peers around the country, voyage through a journalism crash course, and have the opportunity to start stories that they can publish themselves.

Led by: Students Asal Mohammadi & Anya Ustin, Hawken School

Fresh Water Institute - The Power of Youth Perspective for the Great Lakes, Room 307B (3rd Floor)

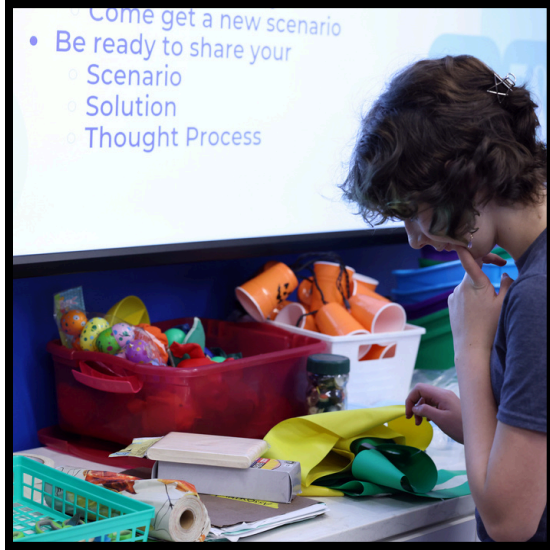
This youth-led session centers the Great Lakes as both a vital natural resource and a living classroom. The Fresh Water Institute's Fresh Water Fellows will share their experiences in the program and how hands-on learning has shaped their understanding of water, climate impacts, environmental justice, and regional stewardship. Through guided conversation, participants will contribute their own insights and ideas, creating a collective exploration of the challenges facing the Great Lakes and identifying pathways toward sustainable, community-driven solutions.

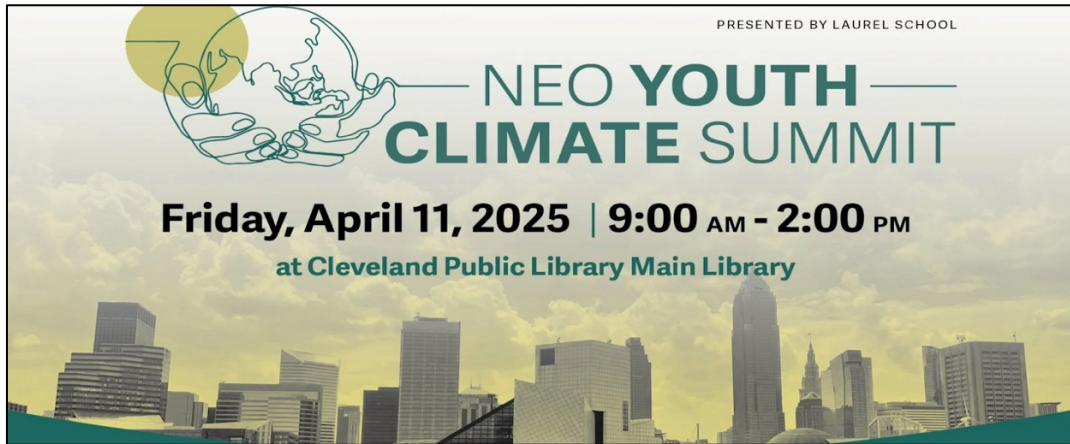
Led by: Students Delona Trice, Aaliyah Robinson and Jayla McLeod, Fresh Water Institute with Erika and Ebony Hood, SYATT

Sustainable Film Making, Room 308 (3rd Floor)

Step into the world of filmmaking! In this session, you will experience an immersive lesson on the lack of movies available about environmental issues and harmful production processes. You will engage in an activity exploring how to create a synopsis about environmental issues and different ways to be sustainable during production.

Led by: Student Sofia Teresinski, Laurel School





2025 NEO Youth Climate Summit: By the Numbers

Event Participation:

- **306** registered students; wait-list of **100+** middle school students
- **280** students attended; **27** different schools represented
- **56%** private or charter schools and **44%** public schools
- **53** volunteers, representing over **20** organizations
- All goals achieved that were set in 2024!

