



Press Kit

SLAP Info

SLAP Fact Sheet



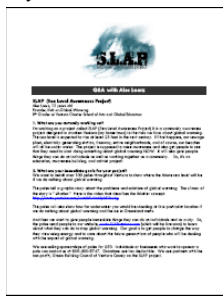
SLAP Key Dates

SLAP	Important SLAP Dates
Monday, June 14, 10:00 am SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.
Monday, June 15, 10:00 am SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.
Monday, June 15, 10:00 - 11:00 am SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.
Monday, June 15, 11:00 - 12:00 pm SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.
Monday, June 15, 12:00 - 1:00 pm SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.
Monday, June 15, 1:00 - 2:00 pm SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.
Monday, June 15, 2:00 - 3:00 pm SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.
Monday, June 15, 3:00 - 4:00 pm SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.
Monday, June 15, 4:00 - 5:00 pm SLAP Key Dates	SLAP Key Dates Key dates for the project including the SLAP Key Dates event.

SLAP Images Logos, graphics & photos



Q&A with Alec



Kids-Vs-Global-Warming

Backgrounder Kids-Vs-Global-Warming



Global Warming Fact Sheet



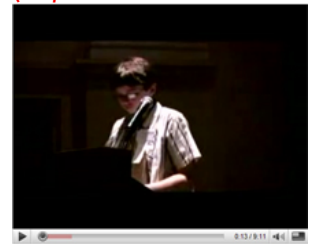
iMatter Video

[View YouTube.com Video](#)
(requires internet connection)



WorldLink Speech

[View YouTube.com Video](#)
(requires internet connection)



Press

ABC News

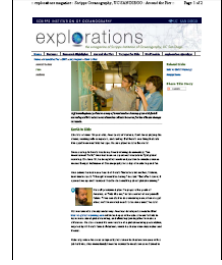
[View Cool Kid Interview](#)
(requires internet connection)



Ventura County Star Four for the Earth



Scrrips Article



WorldLink Newspaper





Fact Sheet

S.L.A.P.

(Sea Level Awareness Project)

A project of:
Kids vs Global Warming
Sponsored by
**Green Building Council of
Ventura County**

Contact Info:
Victoria Loorz
Co-Founder
805-200-8747
victoria@kids-vs-global-warming.com

Alec Loorz
Founder
alecloorz@kids-vs-global-
warming.com

Address:
116 San Clemente Street
Ventura, CA 93001 USA

On the Web:
www.kids-vs-global-warming.com
www.SLAPventura.com (soon)

What is S.L.A.P.?

Alec Loorz, an 8th grade student from Ventura, CA, and founder of Kids-vs-Global-Warming, had the idea to put up 120 poles throughout the coastal area, awakening Ventura to the impact of a predicted 7 meter sea level rise if Greenland should melt. Alec and team from two local middle schools will install the first 10 poles along the Promenade, from Ventura Pier to Surfer's Point, with enthusiastic cooperation with the City of Ventura

S.L.A.P. poles show how far under water you'd be at certain locations and show problems we'll be facing at incremental sea level rise as well (for example, the wastewater treatment center, entire communities and Mandalay generating station would all be affected.) This takes the conversation away from "well, MY house is above the line" to "what are we as a community going to do about this?"

Key Dates:

The initial set of ten S.L.A.P. poles will be installed on June 29, 2008. The poles illustrate the Story of Global Warming and highlight different municipalities that would be affected. The focus, however, is on solutions: simple things that Ventura residents can do, both as individual families and as a unified community, to make a difference.

Mon June 2: Kids present to Ventura City Council at City Hall
Mon June 16: Paint and Prep the Poles at Ventura Charter School
Sun June 29: Global Warming Youth Rally, 1pm-3pm
Installation of poles. Event to follow with youth bands and speakers on global warming at the Ventura Promenade Park.

Thu, July 4: **Booth at 4th of July Street Fair, 10am-5pm**
Oak and California Streets in Ventura
Booth with information and invitations to put up poles at business and residential locations

About Kids vs Global Warming:

We are a youth-inspired and youth-led organization that educates kids about the science of climate change and empowers them to go out and make a difference in their homes, schools, and communities.

SLAP Ventura Pole Locations:





Important SLAP Dates

Updated and everything

fridays: june 6 & 13 @ lunch

REGULAR SLAP MEETINGS

Colleen's classroom

SLAP MEETINGS

order your SLAP teeshirt (\$20), sign up to help at the booth, make buttons, work on poles, call press, work on the street theatre, etc. tons to do.

monday: june 2, 5:30 pm

CITY HALL PRESENTATION

501 Poli Street, Ventura

CITY COUNCIL PRESENTATION

invite everyone you know to come support us!
stand up when your team is introduced.

we will have five minutes in the beginning of the meeting to communicate our whole vision, so let's make it work!

monday: june 16, 2:40 - 6 pm

POLE PREPARATION

at Ventura Charter School

PAINT AND PREP THE POLES

wear paint clothes and be prepared to get them all done!

sunday, june 29, 1-3 pm

INSTALLATION DAY & EVENT!

