

THE YEAR OF  
**CLIMATE  
ACTION**

**Brandeis**

**Summary Report  
July 2023**

**150**  
SEATS

In new courses with  
climate content

**23**

CAMPUS PARTNERS

Collaborating on  
programs

**6**

NEW COURSES

With climate in the  
curriculum

**30**

FACULTY

Attended curriculum  
workshops

**3300**

ATTENDEES

Across all events

**9+**

FACULTY

Updating existing  
courses

**13**

EXTERNAL GROUPS

Collaborating on  
programs

**57**

EVENTS & PROGRAMS

All year

THE YEAR OF  
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ACTION**

**Brandeis**

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# Overview

# Introduction

In the 2019-2020 academic year, the President's Task Force on Campus Sustainability drafted a new climate action plan for the university. Among its recommendations was to dedicate an entire upcoming year to catalyzing and deepening our understanding of climate change as a social justice issue through curricular and co-curricular programming.

After nearly two years of planning, 2022-2023 became Brandeis' first-ever Year of Climate Action.

This report summarizes the outcomes of our year and our hopes for making this the first of many years of climate action at Brandeis.

## **Land Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge and pay respect to the fact that the Brandeis campus occupies land that has been and continues to be the traditional land of the Mattakeeset, Namasket, Natick, Ponkapoag, and Wampanoag tribes of the Massachusetts Nation.

**SO YOU  
WANT  
TO HELP  
THE  
PLANET.**

**EDUCATE. COMMUNICATE. ACT.**

LAUNCHING FALL 2022  
BRANDEIS.EDU/CLIMATE

THE YEAR OF  
**CLIMATE  
ACTION**

**Brandeis**

# BE AN AGENT OF HOPE.

BE A CATALYST FOR CHANGE.  
HEAL THE PLANET.

LAUNCHING FALL 2022  
BRANDEIS.EDU/CLIMATE

THE YEAR OF  
CLIMATE  
ACTION

Brandeis

## Goals of the year

Brandeis' Year of Climate Action set out to:

- Engage our community in new climate justice and environmental justice programming. This includes guest speakers, panel discussions, and funding for climate-related programming.
- Activate our students to be climate advocates in whatever career they choose by providing faculty with tools to relate their course material to climate action.
- Provide a number of programs and opportunities for student training, career resources, platforms for civic engagement, and more.
- Develop campus emissions reduction targets through our ongoing decarbonization study.

Underlying these specific goals was an overall attempt to encourage hope.

We measured the success of the year using several metrics, a summary of which is in our [infographic slide](#).

# Cross- and Off-Campus Engagement

Throughout our planning process, the [planning team](#) presented to several groups, asking how the Year of Climate Action can support what they are already planning for the year. As a result, we were able to build relationships with several on- and off-campus partners.

## Campus partners

- Environmental Studies Program
- The Center for German and European Studies
- Department of Theatre Arts
- The Heller School of Social Policy and Management
- Brandeis Intercultural Center
- Brandeis Hospitality
- Office of Student Engagement
- Vic and Bobbi '63 Samuels Center for Community Partnerships and Civic Transformation (COMPACT)
- Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts
- International Students and Scholars Office
- Brandeis Counseling Center
- Office of Academic Services
- Brandeis Library
- Brandeis MakerLab
- Brandeis International Business School
- Branda app team
- Department of Physics
- Department of Mathematics
- Department of Fine Arts
- Student Senate Sustainability Committee
- Office of Communications, Marketing and External Relations
- The Ethics Center
- Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation Program (CAST)
- Programs in International Justice and Society, International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life

## Off-campus partners

- Sojour Theater
- Boston Vegetarian Society
- Massachusetts Youth Climate Coalition
- Our Climate
- Parsnip Ship
- Lemberg Children's Center
- Grad Bag
- Household Goods of Acton
- Epilepsy Foundation
- Center for Sustainability Education, Dickinson College
- Sustainability Curriculum Consortium
- Rare
- Charles River Watershed Association



# Embedding Climate Topics Into Existing Programs



A key approach of our year was to look at Brandeis' existing and planned set of events and engagements and see where we can encourage the focus to intersect with and examine climate issues. The following are examples of existing campus programming that incorporated climate-related topics or opportunities, rather than adding entirely new programming to campus:

- [Several courses](#) incorporating climate into their existing curricula
- The annual Indigenous People's Day event focused on climate justice, in collaboration with the Brandeis Intercultural Center, Brandeis Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the Brandeis Women Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Brandeis' annual [Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts](#) focused on climate as its annual theme, in collaboration with Brandeis Arts Engagement
- An eco-anxiety support group offered by the [Brandeis Counseling Center](#), in addition to their existing groups
- A 2-week theater residency culminating in three performances of [Without Blinking: A Devised Participatory Performance About Climate Action](#), one of which was cross-listed as a Brandeis Critical Conversation
- A new [Environmental Benefit Maker-In-Residence microgrant](#) with the Brandeis MakerLab, a new category to their existing Maker-in-Residence opportunities, in collaboration with the Brandeis Library Research Technology and Innovation department
- A new [Research Excellence Prize](#) added to several already offered by the Brandeis Library, focused on rewarding students for their climate research



# Ways the Year of Climate Action has made a difference

- Trained over 30 faculty in ways to incorporate climate change topics in to [existing courses](#), many of whom then implemented changes to their courses this year.
- Established [new courses](#), such as Our Local Waterways, Calculus I using climate data (new section), and the Eco-Anxiety support group, which is being transformed from a counseling center group into an elective course to fulfill Brandeis' HWL requirement.
- Praised for our far-reaching campus engagement and planning process, insights from which are being applied to similar new initiatives such as the upcoming Brandeis 75th Anniversary.
- Launched the successful pilot and expansion of Brandeis' [sustainable grounds management initiatives](#).
- Spurred the forthcoming sustainability addendum to the [Framework to the Future](#).
- All 16 students from CAST 150B [won](#) the [Charles River Watershed Association](#) Young Professionals Award for the projects they created in the course, which was focused as a Design Lab for climate solutions during the year.
- Spurred our first delegation to COP27 in Fall of 2022, and application for observer delegate status to continue to send a delegation of students to COP in the future.
- Over three tons of donated goods were diverted from landfill/incineration and provided to partner organizations through our [Give & Go program](#).
- Hundreds of students, faculty, staff, student families and members of the community saw and interacted with the [Rare Climate Culture exhibit](#), which was on display in the SCC for several weeks before and after Commencement. Over 100 people also participated in the associated study with results forthcoming, titled "The Impact on Attitudes and Beliefs about the Environment from viewing Rare's 'Shifting the Climate Culture' exhibits".



# **Academics**

# Faculty Support and Resources

A key goal of the year was to encourage faculty to incorporate climate change topics in existing courses, whether in a class, a day, a unit or more. The Sustainability Committee organized multiple ways to support faculty in their efforts, including:

- Custom Workshops
- Teaching resources:
  - Lesson plans
  - Quantifications of climate solutions
  - Multimedia resources
  - Climate data
- A brand-new, streamlined application to the [Brandeis Sustainability Fund](#), designed specifically for faculty to support enhancements to their courses.

All of the teaching resources were compiled and [provided online](#), and will remain available in the future.



## Surging Seas

Sea level rise analysis by CLIMATE CO2 CENTRAL

## PROJECT DRAWDOWN.

CLIMATE  
INTERACTIVE  
*tools for a thriving future*

**PERIL  
& PROMISE**  
THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE



# Faculty Workshops

The Sustainability Committee convened two faculty workshops in 2022 to provide interested faculty with assistance and resources to incorporate climate change topics in their courses.

## **Integrating sustainability into your course/s using the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals**

Whether faculty were looking to develop a new course, or modify an existing course to include sustainability content, this workshop provided the opportunity to learn how and why integrating sustainability across the curriculum is valuable, and provided work time to implement these strategies in course planning.

The workshop also offered a session with Brandeis Prof. Sally Warner, who shared the latest in, and answered questions about, the science of climate change.

*Facilitated by Lindsey Lyons, Assistant Director, Center for Sustainability Education, Dickinson College; leader of Dickinson's Center for Sustainability Across the Curriculum*

## **Key competencies in sustainability education**

The [Sustainability Curriculum Consortium \(SCC\)](#) and the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) launched Practical Approaches to Teaching Sustainability series, the first volume of which is "Key Competencies." This SCC workshop presented key research from the publication.

*Main Presenters: Krista Hiser, University of Hawaii Office of Sustainability, Kapi'olani Community College; Tina Lynn Evans, Colorado Mountain College; Susan Caplow, University of Montevallo; Tai Munro, MacEwan University; Brittany Y. Davis, Allegheny College; David Robertson, Monash University (Australia); and Ira Feldman, Sustainability Curriculum Consortium*

## **Quotes from participants**

"I will be able to easily adapt what I learned today for my class and to translate theory into practice effectively. It is not something I can say for all workshops I attend. I am very pleased I sign up for this one. I should add that Mary Fischer and Ann Ward offered clear info about the resources available at Brandeis. That was also very helpful."