Community Engagement:

- **27 sponsors**, including:
 - Foundations and local organizations,
 - Educational institutions and government partners,
 - Community-based organizations (CBOs) and utilities;
 - And **5** individual donors!
- **14** unique breakout sessions designed by students and partner organizations
- Internationally recognized youth climate activist speaker, Sage Lenier

Planning Team:

- **24** students from **6** schools
- Supported by **4** adults from **4** different organizations

Networking & Collaboration:

- Representatives from **32** organizations participated in:
 - Student Opportunities Fair
 - Breakout session collaborations
- A Networking event hosted in collaboration with Trust for Public Land
 - **50** attendees, representing over **30** organizations or schools



PRESENTED BY LAUREL SCHOOL

NEO YOUTH CLIMATE SUMMIT

Friday, April 11, 2025 | 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Cleveland Public Library Main Branch | Stokes Wing



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Sage Lenier

Founder of *Sustainable and JustFuture*,
Climate Justice Activist

Sage Lenier is a climate activist, educator, and sustainability advocate known for her work in reimagining environmental education. She gained recognition for developing and teaching the *Solutions for a Sustainable & Just Future* course at UC Berkeley, which focuses on practical, systemic solutions to environmental and

social crises. Lenier is also the founder of Sustainable & Just Future, a nonprofit dedicated to empowering young people with knowledge and tools for building a more sustainable world. Through her work, she emphasizes optimism, community action, and the importance of systemic change in addressing global challenges. We are thrilled to have her as our guest speaker for this year's NEO Youth Climate Summit as a beaming light for young people demanding change in the face of the climate crisis.

8:30 AM: Arrival, Check-In, & Registration: Louis B. Stokes Building | Ground Level / Entrance

9:00–9:15 AM: Welcome Remarks | Lower Level, Auditorium

9:15–9:30 AM: Plenary - Climate Science 101 by Climate Reality Project | Lower Level, Auditorium

9:30–9:45 AM: Community Activity | Lower Level, Auditorium

9:45–10:15 AM: Keynote Speaker - Sage Lenier | Lower Level, Auditorium

10:20–11:10 AM: Morning Breakout Sessions

11:15 AM–12:30 PM: Lunch & Volunteer/Opportunity Fair | Common Area

12:35–1:25 PM: Afternoon Breakout Sessions

1:30–1:55 PM: Closing Remarks | Lower Level, Auditorium

2:00 PM: Departure: Louis B. Stokes Building | Ground Level / Entrance

1: Building a Better World: Problem Solving with Sage Lenier | Lower Level, Auditorium

Join our keynote speaker, Sage Lenier, for an interactive workshop in which students will ideate solutions to problems our world faces. You will develop a solution by identifying why the problem exists, who put the system into place and what incentives they have to keep it that way.

Led by: Sage Lenier: Sustainable and Just Future & Student Faye Moledina: Laurel School

2: Making Access to Green Space More Equitable in Cleveland: A Model of Youth-Led Civic Action | Conference Room B

In this session, students will investigate disparities in access to green spaces and their impact on communities. Through a hands-on mapping activity, they will identify patterns of inequity, discuss the social and health consequences, and brainstorm actionable solutions to promote environmental justice. This engaging experience will highlight how access to nature is not just an amenity but a crucial issue of equity and well-being, and students will get a chance to learn about the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights in partnership with the Western Land Conservancy.

Led by: Renee Boronka: Western Reserve Land Conservancy & Students Ashley Ceden, Yazmyn Moore, Torrey Merrit, Jaxon Ebner, Arpan Ghising, Samil Mahat, Hunter Hill, and Derek Tran: John Marshall High School: CMSD

3: Where Flowers Are Planted, Hope Grows | Conference Room C

Pollinators play a crucial role in our ecosystems and food supply, yet they face increasing threats. This session explores why pollinators matter and how simple actions can support them. Participants will engage in discussions, explore key issues, and take part in a hands-on milkweed planting activity to promote pollinator-friendly spaces in their communities.

Led by: Cleveland Botanical Gardens & Student Julia Angert: Saint Joseph Academy

4: Plastics & Petrochemicals: How Communities Organize for Change | Legacy Room

Plastics and petrochemicals are deeply connected to environmental justice, from toxic incinerators to misleading "advanced recycling" facilities. In this breakout session, you'll hear powerful stories from frontline organizers fighting pollution, explore community-led solutions, and discover ways to take action. Through hands-on activities and discussions, we'll map out strategies to protect communities from environmental harm and hold corporations accountable. Whether you're into activism, policy change, or creative problem-solving, this session will equip you with the tools to make a real impact in the fight for a plastic-free, just future!

Led by: Vicky Abou-Ghalioum: Buckeye Environmental Network & Student Mack Gilbert: Laurel School

5: Sustainable Choices in Fashion | Conference Room E

Step into the world of sustainable fashion! In this interactive session, students will explore the hidden costs of fast fashion and discover eco-friendly alternatives that are both stylish and sustainable. Through hands-on activities, participants will engage with secondhand and upcycled clothing to create their own unique outfits, sparking conversations about mindful consumer choices. Walk away inspired to shop smarter and dress sustainably!