Promenade from Pier to Surfer's Point

INSTALL POLES AND HAVE FUN

invite every kid you know!

event with youth bands and speakers to raise awareness about the effect of global warming on our community...and what we can do about it.

thursday, july 4, 10 am -5 pm

BOOTH @ 4TH OF JULY STREET FAIR

Oak and California Streets

HELP OUT WITH THE BOOTH

Kids vs Global Warming and SLAP will have their first event booth with information about SLAP, invitations for people to put the poles up at their houses, etc. Signups to volunteer for a couple hours will be @ next SLAP mtg.

for more information: victoria loorz, 805-200-8747 or alec loorz, 832-3831

www.kids-vs-global-warming.com

SLAP Images

Contact for additional graphics:

victoria loorz, 805-200-8747

www.SLAPventura.com

www.kids-vs-global-warming.com





iMatter
kids-vs-global-warming.com





Alec Loorz explaining pole message to Ventura City Manager, Rick Cole

SLAP team installing prototype pole for documentary film crew



The SLAP pole prototype



Q&A with Alec Loorz

SLAP (Sea Level Awareness Project)

Alec Loorz, 13 years old

Founder, Kids-vs-Global-Warming

8th Grader at Ventura Charter School of Arts and Global Education

1. What are you currently working on?

I'm working on a project called SLAP (Sea Level Awareness Project) It is a community awareness project designed to awaken Ventura (my home town) to the risks we face about global warming. The sea level is expected to rise at least 23 feet in the next century. If that happens, our sewage plant, electricity generating station, freeway, entire neighborhoods, and of course, our beaches will all be under water. The project is supposed to raise awareness and also get people to see that they need to start doing something about global warming NOW. It will also give people things they can do as individuals as well as working together as a community. So, it's an education, awareness-building, public art and activist project!

2. What are your immediate goals for your project?

We want to install over 100 poles throughout Ventura to show where the future sea level will be if we do nothing about global warming. The full installation will include signs and poles on city property like along sidewalks and parks, as well as in people's yards and in front of businesses. We are shooting for Earth Day 2009 for the full installation.

But, on June 29, we will be doing our first installation in conjunction with the City of Ventura. We'll have ten poles along the Promenade, from the Pier to Surfer's Point, and a kiosk that explains the whole project somewhere along the pier.

It's going to be fun. We got a permit for an event at the end of the Promenade Park, down by Surfer's Point from 1-3 pm. First, about 40 kids will install the poles, under the city's supervision. Then, we'll all gather down at the park where there will be some short speeches, a booth with more information and stuff, and 4 youth bands (me and three SLAP leaders are in one of the bands.) I hope a lot of people come out for it!

3. What are SLAP poles?

The poles tell a graphic story about the problems and solutions of global warming. The climax of the story is "iMatter." Here is the video that describes the iMatter concept:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6lpld1bc4g>

The poles will also show how far underwater you would be standing at that particular location if we do nothing about global warming and the ice in Greenland melts.

We want to give people immediate things they can do as individuals and as a city. So, the poles send people to our website, www.SLAPventura.com (which will be live soon) to learn about what they can do to stop global warming. Our goal is to get people to change the way they view using energy and to care about the future generations of people who will be dealing with the impact of global warming.

4. Who are you working with on this project?

There are about 35-40 kids who meet weekly at two schools. We have six teams: engineering, media, manufacturing, fundraising, design and permissions. Each team has a leader and a mentor: a professional from the community who is helping us. And our organization has an Advisory Board of adults and kids. We have an engineer from the city, an architect, a PR person, a green builder, a designer, and an environmental activist who are on our Advisory Board.

We made some big presentations to the City of Ventura to get their support and permission to put the poles on city property (like sidewalks and parks). They were all really supportive and are helping us make it happen.

And we are partnering with the Green Building Council of Ventura County, the City of Ventura's Green Team, my school Ventura Charter School of Arts and Global Education, and VCool, who have all been awesome in helping us.

5. How did this all begin?

I started an organization called Kids vs Global Warming after I saw Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" last year on DVD. I wanted to be one of the 1000 people who were trained by Gore to give the presentation themselves. But, I was turned away because I was too young. You had to be 14 and I was only 12 at the time. So, I created one of my own, with videos and music and animation so that kids would be interested and inspired to go out and make a difference. I now give the presentations to schools and environmental conferences all over California. Kids are really passionate about this issue and just need to see that their voices matter and they can make a difference in stopping climate change.

Then, last summer, I just had an idea for my town to be able to see how global warming will really affect us, and how soon. I thought if we could put up poles all around Ventura that showed how far underwater you'd be at different locations throughout the city, people would begin to see how it will affect them and make changes. I started talking about it with kids at my school and it grew from there.

6. What are your long term goals for the SLAP project?

Once we install all of the SLAP poles, we will continue with our website, called SLAPventura.com. It will provide solutions and resources for the whole community to work together to reduce our energy consumption and rally together to be a more sustainable city. We also have lots of ideas for activism projects and events to continue to get people motivated to change. I've had other kids interested in doing something like this in their city, so we're going to be working on a kit, "Activist in a Box" to help other kids do what we've done. We want to get the message out that kids have power to inspire others and create change!

Contact:

Alec Loorz
AlecLoorz@kids-vs-global-warming.com
805-832-3831
116 San Clemente, Ventura CA 93001

Victoria Loorz
Victoria@kids-vs-global-warming.com
805-200-8747



Backgrounder

Kids-Vs-Global-Warming

Contact Info:

Alec Loorz
Founder
805-200-8747
alec@kids-vs-global-warming.com

Victoria Loorz
Co-Founder
805-200-8747
victoria@kids-vs-global-warming.com

Address:
116 San Clemente Street
Ventura, CA 93001 USA

On the Web:
www.kids-vs-global-warming.com
www.slapventura.com (coming soon)



*Alec Loorz, Founder
Kids-Vs-Global-Warming*

Mission

Kids-vs-Global-Warming is a youth-inspired and youth-led non-profit organization that teaches kids about the science of global warming and inspires them to make a difference.