"The workshop and the speakers were well-organized, and the information was very clearly presented. The concrete examples of activities/ implementations were extremely helpful, and the mix of theory and examples was spot on."

# Courses With New Content

These courses were updated with new material, units, and projects that focused on sustainability and climate-related material. Many of these came about via our [faculty workshops](#).

BIOL 14a, Genetics and Genomics, Rachel Woodruff

BIOL 172b, Growth Control and Cancer, Rachel Woodruff

CAST 150B, Introduction to Introduction to Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation, Toni Shapiro-Phim

ED 101b, Teaching Science and History for Social Change, Rachel Kramer Theodorou

HISP 105, Oral Communication through Cultural Topics: Sustainability, Kristen Turpin

ITAL 105, Composition & Conversation, Silvia Monteleone

PSYCH 148a, Applied Statistical Computing Using R, Xiaodong Liu

RUS 39, Russian Language for Russian Speakers, Irina Dubinina

SOC 112a, Social Class and Social Inequality, Professor Karen V. Hansen

UWS 43A, University Writing Seminar on Storytelling in Business, Katrin Fischer



L-R: Rachel Woodruff, Toni Shapiro-Phim, Katrin Fischer, Irina Dubinina

# New Courses

In addition to faculty updating existing courses with new climate and sustainability material, the following new courses were spurred by our outreach and planning process, and launched during our Year of Climate Action.

**These new courses provided 150 new seats for students.**

ENVS 111a— Environmental and Climate Justice, Prakash Kashwan

ENVS 122a — Our Local Waterways, Sally Warner\*

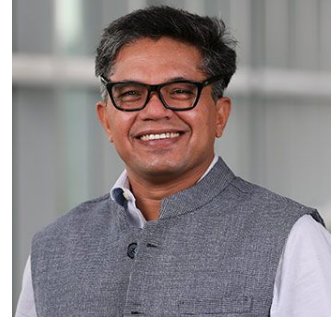
ENVS 20a — Introduction to Climate Change and Health, Israel Ukawuba

LGLS 122b — Indigenous Rights, Environmental Justice, and Federal Indian Law, James Pollack

Math 10a — Calculus I using climate data (Spring 2023)\*

NEJS 26b — Jewish Environmental Ethics, Yehudah Mirsky

\*Funded by the Brandeis Sustainability Fund, using the [Year of Climate Action Streamlined Application for Faculty](#), which made applying for and accessing the fund easier for faculty for the first time.



Top-bottom: Sally Warner, Prakash Kashwan, and Yehuda Mirsky

# Faculty Features



Professor Silvia Monteleone attended both of the faculty workshops organized by the Brandeis Sustainability Committee in the lead-up to the Year of Climate Action. She then updated her syllabus for ITAL105 for the Year of Climate Action. In the course now, students reflect on issues related to globalization, the environment, and present-day Italian society, with a focus on “seconda generazione”, i.e. the new (for Italy) reality of Italians without an Italian family heritage. The course also examines social justice issues related to unequal distribution of power, resources, and privilege by looking at contemporary social/political activism in music and art. According to Prof. Monteleone, students have welcomed the opportunity to talk about relevant sustainability issues such as “fast fashion” and activism in music and in the art world.



Professor Karen V. Hansen updated her SOC 112a, Social Class and Social Inequality. This year, it culminated with a unit on Environmental Justice and a final project that focuses on environmental injustices. Students conducted research about the scope and nature of the problem, and measures taken or proposed to “fix” or prevent further problems. They identified advocates and opponents of change, and pitched their final project presentation to an elected official (of their choice, at any level of government) who might have some power to investigate/legislate/bring attention to/vote in favor of action to mitigate the problem.



# Course Highlight: CAST-CRWA Climate Justice Design Lab and Project Design Practicum

As part of the Year of Climate Action, Professors Toni Shapiro-Phim, Cynthia Cohen and Leigh Swigart of the [Interdisciplinary minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation \(CAST\) program](#), collaborated with the [Charles River Watershed Association \(CRWA\)](#) on a climate justice design lab in the fall semester. The sixteen students in CAST 150B: Intro to CAST conducted oral history interviews with people selected by CRWA. Students then created art - from poems, to songs, to a video game - based on the stories they gathered about the river, its meaning in people's lives, and their hopes for its future. CRWA plans to use some of the stories students gather in their future outreach and educational initiatives.

