
AUG 11-13, 2021
EMERGING
LEADERS'
SUMMIT

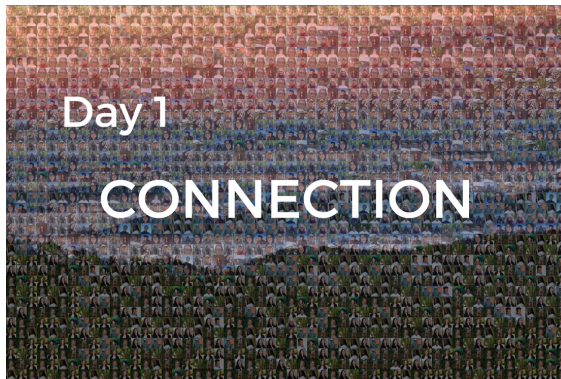
IMPACT REPORT



APPALACHIAN TRAIL
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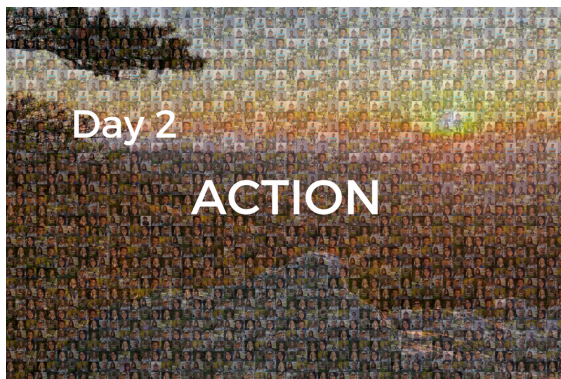
THEMES & IMPACT STATEMENTS



Participants built community through regional networking hubs and gained career building skills from expert leaders.

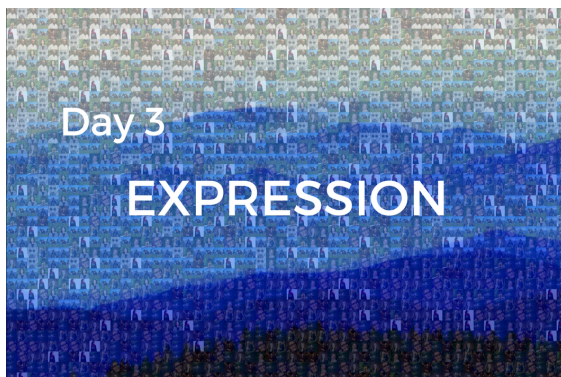
"I was very impressed with the organization and momentum of this virtual event. It was very engaging and offered a lot of development opportunities."

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Participants learned about climate justice, advocacy steps, and built equity maps to use as change agents in their community.

"The two sessions that stuck out to me the most were the GIS mapping sessions and the live performances from emerging leaders. Having the opportunity to work in real-time with GIS experts, get access to GIS software, and learning how to showcase equity information was really amazing and unexpected. I haven't had an opportunity to learn a skill like that before in a virtual summit or conference. The live performances were also really moving and unique. Having that creative and artistic component was really special!"



Participants were inspired to share their creativity through performance, storytelling & interactive workshops.

"I really enjoyed having a specific focus each day of the Summit, including such varying (but interesting and relevant) topics and speakers. From GIS to artistic expression, I felt like both the technical and creative aspects of environmental justice and activism was touched on. Overall, the whole Summit was valuable in its own way!"

OVERVIEW

The Summit was a virtual experience centered on young people aged 14-35 but was open to all. The Summit strengthened connections between young leaders and their networks, sparked momentum for youth movements at the intersection of nature and climate justice, and provided a space for artistic creation and performance utilizing the outdoors and the Appalachian Trail as a muse.

In a time of ongoing crisis, the Emerging Leaders' Summit (ELS) provided a unique opportunity for connection. The Summit brought hundreds of participants together for three days, providing **41 sessions** by **71** fantastic **speakers** and **panelists**.

August 11th: Connection

The focus on **connection** came to life in the virtual space through regional hubs and engaging with leaders across the globe. We learned professional development skills in the Federal Resume Writing and Successful Interviewing workshops. Inspiration came from speakers about the powerful ways they mobilized themselves in their own communities, in the session JEDI Through Action: Mobilizing Your Whole Self to Promote Meaningful Change.

The Trail can provide transformation in many different ways. It can serve as a connection and a source of gratitude for

experiences both by ourselves or with others in nature. Our aim for day one was to foster a space for making connections with opportunities to explore different pathways. Participants had the chance to build relationships with others across regions, across the globe and across careers. The first day's sessions connected young folks with environmental leaders and content to support their careers and lives, like networking, discussing skills for remaining resilient in the face of adversity, and non-violent communication.

255 Registrants

41 Sessions

71 Speakers/Panelists

SUMMIT AGENDA

SPEAKER BIOS

"What is your story that connects you with the outdoors and with your community?"

- Youth Outdoor Policy Playbook

"Do not let perfect be the enemy of good."

