

Youth Environmental Summit (YES!)



2022 Workshops Descriptions

Rebels of the Moon: How Radical Self-Love Can Change the Planet

"Radical self-love summons us to be our most expansive selves, knowing that the more unflinchingly powerful we allow ourselves to be, the more unflinchingly powerful others feel capable of being." - Sonya Renee Taylor

This workshop would include a small yoga, meditation, journaling and partner discussion about what it means to radically love yourself and others. We will dive into the importance of self-change for world change. Together we will explore why taking care of ourselves and our personal needs matters. When we dare to love who we are, we step into creating social and environmental justice for all.

Presenter: Katrina Alden, Rebels of the Moon

Be the Lorax and Speak for the Trees: Help Your School Become a Tree Campus K-12!

"I speak for the trees! Let them grow! Let them grow!" – The Lorax, Dr. Seuss

Do you want to be the Lorax for your school? Trees provide many benefits to communities from improving air quality to providing shade and providing wildlife habitat (and so much more)! In this workshop we'll explore the benefits of trees and learn about the Arbor Day Foundation's nationwide recognition program, Tree Campus K-12. Learn about the steps needed to have your school recognized and become Vermont's first Tree Campus K-12.

Presenter: Gwen Kozlowski, UVM Extension, Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program

How Does Change Happen?

Join 350Vermont for an interactive and engaging workshop on how we think societal change happens through the 4 R's - Resist, Reform, Reenvision, and Recreate. Discuss with your peers how you think we can change our world and which ways of change-making you are most drawn to being a part of.

Presenter: Sonia Silbert, 350Vermont

Sorting it All Out in Your School Cafeteria!

A well-designed cafeteria sorting station supports students in separating their food scraps, recycling, and trash, enhancing a school's sustainability efforts. This presentation will feature examples of sorting stations and the details of what has been found to work well in sorting station design and use. Participants will leave with great ideas for what to consider for a new or upgraded sorting station in their school cafeteria!

Presenter: John Jose, Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District

Stormwater Solutions: Learn How to Slow the Flow

Stormwater is water from rainfall and melting snow or ice that moves over the land and collects pollutants as it makes its way to lakes, ponds, streams, and other surface waters. In urban areas, stormwater reaches surface waters more quickly and in larger volumes during and immediately following rain events than it does in natural areas. This workshop will explore what stormwater is, how it impacts water quality and engage in a hands-on slow the flow experiment to learn how to reduce and treat stormwater on site.

Presenter: Ashley Eaton, UVM Extension - Lake Champlain Sea Grant

Teens Reaching Youth (TRY) for the Environment

TRY stands for Teens Reaching Youth and is an environmental leadership opportunity for students in grades 7-12. It is an environmental education program taught by teens and designed to increase environmental literacy and responsibility in younger youth. TRY for the Environment includes five different program areas to connect young people to real-world environmental problems allowing them to be key change agents contributing to real-world solutions. The program areas include: renewable energy, waste solutions, food systems, forests & trees, and water. Come to this workshop to learn how YOU can become a teen teacher and make a difference!

Presenter: Lauren Traister, UVM Extension 4-H, and past TRY teen teachers

Intro to Peecycling: How to Reclaim Urine as a Resource for Clean Water and Sustainable Farms

Urine contains all of the vital nutrients that plants need to thrive. Instead of flushing urine downstream, where it fertilizes harmful algal blooms, we can reclaim it to fertilize farms and support local food systems. Come learn about how peecycling can help solve some of the greatest global challenges today: watershed nutrient pollution and fertilizer shortages. The Rich Earth Institute operates the first and largest community scale urine recycling program in the US. We will present the facts about urine recycling – why it's needed, how it works, and how you can get involved. Pee the change you want to see in the world!

Presenter: Julia Cavicchi, Rich Earth Institute

Sweet Energy Improvements

This workshop will teach a mathematical approach to analyzing energy efficiency improvements in a home scale (30-80 tap) maple syrup operation. Firewood is a renewable energy source, but shouldn't be wasted. We show how a small hand built reverse osmosis system can cut wood burning in half while using only a small amount of electricity. Demonstrating how to measure the sap's sugar content with a refractometer will be included.

Presenters: Adrian Owens, Sterling College, Environmental Science and Outdoor Education

Implementing VT's Climate Requirements with Vermont Energy & Climate Action Network

With enactment of the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA), Vermont has made a legally binding commitment to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. In December 2021, the state formally adopted our Climate Action Plan as required by the GWSA, which outlines recommendations for addressing climate change through mitigation, resilience, and adaptation measures. The Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network (VECAN), Vermont's network of 120+ town energy committees, plays an integral role in achieving energy progress at the community level. Join VECAN to learn more about the framework for climate action that our state has created to work on emissions reduction, how to plug into this work at the local level, and what progress has been made thus far in enacting our Climate Action Plan requirements.

Presenter: Greta Hasler, Vermont Natural Resources Council/Vermont Energy and Climate Network

Internship and Research in the Environment

The UVM Rubenstein School claims a storied history of preparing environmentally and socially responsible leaders, scientists, practitioners and advocates who understand the interdependence of people and healthy ecological systems. A science-based curriculum, focused on experiential learning, inspires students to apply knowledge to real world projects. Come hear from current UVM students and/or staff as they share their projects and internships in helping to solve environmental challenges.

