

# BREATHE PROJECT

The Air We Share

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Break Free From Plastic International Tour Brings 2-Day Event to Pittsburgh**

**Pittsburgh, Pa.**, – Activists impacted by plastic end-use waste in India and the Philippines will bring their international campaign to Pittsburgh this week, a region facing a fork-in-the-road decision about its future economic development – whether to clean up its polluted past and embark on a sustainable future or follow the path to petrochemical plastics manufacturing plants and a hub of auxiliary plastic-making industries and businesses.

The Breathe Project and its collaborative members – Allegheny County Clean Air Now (ACCAN), Beaver County Marcellus Awareness Community (BCMAC), Sewickley Community First (SC1) and the League of Women Voters – have partnered with #breakfreefromplastic, Earthworks, and the Center for Coalfield Justice to bring this program to the Pittsburgh area.

The event features Lakshmi Narayan of Waste Pickers Union in Pune, India, Myrna Dominguez of PANGISDA, of a fishing organization from Manilla, Philippines, and Jed Alegadco of Break Free From Plastic, also from Manilla, Philippines. The speakers will share their stories about the negative impacts of plastic production throughout its supply chain, especially when plastic is discarded at the end of its use. The event will take place at two locations this week:

**Sewickley Public Library**  
**May 22, 7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.**  
**500 Thorn St., Sewickley**

**Energy Innovation Center**  
**May 23, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**  
**1435 Bedford Ave., Pittsburgh**

“I’m here visiting communities in the U.S. threatened by plastics production in order to bring voices from our coastal communities halfway around the world that are harmed by plastics, too,” said Myrna Dominguez, a food sovereignty activist. “Plastic trash pollutes our waters and destroys fish sanctuaries, harming our fisherfolk whose livelihoods depend upon clean water and a healthy seabed.”

According to a report published this week in National Geographic, “Planet or Plastic,” 40 percent of all plastic produced in the world is packaging used just once and discarded. Another report by the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) reveals that “99% of plastics are produced from chemicals sourced from fossil fuels.”

U.S. plastics production is located in regions near fossil fuel extraction especially in the Gulf Coast and Appalachia where communities are fighting proposed expansion of the extraction and infrastructure necessary to ramp up plastics production for export.

“It’s a sad day when a region with so much promise sells out to a massive, polluting industry,” said Terrie Baumgardner of Beaver County Marcellus Awareness Community. “We look forward to hearing more from these international speakers and jumpstarting the conversation around plastics.”

In addition to Pittsburgh, the tour will visit communities in Texas, New Orleans, West Virginia and Washington D.C. Updates will be posted at [@earthworks](#) and in the [#breakfreefromplastic](#) social media accounts: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). #