Jane Wilburn Sapp, nationally known cultural worker, artist and educator, who has long been at the forefront of social justice and civil rights initiatives in the southern United States and elsewhere, facilitated a songwriting workshop for students in the course. Together, they crafted a song called, *If the River Could Speak*.

Then, in the spring semester, CAST extended the focus in another course, the Project Design Practicum, where students completed a public art project that built on the collaborative work they did with the CRWA in CAST 150B. Entitled "[Voices of a Resilient River](#)," the artwork was on display in Fellows Garden for the duration of the [Festival of Creative Arts](#).

As a result, the Charles River Watershed Association awarded their Young Professionals Award to this group of students for the projects they created about the Charles River Watershed.



CAST Students Honored at the CRWA Annual Gala  
Top row, left to right: Nicholas Ong, Meli Jackson, Fiona Ripp, Hilary Lai, Xavier Butler  
Bottom row, left to right: Liz Sandoval, Jacob Krahn, Alex Rose, Zara Lokuge, Madison Siros



# New Student Book Forum

Each year, a new book is selected as the subject of the [Helen and Philip Brecher New Student Forum](#), where the incoming class has a shared academic experience. Pulitzer Prize-winning author Elizabeth Kolbert visited campus to discuss *Under a White Sky: The Nature of the Future*, which was chosen in honor of the Year of Climate Action.

In *Under a White Sky*, Elizabeth Kolbert takes a hard look at the new world we are creating. Along the way, she meets biologists who are trying to preserve the world's rarest fish, which lives in a single tiny pool in the middle of the Mojave; engineers who are turning carbon emissions to stone in Iceland; Australian researchers who are trying to develop a "super coral" that can survive on a hotter globe; and physicists who are contemplating shooting tiny diamonds into the stratosphere to cool the earth.

A small group of students were also given the opportunity to have an intimate lunch with Kolbert ahead of the forum.



Students speak with Elizabeth Kolbert. Photo credit: Mike Lovett

# The Brandeis Library Research Excellence Prize



Each year, the Brandeis Library offers several [Research Excellence Prizes](#), which recognize students who apply sophisticated information literacy skills to the selection, evaluation and synthesis of sources for a research project. In addition to highlighting exemplary student scholarship, the Award serves to encourage students to engage with library resources and make use of library services. Each prize is for \$250.

In honor of the Year of Climate Action, the Library added a new category of research prize this year focused on rewarding students for their climate research, open to both undergraduate and graduate students.

The winners were undergraduate students Armen Youssoufian, Dalen Weathersby, Dante Culmone-Durso, Ellie Greene, and Fijare Plous. Their research project, “Temperate Forest - How Water-Related Climate Variables Impact Temperate Species & Habitats,” focused on how water-related climate variables, like precipitation and drought, cause a complex array of responses in plant and animal species in temperate forests.



Associate Professor of Ecology Colleen Hitchcock said, “These students collaborated on an oral presentation for Biol39. Each year in this course students first create an oral presentation on their own that focuses on how climate change impacts a specific species. These are recorded online and students give peer feedback and then create a final version of their individual presentation. After this, they then work together to plan a group presentation that brings together all of the ideas in the individual presentations. Well, let me tell you - this group this year - hit it out of the park! They brought it all together, reworked their individual slides, created an excellent narrative that brought together the relevant (and only the relevant) parts of their individual presentations. It was amazing. The research was well-cited, made use of the primary literature, and the slides were credited and formatted wonderfully.”

Students l-r: Ellie Greene, Fijare Plous, Armen Youssoufian. Not pictured: Dalen Weathersby, Dante Culmone-Durso.

# Extracurricular and Cocurricular Events

Brandeis' Year of Climate Action included approximately 53 events and programs, with a total of over 3,200 attendees, the most climate-related programming in Brandeis' history.

Programming was organized with 22 campus partners, 13 off-campus partners, and several student groups. Following are some highlights of those events. Additional events are featured in the [gallery](#), and a list of all events is included in the [appendix](#).



# Climate Warming Stripes Banner

The climate warming stripes banner was an idea from Professor Sally Warner during the summer of 2022. Following this, students, faculty, and staff gathered to sew 40 meters of fabric together into stripes, which depict the changes in global temperature due to anthropogenic climate change.

