

The National High School Climate Forum



February 2022 Newsletter

“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”

- George Bernard Shaw, Irish Playwright

What is the National High School Climate Forum?

The National High School Climate Forum was established in 2020 to foster an exchange of ideas between student environmental leaders at high schools across the country. We accomplish our mission through our communications, speaker events, and our annual NHSCF Youth Summit which takes place in May of each year. Our monthly newsletters represent our primary communications related to fostering an exchange of ideas. Each NHSCF newsletter contains sustainability tips, information related to extracurricular environmental programs, links to interesting environmental articles, and, most importantly, written descriptions of the various initiatives taking place at our member schools. In addition to these newsletters, we host monthly Delegation Meetings dedicated to discussing environmental issues in a live setting. The National High School Climate Forum is committed to climate education, as well, and, as such, we host speaker events on different topics twice a year. Our two 2020-2021 events were dedicated to wildfires and sustainability on college campuses, respectively. Finally, our annual youth summit provides students with the opportunity to present their work for the rest of the forum and concludes each NHSCF year. With this in mind, we are excited to have you and your school in the forum this year and can't wait to see what we can accomplish!

NHSCF Winter 2022 Speaker Event Recap

Climate Intelligence: AI and Technology in Action

On February 9th, 2022, from 7-8pm ET, the National High School Climate Forum hosted our Winter 2022 Speaker Event, titled ***Climate Intelligence: AI and Technology in Action***. The event consisted of presentations by our two speakers: **Ms. Bonnie**, Head of Environmental Justice and Founding Member of the AI for Earth Program for Microsoft, and **Dr. Stacey Gifford**, Managing Director of IBM's Future of Climate Initiative, followed by Q&A. Ms. Lei and Dr. Gifford discussed a variety of projects that their respective companies are working on, ranging from utilizing AI to speed up creation of new materials to aid in carbon reduction and sustainability to tracking and identifying animal populations around the world to support conservation goals. We hope that all of you in attendance at the event enjoyed it and learned a lot and we hope that those of you who were unable to attend will watch the recording below. Remember: Your initiatives make a difference and it will ultimately be up to all of us to continue this fight in the decades to come!

Here is the Link to the Webinar Recording:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MTOsZWH3T7fgtT1fVHkB SsQ-TKQaljhN/view?usp=sharing>

Outside Environmental Programs

Bedford 2030: Climate Action Now

Bedford 2030 addresses the issues of climate change and fights for clean air, water, and land through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the community and beyond. Bedford provides resources such as videos and articles about taking action and other sustainable tips. If you are in the New York area, you can also take action by volunteering or joining events that are hosted by Bedford 2030. The organization sponsors several tools including a carbon tracker that teaches people how to make changes to lower their carbon footprint over a ten year period, as well as the Greenlight Award, a high school competition that allows students to take sustainable action in their schools or communities with support from Bedford 2030. The Greenlight Award promotes students to pitch an idea, either advocacy or innovation, which addresses climate change. The teams then receive funding to fulfill their projects and reach their goals which they will later present and possibly win cash prizes.



Audubon Canyon Ranch : Conservation in Action

This program, available nationwide, gives students an opportunity to get hands-on experience in conservation. Participants learn from professionals ranging from “research ecologists to land stewardship practitioners” and explore many aspects of conservation science. The program features speaker panels, exploration in different professions of conservation science, while developing leadership skills. You can explore different preserves or even become an ACR volunteer to clear trails, remove invasive species, and more.



NHSCF Announcements

1. The deadline for submissions to the NHSCF 2021-2022 Sustainability Competition will be Sunday, April 10th, at 8pm ET. Winners will have the opportunity to be Co-Presidents of the NHSCF in the 2022-2023 school year, and win a pizza party for their club/organization! As always, you can find the competition booklet on the Delegate Dashboard of our website.
2. The NHSCF 2022 Summit will be the afternoon of Sunday, April 24th (Eastern Time) and will be required for all delegates to attend. Please mark the date off on your calendars now!

If you are not a member of the Writing Subcommittee but are interested in contributing something to our March Newsletter, please reach out to Alex at

abnoviello23@lawrenceville.org.

January 2022 Sustainability Initiative Spotlights

Thank you to all of those who contributed!

Emily K. '23 - Rye Country Day School, NY

"We are working with our cafeteria to help reduce food waste, as well as the use of plastic utensils and plastic water bottles. In the future, we hope to install rain gardens across our campus and work with Save the Sound, an organization that could potentially help us decide where to install the gardens. As the weather gets warmer we would like to do a few beach cleanups and possibly a tree planting day."