Goals for 2008

1. Make presentations to 20 schools in Ventura County as well as several others to groups outside of Ventura (this would reach at least 10,000 kids).
2. Create 20+ Kids-vs-Global-Warming teams of kids throughout California, supporting and providing resources, support, networking to green their schools and take leadership roles in local environmental projects.
3. Launch a public project called SLAP: Sea Level Awareness Project to raise awareness of the problems Ventura faces with future sea level rise caused by global warming.
4. Create an interactive, hands-on learning Booth for events like Earth Days and conferences.
5. Improve the website and focus on web videos because kids spend their time on kid-targeted sites.
6. Apply for scholarships, awards, and grants to fund the projects and build the organization.

Bio

Alec Loorz founded Kids-Vs-Global-Warming at 13 years old, as an 8th grade student at Ventura Charter School of Arts and Global Education. Inspired by Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth," Alec knew he had to let other kids know about the problems we're facing and inspire people to action. Alec gives speeches to groups around California, leads a SLAP student group at school, and has launched two websites. He enjoys playing the drums, working on computers, and surfing.



iMatter



iBike

Instead of driving your car to get places, and polluting the environment, you can insist on riding your **BIKE**.



iPower

You can ask your parents to invest in **ALTERNATIVE ENERGY**, instead of supporting power companies that fuel Global Warming. Maybe give some money to a local wind farm, or install a solar panel on your roof.



iRecycle

If everyone recycled just ONE large Sunday newspaper, we could save 75,000 trees. Kids can get their schools and neighborhoods to **RECYCLE** more too.



iQuit

Just totally refuse to use plastic bottles. Last year it took 1.5 million barrels of oil to make them. And even tho they're recyclable, 80% of them are throw in the dump, or pollute our oceans. Just **QUIT** the bottle!



iHang

Some appliances in your house are bigger energy hogs than others. Even though it's a hassle, if you **HANG DRY** your clothes outside, you'll save a lot of energy.



iPlant

Buying food grown far away not only uses up billions of gallons of gas to transport it to you, but rainforests are cut down to grow food that you could just **PLANT** yourself in your own garden.



iReduce

Normal light bulbs waste TONS of energy. If you can replace them with LEDs or compact fluorescent bulbs, you can **REDUCE** your carbon output by as much as if you took 300,000 cars off the road for a year.



iRestore

Trees actually make the carbon dioxide level go **DOWN**, so planting a tree will help the environment. **RESTORING** a whole forest will really help our earth restore its balance.



iPledge

You can also sign our "Declaration of Independence from Fossil Fuels," saying that we, the kids of Ventura **PLEDGE** to take action on climate change and to Stop Global Warming!

WHAT IS



GLOBAL WARMING?

IN THE BEGINNING...

EARTH WAS PERFECTLY BALANCED

Earth is protected by a thin layer of atmosphere filled with a bunch of gases that keep us from freezing. It's sort of like a greenhouse that keeps the earth in perfect balance for us to live on it. We have the exact right amount of air, dirt, sunshine, water, everything.

When rays from the sun come down and go through earth's atmosphere, they hit the surface and bounce back different kinds of rays called infrared rays.

We can't see infrared rays, but we can feel them. Some of these rays are trapped by the gas atmosphere so that the earth is warmed to the perfect temperature to sustain life.

This system was perfectly balanced, and it kept us at the perfect temperature: 59° Fahrenheit.

BUT SOMETHING WENT WRONG

Something happened about 200 years ago that messed up our planet's perfect balance...



contact us to learn more
Kids-vs-Global-Warming.com

THE STORY OF GLOBAL WARMING

so...what happened?



iSuck

The Industrial Revolution happened. We humans began building factories and using coal and oil to fuel them. Today, factories emit over 27,245,753,000 TONS of carbon per year, and carbon (CO₂) is the main thing causing Global Warming. All this extra CO₂ not only gets stuck in the atmosphere, but all the pollution from factories affects our health as well. 40% of all the deaths in the world are caused by pollution.



iEmit

But these factories aren't the only things messing up our atmosphere. Cars are a big problem. In California, driving cars accounts for 58% of all our carbon emissions. And the amount will just continue to rise as more cars and trucks hit the roads each year.



iWarm

All this extra Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) from factories and cars gets stuck in the atmosphere and adds to the greenhouse effect. The CO₂ traps more of the infrared rays, acting like an electric blanket. And with more infrared rays, the earth has gotten hotter. In fact, one degree hotter than it was before all the pollution. One Degree doesn't seem like much, but our earth is perfectly balanced. So, a one degree change has a domino effect throughout the earth, leading to bigger, more disastrous hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, drought, and food and water shortages.



iMelt

Because of warmer weather, ice all over the world is melting. The polar ice cap has shrunk dramatically since the 1900s. Glaciers that were once huge have totally disappeared. And if we collected all the water that flowed off Greenland each day, we would have enough drinking water for the state of New York for a year.



iFlood

If Greenland completely melted (which scientists say could happen within the next 100 years,) sea level would rise 23 feet. New York city would be underwater. Coastal cities around the world would be completely devastated. And that's only if Greenland melted. If ALL the ice in the world melted, sea level would rise over 240 feet, causing BILLIONS of people across the globe to lose their homes, which would lead to worldwide devastation.



iGone

Because of ice melt and warming temperatures, the polar bears' homes and food sources are being destroyed. Scientists say 2/3 of all polar bears could disappear by 2050. And polar bears aren't the only ones that are suffering from Global Warming. Species are going extinct every day because of the changing climate. Scientists predict that 1/3 of all the animals on the planet would be gone by 2050 if we do nothing about Global Warming.



iProfit

The reason that cars and factories pollute the environment is because they burn fossil fuels. Fossil fuels emit the Carbon that's been buried in the earth into the atmosphere, causing global warming. But, some people aren't really concerned about that. Every time you get gas in your car or you use electricity that uses fossil fuels, the oil companies make a whole lot of money. So the oil companies are pretty nervous about us thinking about using alternative energy and buying less gas...they want us to keep giving them money!



iMatter

This is NOT the end of the story! Lots of kids are scared about Global Warming. But it doesn't HAVE to happen like this! We can DO SOMETHING to make a big difference. If we make change NOW, then when we grow up, we will have a better world to live in.

iMatter...and so do YOU!