The banner was taken to the September 2022 Youth Climate Rally in Boston (right), where students marched and spoke in support of climate action by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Brandeis brought roughly 50 students, the largest contingent of the rally.

The display resided in the Shapiro Campus Center throughout the year of Climate Action, wrapping up the staircase to show this information in a highly public space and stress the urgency of climate action.

This project was made possible by the Brandeis Sustainability Fund.







Above:

Brandeis students march with the warming stripes banner at the Massachusetts Youth Climate Coalition Climate Action Rally in September 2022

Right:

Brandeis Sustainability Ambassadors helped Prof. Warner hang the banner in the Shapiro Campus Center, where it remained on display all year.







## Indigenous People's Day: Climate Justice

A powerful discussion on Indigenous Climate Justice was led by Jean-Luc Pierite, president of the North American Indian Center of Boston. Welcoming Remarks were given by Lee Bitsóí followed by a community blessing. Jean-Luc Pierite offered an enriching talk, followed by an interactive Round Dance led by Evangelina Macias, and a lunch of authentic Native American dishes featuring a custom menu developed by Brandeis Hospitality chefs. The event was covered by the [Brandeis Justice](#).

Sponsored by the Brandeis Office of Sustainability, Brandeis Intercultural Center, Brandeis Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the Brandeis Women Gender and Sexuality Studies.



# The Caterpillar Lab

[The Caterpillar Lab](#) is a non-profit organization that raises hundreds of Lepidopteran species (moths and butterflies) to raise awareness of the amazing New England biodiversity that is often overlooked. They provide educational programs that display numerous caterpillars which demonstrate fascinating evolutionary traits, from aposematic coloration, and camouflage, to mimicry which can range from twig mimics to snake mimics.

The Lab came to campus twice in the fall of 2022 and set up their outdoor traveling lab in Fellows Garden. Students, faculty and staff learned about entomological topics and related themes such as ecosystem services, ecosystem dynamics, species interactions and human-nature interactions using Lepidopterans as the prime examples.



Custom stickers and buttons inspired by the Caterpillar Lab visit. Photos for the buttons were taken by Forrest Shimazu '23, an Environmental Studies student and Brandeis Sustainability Ambassador, who interned for the Caterpillar Lab and is an amateur photographer.





## Climate Organizer-in-Residence

Brandeis engaged Eben Bein as our first-ever Climate-Organizer-in-Residence from the local youth climate action group [Our Climate](#). Eben held four “action dinners” to engage students on how to advocate for science-based, equitable and intersectional climate justice policies. Bein is the Massachusetts Field and Education Manager for Our Climate and Administrator for the Massachusetts Youth Climate Coalition. Our Climate then invited Brandeis students to join the MA Youth Climate Lobby Day in February 2023, and an additional lobby training and state policy event is being planned for fall 2023.

His talks were a mix of lecture and interactive discussions to better understand Massachusetts’ climate justice policies and the need for further involvement and advocacy for changes in policy. He brought first-hand knowledge in dealing with policy makers and emphasized the impacts students could make through unified voices and the creation of coalitions.

Student feedback: “The lobbying process is a lot less intimidating to me now and much more concrete. It was great having a chance to help research and prepare for specific legislators, and the general advice on what (and whom) to bring to the table was really illuminating.”

# Without Blinking: A Devised Participatory Performance

The Department of Theater Arts brought Sojourn Theatre to Brandeis to collaborate with Brandeis Students during a two-week residency from September 11-24, 2022. Students worked with two Sojourn Theatre Artists to create [Without Blinking: A Devised Participatory Performance About Climate Action](#). Each of the three 20-30 minute performances was followed by an audience discussion facilitated by Sojourn Theatre Artists and Brandeis students. One of the performances was cross-listed as part of the Brandeis' Core's Critical Conversations.

In conjunction with this event, the Department of Theater Arts also hosted three drop-in workshops to make giant puppets from recycled material collected around campus.



# What's your 'food print'? The hidden costs of our food choices with “Earthling” Ed Winters

Ed Winters, or [“Earthling Ed”](#), is a vegan filmmaker, educator, and public speaker based in London, England. Ed visited Brandeis to discuss the link between animal agriculture and climate justice. To keep up with the demand for animal products without compromising the environment, we need drastic changes in our food systems. Ed tackled the complexities of this topic and challenged the view that we are solely consumers.