Presenter: Akol Aguek, Meghan Young, and UVM students, UVM Rubenstein School of Environment & Natural Resources

Climate Justice

Climate Justice starts with the idea that the negative impacts of a warming climate are not felt equitably among people across the globe. In this interactive workshop, you'll gain first-hand perspective about how the climate crisis impacts people differently. For some, climate change is a business opportunity. Conversely, others experience social, economic, public health, and other adverse impacts, with some having to leave their land and become climate refugees. This workshop, led by CVU seniors and Environmental Action Club leaders Emma Kim and Sloane Roy, will include small and large group discussions where you'll interact with others to truly recognize why these inequities are so important to understand as we work to create climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. You'll also have a chance to hear about the Climate Ribbon Project and add your own ideas to our project – "What do you love and hope you'll never lose due to climate chaos?"

Presenter: Emma Kim and Sloane Roy, Champlain Valley Union High School, Environmental Action Club (EnAct)

Communicating Climate Change

This workshop will explore strategies for effective climate change conversations to various audiences from students involved in The Climate Consensus on the Northern Vermont University - Lyndon campus. By starting with a quick overview of what climate change is and what its impacts are, tips on how to have a discussion with friends, family, or other audiences will be shared from a student perspective. We will have an open discussion with students participating to allow them to express concerns, ask questions, or share experiences about communicating climate change. We will also discuss what The Climate Consensus does to help the conversation about climate change through empowering the next generation of scientists to speak up for the truth and the future.

Presenters: Gabrielle Brown, Luke Morin and others, The Climate Consensus, Northern Vermont University - Lyndon

Do You Really Need That? Climate Change, Resource Use, and Impacts of Your Stuff

How does waste relate to climate change? What can you do to reduce the impacts of all the stuff you use every day? This workshop will help change your perception of waste to that of resources that can be used again and again. We'll explore sustainable materials management – the use and reuse of materials in the most productive and sustainable way across their entire life cycle. Learn how you can inspire yourself and others to conserve resources, reduce waste and slow climate change.

Presenters: Anne Bijur, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Beyond Landfilling and Composting: Converting Food Waste to Fuels and Chemicals

This workshop will provide an overview of anaerobic digestion as an alternative food waste management strategy, emphasizing the role of anaerobic digestion in Vermont to produce electricity and renewable natural gas. Further, this workshop will discuss research happening at the University of Vermont to convert food waste into valuable chemicals.

Presenter: Matthew Scarborough & Amy DeCola, University of Vermont

Pollution Prevention and Watershed Planning

Using a hands-on, tabletop model and Lake Champlain Basin as a focus area, the workshop will teach participants about how polluted runoff impairs lakes and rivers and how watershed planning can restore waterways and reduce pollutant loading. Topics covered include point and nonpoint pollution sources (urban, industrial, forested, and agricultural), toxic substances, phosphorus, pollution prevention, and watershed planning.

Presenter: Katie Darr, Lake Champlain Basin Program

Youth Climate Activism

We will be presenting on the process of planning the Youth Lobby's annual Rally for the Planet and other events that the Youth Lobby has run, in addition to giving an outline of the planning process to organize a youth summit or rally. Through our own extensive and anecdotal experience, we will give advice about how to get involved in youth climate activism and how to organize events to make meaningful change.

Presenter: Miriam Serota-Winston and other student members, Vermont Youth Lobby

Environmental Careers

In this workshop we will explore different environmental careers by talking with staff from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and members currently serving in ECO (Environmental Careers and Opportunities) AmeriCorps. Careers take many different paths, find out what opportunities exist, get your burning questions answered and learn how you can take steps to develop your own career protecting our Earth's natural resources. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation is the part of state government tasked with protecting our air and surface water and drinking water resources. ECO AmeriCorps is Vermont's year-long service corps providing passionate people the opportunity to serve the environmental needs of Vermont communities.

Presenters: Dustin Bowman, Madeline Cotter, Catie Bartone, ECO AmeriCorps

Let Rivers Run: Maintaining Natural Rivers and Floodplains

In this workshop will use a stream table, which is similar to a raised sandbox with water flowing through it. As the water is pumped through the system, different conditions can be simulated to show how rivers and floodplains react to floods, drought, erosion, and sediment deposition. The stream table helps show how to maintain rivers and protect human infrastructure. The stream table will be facilitated by AmeriCorps members who can answer questions about career opportunities in river science, ways youth can be involved in protecting rivers, the benefits to fully functioning rivers and floodplains, and the effects of poor river management.

Presenters: Mary Perchlik, ECO AmeriCorps

Youth Climate Leadership: How to Make a Difference in Your School, Town or State

Did you know that Vermont now has a Climate Action Plan, and that youth like you are helping to shape what it looks like? Come to this workshop to hear first-hand about all the ways that youth are being heard and making a difference all over Vermont, and how you can, too. We will look at Vermont's Climate Action Plan, and get you thinking and planning out ways that you can take action on climate in your school, town or state. From one of VEEP's Youth Climate Fellows (and recent Youth Climate Leaders Academy graduate), you will hear tips and tricks for climate leadership, and have time to consider what changes you want to see happen in your community. Finally, you will leave with tools, resources and contacts to get you started or support the work you are already doing to create the climate future we all need.

Presenter: Mariah Keagy, Vermont Energy Education Program, Energy Action Projects