

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY TO HOST ANNUAL STATEWIDE CLIMATE SUMMIT

April 5, 2023

Environmental justice, building environmental-awareness among topics on June 2

ROCHESTER HILLS, Mich. – Scientists, policymakers, educators, artists and environmental advocates from around state will gather at Oakland University for the fourth annual Michigan Climate Summit on Friday, June 2. The event is presented by the Michigan Climate Action Network (MiCAN) and sponsored by the Oakland University Credit Union.

The summit focuses on building stronger connections among current scientific findings on climate change and the impact on public policy of ordinary citizens and grassroots organizations.

“We’re bringing together scientists, policy experts, educators and artists to unleash the creative potential of Michigan’s climate movement,” said MiCAN Director Denise Keele. “Part of our focus is raising awareness of collective action to deal with the effects of climate change, and turning that awareness into positive and productive change that benefits all citizens.”

A key emphasis of the gathering, said Keele, is on telling personal stories about the consequences of climate change and how environmental advocates are banding together to share their passion. Coming together in-person to confirm a shared mission is essential to the bond required to strengthen the citizen-based environmental movement, she said.

“OUCU is proud to partner with Oakland University as a sponsor for the Climate Summit,” said OUCU President/CEO April M. Clobes. “Fostering conversations regarding climate change is important to our communities and our future. Summits such as these empower all of us with the critical tools to be a part of the broader solution.”

The climate summit will convene nearly a year after the Whitmer administration unveiled its “MI Healthy Climate Plan,” the state’s framework to address environmental and economic impacts from dramatic fluctuations in weather. The plan lays out the impacts of climate change, opportunities to improve health, how to address environmental injustices, and respond to economic opportunities. According to the plan, Michigan could achieve carbon neutrality by midcentury.

At Oakland, the Campus Alliance for Sustainability and the Environment (CASE-OU) is committed to creating a campus-wide

culture of sustainability. Their efforts have translated to minimizing waste on campus, nurturing green and natural spaces, reducing the university's carbon footprint, and raising awareness about climate change and environmental injustice.

"Higher education institutions play a critical role in educating the public and policy makers about the threats to our ecological balance from climate change," said Jeffrey Insko, OU professor of English and CASE-OU member who is helping to organize the summit.

"Our goal is to advocate for doing more than recycling and reducing energy consumption," he said. "We must encourage new ways of thinking and living that will allow us to develop more sustainable relationships, cultivate renewable habits, and generate new values that reflect our desire for a more just and habitable world."

MiCAN is a nonprofit organization with the mission to support individuals, communities and organizations advancing equitable climate solutions based on rigorous scientific analysis and findings.

For details and to register for the fourth annual Michigan Climate Summit, please visit [here \(https://www.miclimataction.org/2023_michigan_climate_summit\)](https://www.miclimataction.org/2023_michigan_climate_summit).

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