Michael '23 and George '23 - The Roxbury Latin School, MA

"We have several fundraisers at our school that go toward environmental causes, like onetreeplanted. We also try to encourage students to ride their bikes to school by funding bike racks, as well as cutting down the school's use of paper during paper drives in which we discourage printing and use compost and recycling bins at the cafeteria and throughout the school. "

Lawrence L. '22 - The Thacher School, CA

"Years ago, The Thacher School implemented key structural changes to confront the ongoing threat of the climate crisis, especially considering our location in dry southern California. The Environmental Action Committee was one of the big results of these new changes. The club is run by two students elected by a faculty committee, who delegate and lead subcommittees dealing with animal husbandry (chickens, hogs, bees) as well as community-based programs (resource management, activism, camping and other outdoor programs, and engagement with the local community). We mainly run campaigns dealing with water and electricity usage and conversation, on our campus and beyond. "

Maggie L. '23 - Episcopal Academy, PA

"The EA Student Alliance for Sustainability is having discussions with the cafeteria leadership to cut down on plastic waste, offer more vegetarian options and less red meat, as well as possibly implementing a composting system. Coming up in the Spring, we are also hoping to continue working with our township's sustainability association to do more tree plantings, as well as build some owl boxes for the Eastern Screech Owls! We also hope to plan a fun Earth Week in April for our school with grade competitions and such."

Chris A. '22 - The Gregory School, AZ

"We're working on developing a Climate Action Plan for the school. The plan includes initiatives such as solar panels, electric car charging stations, and electric vans for the school. Although the administration expressed openness to our plan, they've yet to provide the information needed to get started on most of our initiatives. The school recently started composting food scraps from the dining hall as well."

Sustainability Initiative Spotlights Continued...

The NHSCF hopes that these initiatives will inspire you to emulate them with similar projects at your schools!

Aydan A. '23 - The Peddie School, NJ

"We have a composting initiative in our dining hall where we work with a local farms to feed animals with our excess food. To encourage students to do compost we create posters of animals to put around the school as well and do announcements during school meetings. We work with our local watershed to host/sponsor activities for kids at our school to plant trees, pick up trash, and more at different local parks/areas as well. We also send out a weekly newsletter that educates the members of our community about different environmental issues every week. Every Earth Week, we coordinate a competition between teams of students for points. Lastly, we try to raise awareness about invasive species and new laws (like NJ's upcoming ban on plastic bags)."

Amelia R. '24 - The Polytechnic School, CA

"Currently, my schools ongoing environmental initiatives include closing the loop on our organic waste system by sorting our food waste, diverting it from the landfill, and changing our energy sources to solar and other sustainable options. We plan on having on-site composting for all of our organic waste for all three divisions of our school. In addition, we have been changing all lighting to sources that require less energy, including in the gymnasium and in our classrooms. We are focused on connecting with the community to push our efforts to the broader surrounding area, as well."

Amina S. '23 - Detroit Country Day School, MI

"Our school has planned to fundraise by making sweatshirts, candy grams, and/or conducting bake sales outside of our school campus. We will be donating the money to local non-governmental organizations. We are open to any ideas and initiatives."

Coco W. '23 - The Cambridge School of Weston, MA

"Our Sustainability committee includes both faculty and students and seeks to make our campus more sustainability, in addition to promoting awareness within our community. In previous years, we have worked on assembly presentations, as well as transitioning the school to reusable utensils and LED lights. This year, we are focusing on recycling, sustainable art (using art to promote climate justice), and collaboration with our board of trustees to increase students' involvement."

Maddy G. '22 - Moses Brown School, RI

"At Moses Brown we recently implemented a composting system throughout our campus to limit food waste. During the warmer months of the year, our Environmental Council works with our lower school in the community garden to help inspire early environmental awareness. Recently, in December, members of our Environmental Council also spent 10 or so class periods teaching our 9th graders about environmental education, advocacy, and sustainability. I am hoping that we can also have a "Meatless Monday" lunch menu since we know that meat is a significant contributor to GHG emissions."

Interesting Articles and Important Environmental Topic Links:

Ukraine-Russia Conflict and Climate Change:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/23/business/economy/russia-ukraine-energy-security-climate-change.html>

(The NHSCF sends our best wishes to any Ukrainian students at our member boarding schools reading this newsletter!)

Interesting Climate Change Interactive from CNN:

<https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2019/09/world/climate-change-before-after/>

Hope you enjoy these articles and find them interesting!



Thanks for Reading!

- *The National High School Climate Forum*