Earth Day: These activists work 365 days a year to improve the planet

By Zeke Barlow
Tuesday, April 22, 2008

The very expression "Earth Day" implies something that happens only once a year.

But for a group of activists in Ventura County, Earth Day is a misnomer. For them, every day is a chance to examine their actions in light of the environment and teach others what they've learned. They aren't people with large checkbooks or the power of big organizations backing them. Most started with the simple desire to make a difference in their community and then created movements and organizations that matched their passions. And they got results.

Alec Loorz was so driven to do something about global warming, the 13-year-old went into an independent study program at school so he would have time to teach kids about the state of the planet.

Kent Bullard has spent much of his life not only preaching about biodiesel but also making it easier for people to get the less-polluting fuel into their cars.

On any given weekend day, you can find Carol Day hiking through Los Padres National Forest, clearing the trails so others can enjoy them.

And Rachel Morris was so inspired by the hundreds of fellow Venturans who demanded a game plan to fight global warming, she started a group to tackle the issue.

Today, on Earth Day, these four committed environmentalists share their stories.

Alec Loorz, global warming crusader

Alec didn't even want to see the movie that would eventually change his life. When his mom told him she rented Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth," the then 12-year-old thought it would be a boring documentary. But within two hours, he was transformed.

The next day, he got into an argument with a student who believed global warming was a hoax. Though Alec

held up his end of the discussion, he figured he had to crystallize his argument.

"I realized I had to do something," said Alec, now 13. That night he stayed up late making a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the threats of global warming and how to deal with skeptics.

"I thought I needed to educate other kids."

He wanted to be one of the people Al Gore trained on giving his talk, but Alec was too young, so he developed his own speech. Before long he was giving his presentation at an environmental charter school in Los Angeles and then at an Earth Day event and then another and another.

"It was like a little idea I had last year, and now it has grown into a huge project that needs to get done," said Alec, whose brown bangs hang just above his glasses. He went into independent study at school so he could devote his time to getting kids active in the fight against global warming. He built a Web site to keep others up to date on what his group was doing.

He's given 18 talks so far, including one to more than 700 students at an environmental conference in San Diego. He started a group, Kids vs. Global Warming, that motivates other youths to get involved in the issue that in 50 years will affect them more than their parents.

"I can't wait 10 years until we have our Ph.D.s and we can make big changes," said Alec. "If we make changes now we can make a difference."

At every school he speaks at, he encourages students to start action teams and figure out how to reduce their output of carbon emissions.

He's also started SLAP, or sea level awareness project, which is trying to get a series of poles put up around Ventura that would show how high the ocean level could get if the polar ice caps melt.

But his intent is to never allow that to happen.

"If we work hard enough," Alec said, "we can make a difference."

On the Net: <http://www.kids-vs-global-warming.com>

Kent Bullard, helps promote biodiesel

If Kent Bullard has his way, Exxon Mobil may go out of business one day. Or at the very least, the oil giant will start replacing all its petroleum with the more environmentally friendly biodiesel.

In recent years, Bullard, 51, has been preaching the wonders of running cars off the same stuff used to cook french fries. He's helped people around Southern California gain easier access to the fuel made of plants instead of dead dinosaurs.

"We are driving down the highway at full speed ahead, and we never look behind us to see what we left behind," said Bullard, a maintenance supervisor for the Channel Islands National Park.

Not only has he converted many of the power systems on the islands to solar or other renewable energy sources but also he's done the same at the Galapagos Islands, taught others how to convert their homes to solar power and started a nonprofit group that provides people with the hard-to-find biodiesel.

He was part of a pioneering force for the National Park Service when he figured out that burning 2,000 gallons of diesel to ship 8,000 gallons out to Anacapa Island was a waste of resources. He installed a solar system to power the park's buildings, and the park now uses only about 263 gallons of fuel on the island annually. During the Channel Islands National Park's many expansions over the years, Bullard helped to supply power using renewable energy sources.

But Bullard's work is hardly done after he punches the clock.

Wanting to help others get the hard-to-find biodiesel, he started LA Biodiesel Co-op, a nonprofit that purchased a 1,000-gallon fuel tank from which members can load up. Bullard fills up his cars — with the license plates PUREBIO and BIOCAR — when they need topping off. After a few successful chapters in Los Angeles, he's working on establishing one in Ventura.

Bullard also got involved with Habitat for Humanity and helped build homes that run off alternative energy, saving not only energy but also money on utility bills for the eventual owners.

Bullard says he's afraid of what's going to happen to the world if people keep heading in the same direction.

"At times I'm scared for the future populations," he said. "The children and grandchildren are not going to have the same world as we do."

On the Net: <http://www.labiodieselcoop.org>.

Carol Day, longtime forest trail worker

For Carol Day, it started with a ghost of a trail.

In 1981 she had recently moved to Santa Paula and was looking for good hiking trails near her new job at Thomas Aquinas College, where she was an astronomy teacher.

The map she got showed a line marking Last Chance Trail, which snaked through the mountains that rise like a wall behind the campus. But she couldn't find the trail no matter how hard she looked. The trail had completely grown over.

So she organized some volunteers, borrowed some tools and refurbished the trail so others could hike through the mountains.

After she was done with that trail, she took care of another, then another, then another.

More than two decades and countless miles of trails later, Day is still at it, caring for the trails that many use to explore the backcountry of Los Padres National Forest.

