



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Pittsburgh Earth Week 2020 Coalition Raises Awareness and More than \$6,200 to Mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day**

More than 60 SWPA organizations came together to sound the alarm, declaring a Climate Emergency for Southwestern Pennsylvania and beyond with a historic event that attracted more than 22,000 people in honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day.

The **Pittsburgh Earth Week 2020 Teach-In and Youth Climate Strike** marked a first in the region, a virtual program that lifted the voices of a broad spectrum of organizations, community leaders, artists, musicians and frontline activists working to improve people's health, safety and the environment. Both events together succeeded in raising more than \$6,200 for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Foodbank.

The goal was to amplify new and familiar local voices, strengthen community connections and raise up environmental awareness through an Earth Week Teach-In and Earth Day Youth Climate Strike.

More than 22,280 people viewed the Teach-In on April 19 on three platforms, Facebook, YouTube and Vimeo, according to analytics from the production team, Fireman Creative and BlueLens. A majority of viewers, 14,708, watched on Facebook. About 60% of the viewers were female and 40% were male.

More than 40 people presented live and by video during the 4-hour program. Topics ranged from affordable housing to education, urban farming, employment as well as industrial assaults from air and water pollution, the expanding petrochemical complex and climate change. The videos have been posted on Facebook and YouTube and continue to receive nearly 50 views a day.

The 24-Hour Youth Climate Strike on Instagram April 22 had between 1,200 and 2,400 views over the course of the strike and averaged 60-100 views per hour.

“I think virtual events like these show the resilience of our community in Pittsburgh,” said Leandra Mira, an organizer of the Youth Strike. “It’s inspiring for me as an environmental organizer because there are always moments where I feel drained and hopeless, but seeing how everyone came together and participated really reminded me of how lucky I am to be a part of such a nurturing community.”

“Earth Day is a celebration that we recognize as an annual celebration honoring the work of many wonderful people,” said Raqueeb Bey of Grow Pittsburgh. “Earth Day is every day and should be honored in respect of those ancestors who paved the way for us by doing the right thing, before laws were created to make them.”

“What began as a physical event in Point State Park had to pivot quickly because of Covid-19 concerns,” said Paul Fireman of Fireman Creative. “Faced with a situation where it was impossible to have a rally, we rallied digitally. By embracing technology, we saved Earth Week. It was a mission of love.”

A complete list of partners can be viewed on the [Earth Week Pittsburgh](#) website. Supporters and presenters included Rising Appalachia, JasiriX, Etta Cox, Jamil Bey of Urban Kind, Clairton activist Melanie Meade, Randall Taylor, Leandra Mira and Dr. Patricia DeMarco and Dr. Ned Ketyer. (See the complete list of speakers [here](#).)

See the [Schedule](#) and [Coalition Partners](#) on EarthWeekPGH.Org

The coalition will continue to enlist people ready to [Accept the Challenge/ Values and Demands](#) on the website throughout the year because every day IS Earth Day.

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