



## Saints Attend Delaware Environmental Summit

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On February 28, three St. Andrew's students attended the Delaware Youth Environmental Summit (YES!) in Dover, Delaware. More than 250 students from 22 high schools across Delaware attended the summit, which was organized and led by students. The summit's goal was to inspire youth-led action and environmental leadership throughout the state.

Eleri Phillips '21 was one of the lead organizers of the summit. "YES! was created by a coalition

of nonprofit environmental leaders, educators at area schools, and agencies to provide the opportunity for teens to meet, learn, and share their ideas on environmental issues of concern," Eleri said. "Our goal is to inform, inspire, activate, and empower students for environmental change."

The summit featured several keynote speakers, a dozen workshops, more than 27 nonprofit and agency exhibitors, and student led lightning talks. Action plans were developed at the end of the day for students to integrate the day's learning into a plan for increased sustainability at their respective schools.

Cierra Martinez '20 and Piper Jenkins '22 also helped to organize and attended the summit. "Eleri MC'd the entire day, introducing everyone to the summit as well as introducing our morning keynotes by Colin O'Mara [**President & CEO of the National Wildlife Federation**] and Delaware Senator Tom Carper, drawing students for the raffle, and generally guiding people through the day," explained St. Andrew's Director of Sustainability Diana Burk. "Cierra and Piper were on the keynote speaker committee. Before the summit, they helped choose the two keynote speakers, invited public officials to the conference, and chose students to give short 'lightning talks'. Cierra also helped create a green schools survey for conference goers. On Friday, Piper introduced the three lightning talks by Delaware high school students from Newark Charter and Sussex Academy. Cierra then introduced the afternoon keynote by youth climate activist Nadia Nazar. Eleri, Cierra and Piper were also chosen to escort Delaware Governor John Carney and **DNREC** Secretary Shawn Garvin to the workshops. "

"Our goal here is not just to talk about the issues at hand, but to come to solutions," Piper commented in **an interview with Delaware Public Media**. "It's something that we want it to be

cohesive and we want it to create solutions and kids to come up with plans to make their school greener make their counties and communities greener. We're really hoping that this makes the impact we're looking for."

"I think it's incredibly important, it's our futures that we're talking about here for our generation but also generations to come," Eleri said in the same interview. "We're reaching a really pivotal point right now I think where action really needs to be taken."