Since last year, when she started keeping track, she's logged more than 460 hours working on trails. That works out to be about an hour a day.

"If it eats out time I would spend watching TV, that's good," said Day, 56.

Over the years, she's heard mountain lions scream, seen countless bears and recently had a turkey vulture eye her warily.

"She's not afraid to tackle anything," said Heidi Anderson, a Wilderness Trails manager with the Forest Service. "She has a lot of enthusiasm."

The work is as much fun as it is work, she said.

"I love being outdoors," she said. "I think being a steward of the land is something I feel responsible for. This is just one way to do it."

Rachel Morris, head of VCCool

It all started by accident.

Rachel Morris and her friend thought they would try to organize a petition to give the Ventura City Council the impetus to do something locally about global warming.

"I had no intention of being responsible for anything," she said.

But then more than 300 people showed up at a town hall meeting last year, and Morris knew she had to do something to harness all that energy.

"This is an opportunity to get something done," she remembered. "We had a feeling of responsibility."

And VCCool — or Ventura Climate Care Options Organized Locally — was born. Now Morris, 45, is trying to find a way to quit her job as a Web designer, mold her group into an active nonprofit and focus full time on local solutions to global warming.

Since the group started last year, Morris has led campaigns to use reusable cloth grocery bags instead of disposable plastic ones, organized a bike summit to encourage ridership and helped put people on "carbon diets" to curb their carbon dioxide emissions.

For the high-energy, high-spirited woman, the roots of her environmentalism can be traced back to her formative years in northern Utah. Morris can remember staring endlessly at lizards as they scampered across the harsh desert, then waiting a half-hour for one of the critters to pop its head back out from under a rock.

Over the years, she has worked on issues ranging from stopping nuclear power plants to making sure a tiny hill near her home wasn't lost to development.

When she's not working on VCCool, she's testing out development of an energy-free homemade refrigerator, biking around town (because she vows to use a car only twice a month) and strumming tunes with her music duo, Nature Girl.

But there isn't much time when she's not thinking of ways to help Venturans tread lighter on Earth.

"I can't think of anything else that is more important," she said.

On the Net: <http://www.vccool.org>.



© 2008 Ventura County Star

explorations

the e-magazine of Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego

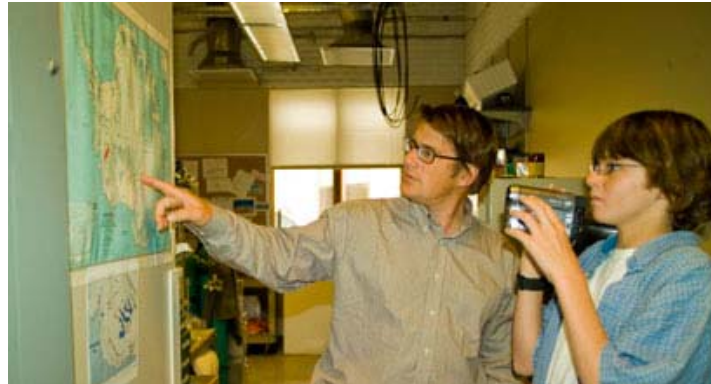
[Home](#) | [Features](#) | [Research Highlights](#) | [Around the Pier](#) | [Voyager for Kids](#) | [Multimedia](#) | explorations@scripps

[Home](#) » [Around the Pier](#) » [2007](#) » [July August](#) » [Earth to Kids](#)

[Around the Pier](#)

[June](#)

[Archives](#)



Jeff Severinghaus points to a map of Greenland to show 13-year-old global warming activist Alec Loorz where he collects ice cores for his climate change research.

Related Links

[Kids vs. Global Warming!](#)
[Scripps Home](#)

Share This Story

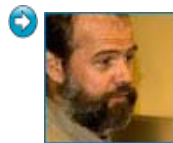


Earth to Kids

Like lots of other 13-year-olds, Alec Loorz of Ventura, Calif. loves playing the drums, working with computers, and surfing. But there's one thing that sets him apart from most kids his age. He also plans to save the world.

Since seeing Al Gore's Academy Award-winning documentary, "An Inconvenient Truth," Alec has been on a personal crusade to fight global warming. On June 13, he brought his newfound passion to climate-science mecca Scripps Institution of Oceanography for a day of mentoring and fun.

Alec admits he had never heard of Gore's film before his mother, Victoria, took him to see it. "I thought it would be boring," he said. "But after I saw it, it opened me up and I realized I had to do something about global warming."



His self-proclaimed plan: To prepare the youth of America, or "kids like me," to take control of our planet's future. "If we can start to do something now, when we get older, we'll know what needs to be done later," he said.

His movement is already under way. Alec has developed a website titled kids-vs-global-warming.com which he hopes will create a forum for kids to learn more about global warming, and ultimately join together to make a difference. He also created his own version of a global warming presentation, inspired by Al Gore's famed slideshow, which he shares with classmates and friends.

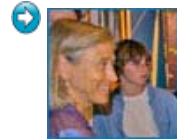
Naturally, when Alec was assigned by his school to shadow someone with a job he'd like, Alec immediately knew he wanted to meet someone trained to

deliver Al Gore's presentation.

Enter Lisa Shaffer, assistant director of program development and international relations at Scripps, and trained Gore slideshow presenter.

Alec contacted Shaffer to see if he could attend one of her upcoming presentations, but Shaffer far exceeded his expectations, scheduling a full day of activities for Alec to visit Scripps and interact one-on-one with some of the world's leading climate science experts.

Alec's day at Scripps began with a personal tour of Birch Aquarium at Scripps's new climate change exhibit, "Feeling the Heat: The Climate Challenge," led by project scientist Debbie Zmarzly.



