



Student Leaders Discuss Sustainability Initiatives at White House Event

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- SUNY Student Assembly leaders accompanied over 100 student leaders from all corners of the country in the nation's capital to discuss combating climate change.

"Having the chance to discuss critical issues of sustainability with like-minded student leaders from across the country was incredible," said Student Assembly President and SUNY Trustee Marc J. Cohen, from the University at Albany. "While it is clear that SUNY and the Student Assembly have made incredible strides, there is more to be done in reducing our carbon footprint and leading more sustainable lives."

Five Student Assembly leaders from the Executive Board, Executive Committee, and representative body attended the National Climate Leadership Summit. During the trip, Student Assembly leaders met with congressional delegations, environmental policy makers, and White House staff to discuss the road ahead for fighting climate change.

"The National Climate Leadership Summit has been an incredible opportunity for student leaders to come together over an extremely important common cause," said Student Assembly Vice President Bridget Doyle and student at SUNY Fredonia. "We have gained extensive knowledge on White House initiatives and initiatives on a wide range of campuses in regards to climate change efforts."

"I am honored to represent the SUNY system, ESF, and to use my knowledge of climate change and my training as an environmental scientist to make this conversation relevant to the next generation of leaders," said Samantha McVey, Student Assembly representative and student at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. "This has been an eye-opening experience to how much more we can be doing on our own campuses and I am eager to bring our common interests home to New York State."

The event, held from June 6 to June 8, was organized by National Campus Leadership Council, American University's School of Public Affairs, Second Nature, US Green Building Council, and Defend Our Future. This year's event was brought on by last year's White House Youth Climate Conference attended by student governments across the country, focused around promoting sustainability.

"Having the opportunity to speak with other student leaders in a setting such as this is extremely unique. It's rare to have such a wide array of perspectives having a dialogue on climate



change,” said Nicole Pereira, Student Assembly representative, and student body president at SUNY Oneonta. “Learning from these students and experts imparted great ideas to bring back to SUNY.”

"The coming together of different student leaders is frequent, but rarely is it in this type of venue with this type of urgency,” said Nick Simons, Student Assembly chief of staff and student at the University at Albany. “Climate change necessitates the utmost cooperation among all parties. I'm thankful that SUNYSA had a presence at this conference and could contribute to the dialogue as well as learn from other leaders.”

At the first Student Assembly meeting under new Executive Board leadership in Lake George, leaders throughout the organization discussed continuing to promote sustainability through previous initiatives. During the business meeting, Alivia Sheffield, student from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry had her appointment confirmed as the latest chair of the Sustainability Committee.

Through previous leadership under former Sustainability Committee chair Zachary Beaudoin, the Student Assembly passed resolutions which advocated to incorporate sustainability education into general education requirements, align SUNY with the UN’s 2030 agenda for sustainable development, and divest from fossil fuel investments.

About the Student Assembly of the State University of New York

The Student Assembly of the State University of New York (SUNY SA) is an organization comprised of student leaders elected by their peers from across SUNY’s 64 campuses. Empowering students throughout the state, the SUNY SA is committed to student life and ensuring the representation of its members on the state and national level as well as throughout the SUNY system.

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