- Michelle Mitchell, USDA Forest Service

VIEW SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

1. [JEDI Through Action: Mobilizing Your Whole Self to Promote Meaningful Change](#)
2. [Climate and Tribal Youth](#)
3. [Beyond the Climate Crisis: The Journey to Environmental Justice with CLASP](#)
4. [Michelle Mitchell \(USDA Forest Service\) - Day 2 Keynote](#)
5. [Amal Kassir - Day 3 Keynote](#)

[August 12th: Action](#)

The **action** theme was experienced through the lens of climate impacts and response, as individuals heard from panelists about the varying intersections of environmental justice. Attendees were able to contribute directly to equity maps, after skill-based sessions on GIS and story mapping. Some dynamic actions were also expanded upon through policy and advocacy playbooks, community organizing, climate analysis, and what a #newdealforyouth can look like.

In the face of a climate crisis and social unrest, Dr. Fatemeh Shafiei in the Intersections of Environmental Justice and Climate Change panel reminded us that within that vulnerability, there is a potential and great need for us to be powerful agents of change. Individuals have an opportunity to show up for their communities and, as

framed by the CLASP Changemakers panelists, to practice holistic and radical care for each other. As participants find ways to mobilize and support each other, it's important to find the common ground that unites them— to protect the land and resources we all treasure.

The day was wrapped up with #JusticeLabs, a collaborative space for participants to think about specific ways they could contribute to their community, and to collectively apply their learning from the day. The labs gave participants a chance to share their input on how leaders can make changes and how they saw themselves as part of that change. In her final keynote, Sophia Kianni, who represents the U.S. as the youngest representative on the inaugural United Nations Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change, emphasized the importance of moving forward from apathy to action through persistence and connection.

"Resiliency is in our DNA!" - MC Ellis, Resources for Resilience

"Climate justice is rebuilding a society where the foundations are sustainability, respect, unity, and equity- where we are dismantling systems of oppression that are preventing people from thriving."

- CLASP Changemakers

SPECIAL THANK YOU

Thank you to the National Park Foundation, USDA Forest Service, Hydro Flask, and AXA XL, members and donors of ATC who made this Summit possible. We'd also like to express our gratitude to our Summit Speakers, Ambassadors, and staff for giving their time and energy to making this Summit into a reality.

August 13th: Expression

On Friday, August 13th, ELS participants gathered to release their creative energies. The day's theme of **expression** encouraged the artist inside each of our attendees. With **eight** different sessions and workshops happening, participants explored how nature can be used as a space for adventure, healing, and creative inspiration.

Amal Kassir, world renowned Syrian American poet, led us through a warm, welcoming speech through her spoken word and poetry. Her descriptions of nature's connectivity to the day's theme were spot on and set the tone. Feeling empowered to tackle the day, participants got vulnerable in the performance hour, emceed by Derick Lugo. In a beautiful display of emotions, participants from around the world shared poetry, stories, and songs.

After the performance hour, the first rounds of the day's workshops began. Emerging leaders had the chance to go to different sessions focused on developing artistic skills, such as writing poetry, or growing confidence with ciphering/improv. Other curious minds chose lessons with stronger outdoor connections by attending our nature journaling and photography classes. The afternoon yoga practice allowed people to let go of their stressors as they went through nature-infused poses. Additionally, others had a chance to gather and reflect on how nature can inspire in the session "Reaching New Summits".

This Summit created connections and ideas for action. The final day's use of poetic expression as a means of communication and medicine enhanced the connection felt by all, despite being in a virtual setting. The Summit delivered on creating new networks and providing youth with different spaces for artistic expression using the Appalachian Trail and nature as muses.

"Poetry is the way that one purple flower pops out of the snowy ground.

Poetry is in the details."

- Amal Kassir



"Thank yourself for your connection to nature."

- Devin Everett

WHOVA STATISTICS

1,664

TOTAL WEB PAGE VIEWS

72%

REGISTRANTS LOGGED ON AT SOME
POINT DURING THE SUMMIT

TOP 5 AGENDA VIEWS

1. INTERSECTIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & CLIMATE CHANGE
2. EQUITY MAPPING CASE STUDIES FOR CREATING COMMUNITY CHANGE
3. STORYTELLING & FREESTYLE: CLAIMING THE POWER OF SPOKEN WORD
4. NOTE TO A SUPERHERO(INE): CRAFTING POEMS IN THE TRADITION OF LUCILLE CLIFTON
5. EAST COAST CLIMATE CORRIDOR: AN APPROACH TO CLIMATE ACTION AND CONSERVATION IN THE A.T. LANDSCAPE

COLLABORATION STATISTICS

25

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

8

SUMMIT AMBASSADORS

71

SPEAKERS/PANELISTS

23*

U.S STATES REPRESENTED
*INCLUDING WASHINGTON D.C

7

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

THE EMERGING LEADERS' SUMMIT TEAM



Julie Judkins

Director of Education & Outreach



Van Tran

Education Network Coordinator



Jet'aime Lewis

Summit Coordinator



Christina Oyelowo

Summit Coordinator