Next, after some time job shadowing Shaffer at Scripps, Alec met climate scientist Jeff Severinghaus for a private lab tour and crash course in how he studies our planet's climate past. Alec's lesson even included a hands-on encounter with a piece of 150,000-year-old ice from Greenland.

Later, in paleobiologist Dick Norris's lab, Alec viewed four-million-year-old microscopic fossils and learned how climate change may affect these tiny, but important ocean organisms in the future.

Alec's visit finally came to an end at the Morgan Run Country Club in Rancho Santa Fe where he watched Shaffer in action as she presented her version of Gore's "Inconvenient Truth" slideshow, something she's done for more than 15 schools and community organizations so far.

"I was very happy to have been able to provide Alec with this experience," said Shaffer. "I think it's important to encourage kids who are excited by science and who care about the future of the planet."

Alec's goal is to stop global warming within his lifetime, and it seems Shaffer's coordination of his visit to Scripps has only fueled his commitment. In the "My Day at Scripps" blog entry on his website, Alec writes, "it made the whole issue more real for me, even the possibility of making a difference." Perhaps equally as important, Alec also describes his day at Scripps as "one of the funnest days I've ever had."

—*Shannon Casey*

WORLD LINK

Youth Town Meeting Newspaper

Volume XI

January 24, 2008

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY:
A GHANAIAN'S EXPERIENCE OF
HUNGER AND HOPE



PAGE 5

RON BONN REVEALS
MEDIA BIAS



PAGE 4

Thanks to the WorldLink Sponsors and Youth Town Meeting Donors

Patron: *Gloria Garrett*

Grant: *Gary and Mary West
Foundation*

Donors:

African & Beyond; Kimberly Benson; Karen Cabrerros; Michael J. Connor; Deloria Doe; Jeffrey Duhnam; Vivian Glyck; Marrion Moss Hubbard; Nancy Rhew; Alan Sorkin; Bernadette Stein; Judith Thompson; Publica Press Ltd and Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice Leadership Circle: Sandra Ciallella, Daniel Cohn, Dr. & Mrs. Donald M. Gragg, Anne Hoiberg, Amy M. Rypins, Mary Scherr and Lilia Velasquez and the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice

Features on WorldLink
Speakers and Briefings
Pages 1-9

Articulos en Español
Pages 10-11

2008 WorldLink Youth Town
Meeting Agenda and Speakers
Page 13

Glorious Journey Photography
Page 14

Letters to the Editor
Pages 15

Student Responses
Page 16

Youth No Longer On The Fringes

BY VANESSA ZARATE
STAFF WRITER



Global Warming has been a “hot topic” among scientists since the early 70s, but not until recently did it actually gain the momentum and recognition it deserves. After Al Gore’s call-to-action, “An Inconvenient Truth,” people were left shocked by the number of issues surrounding climate change. Suddenly, the light bulb came on, and the world began to see the harmful effects of technology, industry, and overall bad habits. While some were left eager and ready to diminish this crisis, others had yet to be moved by this “new” discovery.

It was a day to be inspired January 24, 2008: students from San Diego, Mexico, and South Korea gathered at the University of San Diego (USD) for the 11th Annual Youth Town Meeting. This year’s theme was voted by last year’s delegates to be, “Untying Global Knots: Global Warming, Poverty/Health, Corruption, and Media Bias.” Featured speakers included: **Lynne Talley** (professor, Scripps Institution of

Oceanography), **Alec Loorz** (founder of Kids vs. Global Warming), **Ron Bonn** (professor, former TV news journalist and executive producer), and **Thomas Awiapo** (native of Ghana who survived devastating childhood poverty), and many others.

Before the Youth Town Meeting commenced, approximately 700 youth delegates from middle schools and high schools crowded into the Shiley Theatre and waited anxiously to be informed. The stage was aligned with nametags for the opening plenary speakers, and the intrigued students crammed before it to see who would be opening the day. Cameras were placed strategically around the room, journalists sat in the front with pens and paper in hand, while the rest of the students excitedly chatted. At 8:30am, guest speakers Talley, **Lisa Shaffer**, Loorz, **Richard Matthew**, **Scott Anders**, and High Tech High International’s **Mark Hargrove**, filed onto the stage and took their respective

seats.

Hargrove was the first to address the audience and students listened attentively to his remarks about the United States government’s lack of action concerning climate change. Hargrove commented that, “the money that should be given to the hungry is sitting in their [government] bank account,” while referring to the government as a big “denial machine.” He could not have been more adamant in his observation about corrupt practices in powerful offices.

Talley, one of the many lead authors of the report of the United Nation’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was awarded, along with Al Gore, the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007, encouraged all youth to be “skeptical” and to ask questions about climate change.

“Opening Plenary” Continued on Pg. 3

Kids vs. Global Warming

BY KELLIE ROUSSOS
STAFF WRITER

Alec Loorz, 13, the founder of Kids vs. Global Warming truly inspired many WorldLink students with his enthusiasm, youth, and self-confidence in the fight against climate change.

Loorz was the youngest speaker at the WorldLink opening plenary, but the only one to receive a standing ovation. He didn’t try to act intellectual or more grown up, he just honestly let his audience know that kids do care and are going to do something about this climate change “mess” that previous generations got them into.

He knows, “it’s discouraging for some kids to think that [we’re] inheriting a world that is pretty messed up.” However, Loorz doesn’t see youth as a drawback, but as an advantage. The young are the ones who are going

to have to live with this problem, and are the ones who must eventually do the most about it.



Loorz’s target audience for his awareness campaign is kids his own age. He visits schools to do presentations, designed a kid-friendly global warming website, and is planning a booth at Earth Day which will feature activities for kids.

