

Generation Green: Making a Large Impact in a Seemingly Small Way

Tanvi

On November 22nd, 2019, students from Grade 7 to Grade 12 met at the Sheridan College, Oakville, for the Generation Green Youth Un-Conference, a conference dedicated to raising awareness about one of the most crucial issues the world faces today - climate change. The Generation Green Youth Un-Conference inspired students to take climate action because anyone can make a difference.

Students heard from many speakers, such as Elizabeth Dowdeswell, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Chief R. Stacey Laforme, from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Dr. Daniel Scott, from the University of Waterloo, and Frances Edmonds, from HP Canada. The students also had the opportunity to learn more through workshops, with appealing topics such as Building (Open) Smart Cities and How to Measure, Track, and Report Your Impact. During the provided delectable, waste-free lunch, students got to network and visited representative booths of environmental programs offered at various Canadian universities and colleges. Students were encouraged to create their own project and community to follow throughout the next few months that would reduce their community's greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).



For my community initiative, my family and I reduced our GHG emissions in several ways. We tried walking instead of driving wherever possible and decreasing the use of some appliances. We participated in this project from December 2019 until March 2020, and we will continue to implement it more in our home and our community. I chose this project as I know that small changes can make big impacts. Hence, I wanted to apply that same mindset to this project for my family to be even more sustainable and ecologically friendly.

We reduced our home's GHG emissions as we conserved more energy and water by decreasing our use of these utilities throughout this project. Initially, I tracked our regular activities and later, we implemented 'green' activities in a spreadsheet. In the end, I calculated GHG emissions for our regular activities and the overall reduction in our GHG emissions accordingly. These changes seemed small, yet had a significant impact on our family's greenhouse gas emissions.

Many people believe that their efforts are insignificant and hence do not try to create a positive impact. Although, as a family, we strive to be sustainable and ecologically-friendly, this Generation Green project has shown us where we can improve. Through the Generation Green project, we were astounded to see the tremendous change we had made in numbers. We will encourage, motivate, and support others in creating their own impact, and teach others the lessons we learned from Generation Green. My family and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience inspired by Generation Green, and we will continue to create a positive and sustainable impact on our home, our community, and our world.

The Generation Green Wrap-Up Event took place on March 20th, 2020. The event was initially planned to be held at Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre, Oakville, but was later conducted online via Zoom from 10:00 A.M to 11:30 A.M. Due to this change, anyone in the community could attend. The Wrap-Up Event consisted of guest speakers and awards announcements. Students were eligible to win prizes and received a certificate of completion as well as volunteer hours.

In conclusion, Generation Green was a worthwhile experience that helped students like me create a positive impact, and become leaders in their community.