Led by: Cathi Lehn: Plastic Free CLE/Cleveland Sews & Students Isabel Alvarez, Tori Brown and Avalon Woconish: Beaumont School

6: Downstream Impact: Connecting Climate, Sewers and Equity in NEO | Common Area 1

Join the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS) and the Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD) for an engaging exploration of community equity. Learn about Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs)—what they are, why they matter, and how they impact our region. Discover the power of green infrastructure and how we can educate our communities about CSOs. We will create personal action plans, and this session will equip you with the knowledge and tools to tackle climate challenges and advocate for a more sustainable, equitable future in Northeast Ohio.

Led by: Robin Halperin and Jessica Shetty: Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Timothy Becker: Cuyahoga County Soil & Water Conservation District & Students Anya Ustin and Kaisa Strautnieks: Laurel School

7: Achool!: Climate and Health Degradation and the Invisible Systems That Activate Them | Common Area 2

This session focuses on the intersection between climate change and its disproportionate effects on vulnerable populations. We will explore how climate-related phenomena, such as extreme weather, air pollution, and rising temperatures, exacerbate existing health disparities in communities of color, low-income groups, and other marginalized populations. The session will also address strategies to mitigate these disparities through equitable solutions through an activity discussing three different spheres and severities of solutions.

Led by: Dr. Shannon Conrey: Case Western Reserve's Swetland Institute & Student Asal Mohammadi: Laurel School

8: Climate Justice for Northeast Ohio Schools: Campaigning for Change |***Lower Level, Auditorium***

Schools should be safe, healthy places to learn—but outdated infrastructure, poor air quality, and reliance on fossil fuels create real challenges. This session explores how students can advocate for clean energy solutions in their schools through the Green Schools Campaign. Through hands-on activities and real-world success stories, you'll gain the tools to start or strengthen a Green Schools Campaign in your own school or district—because students have the power to drive change!

Led by: Cate Henning: Green Schools Campaign/Climate Reality Project & Students Jalsha Basnet, Maya Stark, Olivia Taylor, Reem Alzin, and Sana Ali: John Marshall High School, CMSD & Student Hannah Rosenfeld: Laurel School

9: Harvesting the City: The Benefits of Urban Farming | Conference Room B

Urban farming is transforming cities by providing fresh food, promoting sustainability, and creating greener communities. This session will explore the importance of urban farming, showcasing real-world examples like rooftop gardens, hydroponics, and community farms. Participants will engage in discussions, hands-on activities, and brainstorming to discover how they can implement sustainable practices in their own schools and communities, leaving with practical knowledge and ideas to take action.

Led by: Sara Continenza: Food Strong & Students Michael Cacioli, Sean Porter, and Teacher Darci Sanders: Gilmour Academy

10: Planet vs. Policy: Environmental Legislation of the Past, Present & Future | Legacy Room

In the Environmental Policy & Legislation breakout session, we will be exploring how laws and programs of the past and present have impacted the environment and informed advocacy efforts. We will achieve this goal through an interactive timeline game, followed by a discussion about the present and future of environmental policy under the current administration led by Ohio Senator Kent Smith.

Led by: Kent Smith: Ohio Senate & Students Ivey Williams and Fara Latifi: Laurel School

11: Consuming Mindfully and Disposing Sustainably | Common Area 1

Consuming Mindfully and Disposing Sustainably focuses on how the products we choose can affect the planet and how best to dispose of them once they've been used to their fullest extent. We will also explore how to evaluate our purchasing choices and decide what's best for us and our Earth!

Led by: Zoe Apisdorf: Rust Belt Riders & Students Ashley Eggleston, Faye Moledina, and Jannah Kazmi: Laurel School

12: Building Resilience: Climate Disasters and Community Health | Common Area 2

Explore how climate disasters around the world, such as droughts in central Africa, earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, and the recent Los Angeles wildfires, impact global health issues ranging from mental health concerns to poor water quality to disease outbreaks. Analyze international case studies to dive deeper into the direct effects of climate disasters on an entire community's health and quality of life. Lastly, collaborate with peers to study national and global responses to climate disasters, while brainstorming creative and effective solutions to ongoing climate emergencies.

Led by: Grace Robbins: National Academy of Medicine & Students McKeely Kemock and Asalé Jones: Laurel School

13: From Macro to Micro: The Ripple Effect of Plastics | Conference Room C

In this breakout session, you will delve into the far-reaching effects of both macro and micro plastics on our ecosystems, closely examining microplastics under a microscope. Through collaborative brainstorming, you will explore innovative solutions to address this pervasive issue. A guest speaker will share invaluable expertise, sparking a deeper discussion on the necessary individual actions and systemic reforms needed to combat plastic pollution on a global scale.