He presented scientific graphs, showing that the temperature of the earth and output of carbon dioxide and have sky rocketed, starting in 1950 (around the industrial revolution and the widespread use of cars).

Another chart revealed that the United States produces 28% of the earth’s carbon dioxide, and China produces 23%. This seems comparable, right? Then Loorz explained that the United States is home to only 4%...

“Loorz” Continued on Pg. 3

Looking for New Sources of Energy

BY CATRINA ALVAREZ
STAFF WRITER

“My job is to paint a picture for you, to show you what is going on,” remarked **Jim Cole**, senior advisor to the California Institute for Energy and Environment (CIEE), at the beginning of his briefing.

In 1972, Cole worked with a military electronics research center at Bell Telephone Laboratories. Soon after the energy crisis of 1972, he decided to switch professions and moved into the energy field. He took a job at Syracuse University Research Corporation, which eventually led him to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. During this time, Cole became director of CIEE. When he stepped down in 2002, Cole accepted his current senior advisor position. Over the past several years with CIEE, he has assisted the California Energy Commission in creating an electric transmission systems research and development program. He has multiple years of experience in the fields of conducting and managing energy and communications technology research and development.

Cole began his presentation by first explaining the greenhouse effect, which is primarily caused by the buildup of carbon dioxide in the

atmosphere resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels such as oil, coal and natural gas. Melting glaciers, less rain, increase of drought, species extinction, and even desertification are just a few of the many problems created by the greenhouse effect. The large amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is due to an increase in both population and energy use per capita. Unfortunately, the “addicted” United States is the leading emitter, with 22.4% reaching the ozone.

Cole pointed out that the leading alternative at the moment for a different source of energy is wind plants which, with the addition of 19,000 miles of new transmission lines, can create enough energy for 120 million homes. Sadly, this option has not been used as often because of the difficulty of installing more transmission lines.

Another option is to charge a carbon dioxide tax per emission. The funds raised would be directed either by the government or a market-based system that would allow more research towards finding other energy solutions. The European Union, for example, is currently using a market-based approach for

reducing carbon dioxide emissions, and the U.S. Congress is currently discussing establishing a similar mechanism.

At the moment, the California Energy Commission researches and invests in renewable energy sources. Although it is a slow process, Cole stresses that individual small changes can make a big difference. By simply using more efficient vehicles, investing in carbon capture and storage (CSS) at coal plants, and being aware of one’s daily bad habits (such as not carpooling), these smaller steps could all have a positive effect on this growing problem. Yet, the choice needs to be made now because it has been estimated that in fifty years carbon dioxide levels could double.

As teenagers, Cole explained that we can make the choice to look ahead and choose careers which make a

difference in climate change. In addition, by creating more public awareness, campaigning and receiving political support, we will get one step closer to a solution.



The Media’s False Portrayals

BY MATTHEW WONG
STAFF WRITER

The media has always occupied an important role in society. Today, newspapers, magazines, and blogs are only a few of the many ways in which Americans can obtain news and information. Yet as **Kathy Sangha**, film documentarian and co-founder of Sun & Moon Vision Productions, explained the media’s

penchant for bias, tension filled the air and left WorldLink delegates intrigued.

Sangha started her briefing with an enlightening comparison. “Media is like water; it is everywhere, constantly flowing all around you and subliminally through you,” she said. “It plays a big role in shaping our culture, thoughts and history...and it is everywhere, so it behooves us to be informed of what we are watching, who is represented, how they are represented and the subliminal messages that we are absorbing.”

While it is true that many media outlets exist, people have a certain affection for mainstream media. Because several major media conglomerates hold control over the industry, Sangha explained that the public should be aware of every bit of information

they take in from the media and should supplement what they learn from mainstream media with other sources, particularly independent ones. “If all your information is coming from mainstream media, you have to realize that there are only a handful of companies, and a handful of executives who are deciding what you should be informed about. In this way, it (the media) really does act like a dam,” Sangha observed.

Well before she became a producer and director, Sangha acquired a profound interest in the depictions that the media puts forth. “As a young woman I realized that the images of women as reflected by mainstream media/television/and film did not relate to me, and were nothing like women who surrounded me: my mother, sisters, teachers, friends,” she said. “They were also not the type of people I particularly aspired to be like.”

Sangha thus began the goal of exposing social injustice to the world and educating the public about youth, women and under-represented groups through film, documentaries, and media arts. Gender bias, Sangha found, threatened public opinion and set forth unreasonable representations of women. “Women whose stories are not told should be told. That is why I feel particularly compelled to highlight women in many of the film

projects and to encourage more women to get involved in creating media,” she commented.

What is the solution to correcting the unfair portrayals of women in the media? Sangha explained that the first step is to “get more women, and men, that believe in and want to represent gender equality and empowered women, involved in creating media and working at the decision making levels of production or broadcast.” Furthermore, the public should support those in the media who portray women in leadership roles and should not be swayed by mainstream examples. More that anything, Sangha asked for those dissatisfied with the gender bias to voice their opinions and tell their own stories.

Sangha ended her presentation by fielding a number of questions from WorldLink delegates and asking how they can lessen their reliance on mainstream media. As delegates explained their hopes and plans, Sangha expressed her approval. “Youth have the power to create great change and their involvement makes a tremendous impact, not only on themselves, but in the community and individuals around them. History has shown us that there has never been any significant social change without the participation of the student movement,” she said. As delegates filed out of the room, they left empowered and cognizant of their ability to not only change the media, but also to change the world.



“Loorz” Continuation from Page 1

of the Earth’s population, while China contains 20% of the population. “We are clearly using more than our fair share of environmentally destructive gases here in the homeland,” he told the delegates.

Loorz explained the flaws in the logic of different types of skeptics, from those who say global warming does not exist because it’s cold out, to those who say scientists don’t really agree that it exists anyway.

