



VTeen 4-H Science Pathways Café

Saturday, January 13, 2024, 5 – 7 p.m.

University of Vermont, Davis Center, Mansfield Dining Room, Burlington, VT



Life in a Drop of Water: A Deep Dive into Aquatic Microbiology and Phytoplankton

Within a single drop of water — smaller than the width of a human hair — you can find some of the most diverse life on Earth. These microbial creatures range from the beautiful (“living stained glass” diatoms) to the dangerous and strange (helmeted fleas and toxin-producing cyanobacteria). Though you cannot see them by eye, these organisms are foundational to supporting all life on Earth via oxygen production, primary production (photosynthesis), and nutrient recycling roles in ecosystems. In this café we will interact with aquatic microscopic life in Lake Champlain, mud puddles and the ocean using microscopes; learn about the importance of microscopic aquatic life (and why NASA is sending algae to space!); compete for prizes; and even create living mini-ecosystems in a bottle to take home.

About our Speaker

Rachel Cray is a Ph.D. student at the University of Vermont in Natural Resources studying phytoplankton ecology. Her current research aims to describe how disturbance events, such as storms or climate change, affect algae in lakes and change how they function and shape their ecosystems.

What is a Teen Science Café

The cafés are a free, fun way for teens to explore science, engineering and technology with local scientists, engineers and technology experts. Teens participate in informal discussions and hands-on activities to learn about different topics. And there is always free food! Planned and run by teens for teens.

Register at: <https://go.uvm.edu/water-life>

Please register for this café by Wednesday, January 10, 2024 so that we have time to email you the required paperwork to attend.

Open to all youth in grades 7–12, FREE pizza and drinks!

To request language interpretation/translation assistance and/or a disability-related accommodation to participate in this program, please call or email Lauren Traister at 802-656-7565 or lauren.traister@uvm.edu by Friday, December 20, 2023, so we may assist you.

For more information about UVM Extension 4-H and youth programs, visit
www.uvm.edu/extension/youth