Led by: Jill Bartolotta & Mark Warman: Ohio Sea Grant and OSU Stone Laboratory & Students Carina Kosla and Diya Anand: Youth Eco Impact: Brecksville/Broadview Heights

14: Youth Environmental Press Team: Amplify Your Voice for the Planet | Conference Room E

Meet with Ohio's first Youth Environmental Press Team (YEPT) chapter and learn how to turn your passion for the environment into published journalism! This student-run news source is looking for young writers to craft engaging, well-researched environmental articles—and get paid for their work. Learn how to use storytelling to drive change, explore opportunities to contribute original content, and discover how journalism can be a powerful tool for environmental advocacy.

Led by: Teacher Saber Melendez & Student Mack Gilbert: Laurel School





PRESENTED BY LAUREL SCHOOL

NEO YOUTH CLIMATE SUMMIT

SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2024 | 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM | CWRU Think[box]

2024 NEO Youth Climate Summit: By the Numbers

Event Participation:

- **120** registered students
- **90** students attended
- **15** different schools represented
- **25** volunteers, representing over **12** organizations

Community Engagement:

- **17** sponsors, including:
 - Foundations
 - Local organizations
 - Educational organizations
 - Utilities
 - Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
- **8** unique breakout sessions designed by students and partner organizations
- Internationally recognized climate activist keynote speaker, Xiye Bastida

Planning Team:

- **12** students from **2** schools
- Supported by **4** adults from **4** different organizations

Networking & Collaboration:

- Representatives from **25** organizations participated in:
 - Student Opportunities Fair
 - Breakout session collaborations
- A Networking event hosted in collaboration with Trust for Public Land
 - **50** attendees, representing over **30** organizations or schools

Goals for 2025 NEO Youth Climate Summit:

- 300 student attendees
- 30 schools represented
- 12 unique breakout sessions
- Nationally recognized youth climate activist keynote speaker
- 30 volunteers
- 20 sponsors



— NEO YOUTH — CLIMATE SUMMIT

PRESENTED BY LAUREL SCHOOL

SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2024 | 11:00 am–4:00 pm



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Xiye Bastida: *Climate Justice Activist*

At 21, Xiye Bastida is a powerhouse in the climate movement. Her activism, which began with organizing a walkout of 600 students at her school has led to mobilizing record-breaking climate strikes in New York City. She co-founded the Re-Earth Initiative, with a mission to make the climate movement accessible to all. Xiye's powerful voice reached world leaders at the Biden Climate Summit and COP26, advocating for climate justice and youth involvement. Recognized by Forbes, TIME, and the UN, she champions a just transition to clean energy and sustainable practices and wrote the first chapter of "All We Can Save," a beautiful anthology

of essays, poems and writings by 60 women at the forefront of the climate movement. Now, Xiye extends her impact through her upcoming documentary "The Whale Lagoon." Her unwavering dedication to protecting people and the planet inspires us all to be a part of solutions for a better future.

10:30–11:00 am: Arrival and Check-in at the Think[box] | **2nd Floor**

11:00–11:45 am: Welcome and Opening Ceremony | **1st Floor, Room 1**

11:45 am–12:45 pm: Breakout Sessions (60 minutes each)

Indigenous Voices with Xiye Bastida | 1st Floor, Room 1

Join our keynote speaker, Xiye Bastida, for an interactive workshop to explore Indigenous and Environmental Rights Movements across the globe. Xiye, a member of the Otomi Indigenous group in Mexico, grew up learning Indigenous philosophies with a main tenet being 'we all take care of the earth, because the earth takes care of us'. Through discussion-based conversations, utilizing the traditional circle, and collaborative knowledge, we will learn from one another and walk away with new perspectives. The knowledge gained from this session can be applied anywhere when fighting for social justice.

Led by: Xiye Bastida, Re-Earth Initiative & Students Fara Latifi and Faye Moledina

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Breaking Barriers: Intersectionality and Access to Justice | 1st Floor, Room 2

This breakout session aims to teach students about the principles and importance of intersectionality as it relates not only to individual identities but also to environmental justice issues. After a brief introduction and icebreaker led by the Sierra Club's Chad Stephens, students will engage in an interactive simulation mimicking how different identities and experiences might dictate their vulnerability to various environmental issues. Although the session will be concluded with time for reflection, students are encouraged to share thoughts, feelings, and realizations throughout the activity, promoting active learning in real-time.