He referred to a University of California study, which revealed that out of 928 scientific articles on global warming, none of them disagreed on the existence of global warming. However, out of the 3,543 news, tabloids, and other non-scientific articles, 53% disagreed on global warming’s existence.

In response to the “Its cold today so global warming cannot exist” argument, Loorz took it upon himself to teach his audience the difference between weather and climate. Weather, being defined as the actual state of the earth’s surface at a given time, and climate, the average or normal state of the earth’s surface conditions, are clearly not the same. Thus it is possible for it to be cold somewhere, although the average temperature of the earth is rising, exposing the fallacy of this argument. He clarified, “cold days do not disprove global warming, and hot days do not prove it.”

Loorz’s youth-friendly presentations captivate and inform his audiences, leaving them empowered and enthusiastic about doing something about global warming. By request he can visit schools, and then start an action team there to help with future events and

projects.

To join Loorz, you can visit Kids-vs-global-warming.com. Loorz and his supporters have proven that “youth are not on the fringes” in the

fight against global warming. They are in the foreground.

To youth, Loorz urges you to remember, “We are the future. But we are more than that: We are the now.”



An Anthropologist’s Take on Global Warming

BY ASHLEY CHANG
STAFF WRITER

Global climate change is real – scientists have proven this. We have everything – the numbers, the graphs, the white lab coats – to put the validity and urgency of this environmental crisis in plain view. It’s here, before us, written in permanent marker, and has left a stain that detergent cannot remove. But even with all the quantitative research, scientists have been unable to string together a coherent image of what is actually happening to humans. Anthropologists like **Robert Hitchcock**, chair of the Department of Anthropology at Michigan State University, look at the “people side of the equation,” he said. “We need a nuanced view to see what’s happening.”

Hitchcock explained that the threat of global climate change lies not in the destruction of the atmosphere itself but in the destruction of human lives. Environmental changes provoke a sort of domino effect, where the poorest are the first pieces to fall. Those who live in poorer regions lack the basic means and bare necessities to care for themselves and are the least able to deal with the impending impacts

of climate change. It is the 600 million indigenous people who will suffer the most when heat intensifies or rain falls without cessation. This segment of the population depends mostly on agriculture for sustenance. A shortage of sustenance will lead to an undernourished society and the need for greater assistance.

Typically, humanitarian and non-governmental organizations like Greenpeace and the Sierra Club have endorsed such enterprises as bringing health and comfort to the sick and hopeless. But it’s not as simple as it sounds. These organizations typically need government permission to enter and work in their countries. Sometimes the very government is reluctant or even uninterested in the assistance.

Hitchcock noted that there is a close connection between environmental change and terrorism. Global warming will increase ethnic conflicts, as we are already seeing in such countries as Kenya, Uganda, Mali, and Chad. Secessionist movements are typically related to “poverty” and “dissatisfaction with the government,” Hitchcock described. This discord certainly has environment-related roots. When sustainability is up, peace reigns. However,

since global climate change is wreaking havoc on our world’s poor, various countries are dealing with different struggles, including terrorist activity. Often times, the poorest countries’ biggest investments lie with the military; because of instability, measures to improve health and the environment are not the top priorities. Countries are “spending more on counter-terrorism than environmental programs,” explained Hitchcock. Instead of focusing on this, Hitchcock suggested funding more relief efforts if we are to effectively mitigate the forces of terrorism.

As far as the future goes, Hitchcock said grimly, we “won’t make changes fast enough.” Right now there are people all around the globe trying to make a difference, but global climate change is winning the race – we’re mired in a situation where there’s “more cost before benefit.” Of course, countries are beginning to take a more progressive path. The world is finally waking up and realizing what needs to be done to stop the issues at hand; people can affect change, and help indigenous minority populations. “It’s getting better,” Hitchcock said.



“Opening Plenary” Continuation from Page 1.

In a world of miscommunication and extreme hyperbole, it is very easy to be steered onto the wrong path. This happens most often when the uninformed pose as experts. Talley strongly discouraged youth from believing everything they are told (especially when it is coming from politicians), and encouraged all to question the credibility and origin of information. She dispelled any beliefs of a catastrophic planet collapse in the next ten years, or century for that matter. However, she did conclude that climate change is very real and should be

taken seriously.

Matthew, associate professor of International and Environmental Politics in the Schools of Social Ecology and Social Science at the University of California Irvine, described the audience as a “unique generation” - one of change and action. He believed strongly that the teens in attendance would start a revolution in global awareness. He spoke of the dangers surrounding global warming in places like South Asia, where they are ill equipped and have “little resilience” against climate change catastrophes. He warned that if no one wanted to help the planet, there were going to be “a lot more Darfurs, and a lot more New Orleans’s.”

Shaffer, executive director of the University of California San Diego’s Environment and Sustainability Initiative, spoke next and opened her own speech with a curious statement, “everything is connected to everything.” While the audience paused to dwell on her comment, she further explained that one decision could change everything-positively or negatively. Her approach was meant to show the youth before her how it was possible to fight global warming, and how simple it was to make it worse.

13-year-old Loorz, founder of Kids Vs. Global Warming, spoke passionately about what was to come if humans continued to harm the earth

and how kids can and will make a difference; it left the audience on their feet roaring in applause.

A serious tone shift followed, and humorous Anders, director of the Energy Policy Initiatives Center at USD’s School of Law, was given the difficult task of concluding the opening ceremony after Loorz’s incredible speech. He added to Loorz’s statement and made it clear that, “what the world really needs is leadership in youth, not new inventions.”

The morning plenary was a fantastic start to an awe-inspiring day, and as students left the theatre, they couldn’t help but wonder what was to come.