Led by: Chad Stephens, Sierra Club & Students Asale' Jones & Ivey Williams

Cultivating a Green City: Cleveland's Climate Action | 1st Floor, Room 3

In the Taking Action in Cleveland breakout room, students will engage in an interactive simulation, taking the perspectives of council members, citizens, and industry representatives to tackle a goal and find common ground. The simulation is modeled after environmental justice issues that Cleveland faces, and students involved will learn more about how Cleveland is tackling environmental justice and have the opportunity to work on skills of collaboration and problem-solving as they draft a conclusion for the future together.

Led by: Philena Seldon, City of Cleveland Mayor's Office of Sustainability & Student Eva Ko

Stitching the Future: Fast Fashion and Sustainable Mending | 2nd Floor, Room 4

In this Breakout Session, students will learn about what sustainable fashion is and will have the opportunity to participate in a sustainable mending workshop. Exciting leaders like Cathi Lehn and Sharie Renee will lead the mending workshop and show a presentation, designed to educate students on how to mend and use fashion in a sustainable way.

Led by: Cathi Lehn, Circular Cleveland; Sharie Renee, Cleveland Sews & Students Jannah Kazmi & Ashley Eggleston

12:45–1:15 pm: Lunch | **2nd Floor**

1:00–1:15 pm: Break

1:15–2:15 pm: Breakout Sessions

From Awareness to Action: Environmental Justice and Advocacy | 1st Floor, Room 1

Youth engagement is crucial in the environmental justice movement! In this breakout session you will learn about the major environmental justice issues in Cleveland and how to take action by contacting lawmakers and advocating for change. Students will also learn about Laurel School's Environmental Justice Semester, a program consisting of interdisciplinary lessons on environmental and social justice, as a means to work towards solutions ranging from individual to global.

Led by: Brian Siggers, Ohio Environmental Council; Angela Yeager, Laurel School's Environmental Justice Semester & Students Faye Moledina, Iris von der Heydt & Ashley Eggleston

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Strive to Thrive: Sustainability and Healthcare | 1st Floor, Room 2

In the Strive to Thrive: Sustainability and Healthcare breakout room, students will have the opportunity to become educated on how to cultivate healthier communities by diving deeper into local environmental health issues. Largely focused on the intersectionality between healthcare and the climate crisis, students will gain a greater understanding of systemic issues, along with the impact of their individual choices. This breakout session will not only educate, but inspire future sustainable healthcare professionals and those wanting to lead healthier lives!

Led by: Kim Foreman and Arianna Mack Environmental Health Watch & Students Madeline Friedman, Mack Gilbert, and McKeely Kemock

Cultivating a Green City: Cleveland's Climate Action | 1st Floor, Room 3

In the Taking Action in Cleveland breakout room, students will engage in an interactive simulation, taking the perspectives of council members, citizens, and industry representatives to tackle a goal and find common ground. The simulation is modeled after environmental justice issues that Cleveland faces, and students involved will learn more about how Cleveland is tackling environmental justice and have the opportunity to work on skills of collaboration and problem-solving as they draft a conclusion for the future together.

Led by: Philena Seldon, City of Cleveland Mayor's Office of Sustainability & Student Eva Ko

Spend Green, Buy Green, Live Green: How to be a Sustainable Consumer | 2nd Floor, Room 4

Do you want to shop greener? This breakout room is for you! We will focus on educating students on how to become sustainable consumers. Through making reusable bags, learning about solar energy, and correctly disposing of food waste, you will understand how to make small changes in your everyday life to decrease your carbon footprint. Presentations and most importantly, hands-on demonstrations and collaboration among students will leave you with the knowledge to turn your life and others around you to sustainability.

Led by: Courtney Freyhauf, NOPEC; Katharyne Starinsky, Cuyahoga County Department of Sustainability; and Robert Kurtz, Rust Belt Riders & Students Laina DiGeronimo, Kaisa Strautnieks & Elle Richey

2:15–2:30 pm: Break

2:30–3:00 pm: Keynote Speaker Xiye Bastida and Audience Q&A | **1st Floor, Room 1**

3:00–3:30 pm: Youth Panel: Hosted by Erika and Ebony Hood: Syatt *Students:* Ashley Eggleston, Madeline Friedman, Jorge Espada-Davila, Trinity Pruitt, Delona Trice, and Jonah Rosario

Closing Remarks: County Executive Chris Ronayne & Student Faye Moledina | **1st Floor, Room 1**

3:30–4:00 pm: Internship, Volunteer, & Opportunities Fair | **2nd Floor**

4:00 pm: **SUMMIT ENDS** | Students depart **2nd Floor** for parking and drop-off & **1st Floor** for Rapid Transit

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