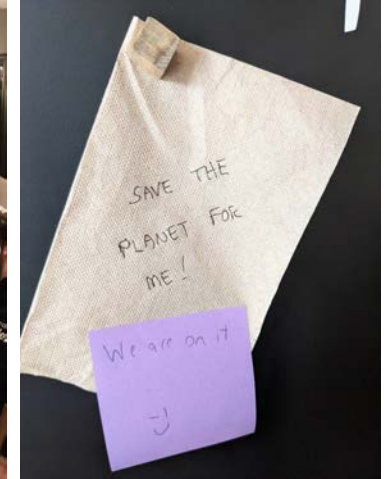
Instead, Ed argued we have to become food citizens, aware of the origin of our foods and the damage caused by our everyday choices. Drawing on the latest science and most up-to-date research, this talk analyzed the impact of our food choices and asked the question, what will the future of food look like?

The event was part of the Year of Climate Action's Food and Climate Week.

This event was co-sponsored by Co-sponsored by the [Center for German and European Studies](#) and the [Boston Vegetarian Society](#).







## Food and Climate Week

In collaboration with Brandeis Hospitality, Food & Climate Week offered several events to celebrate World Food Day. It kicked off with “What’s your ‘food print’? The hidden costs of our food choices with ‘Earthling’ Ed Winters.” Brandeis Hospitality held a week-long [Swipe Out Hunger](#) meal swipe donation drive, and introduced [Coolfood](#) Meals Station Takeovers in both residential dining halls. They also held an exclusive Farm to Table dinner highlighting local, climate-friendly foods that received rave reviews by students.

In addition to Food and Climate week, Brandeis expanded [our dining sustainability practices](#) this year by holding bi-monthly Coolfood Meals Takeovers, expanded composting, improved our zero waste catering, reduced waste by removing individually wrapped disposable condiments across most locations, and completed our first food donation to [Food for Free](#).

Above, L-R: advertisements for Food & Climate week events, the Farm to Table dinner, a photo of students attending the Farm to Table dinner, and a note on Brandeis Hospitality’s “napkin talk” wall, where a student had written “Save the planet for me!”, and staff responded “We are on it.”

# Climate Concerns: Eco-Anxiety Support Group

The emotional effects of Climate distress are real and prevalent for many students today. According to a survey by the American Psychological Association, more than two-thirds of Americans experience some climate anxiety. Hadassah Margolis of the Brandeis Counseling Center created the Eco-Anxiety Support Group to allow students to share concerns and build personal empowerment while combating despair, inaction, and eco-anxiety. This group was open to all Brandeis students.

Because of its success, the group will transform into a course that will fulfill Brandeis' HWL requirement starting in fall of 2023.

Student feedback after attending the group:

"I think what I found most helpful was the ability to just share what we were thinking about the climate change issue. Having a space to share different options and thoughts around the problems we face with climate change and the greater social issues is very important."

"The best thing about this group was finally having a space where I could speak about my experiences and be heard and understood because the people around me have had similar experiences to mine. And just generally how supportive everyone was to each other and the introspective nature but also future looking mindset in order to prepare for challenges ahead."

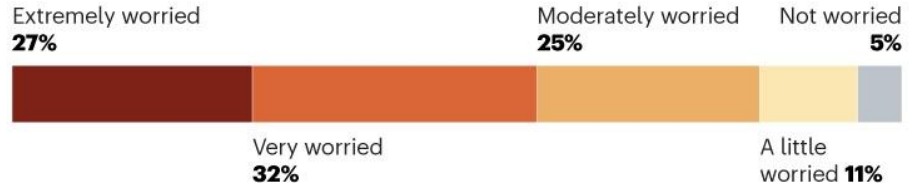


Hadassah Margolis

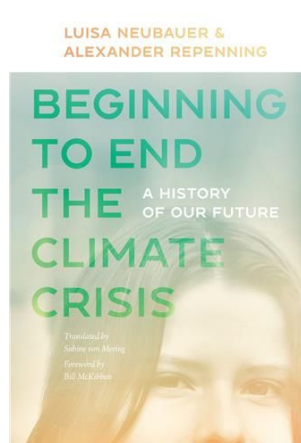
## CLIMATE ANXIETY

A survey of 10,000 young people shows that negative feelings about climate change can cause psychological distress.

### How worried are you about climate change?



Credit: Nature.org



## CGES@25: Beginning to End the Climate Crisis

The Center for German and European Studies' all-day [25th anniversary celebration](#) celebrated the launch of CGES' director Sabine von Mering's English translation of Luisa Neubauer and Alex Repenning's book, *Beginning to End the Climate Crisis: A History of Our Future*. With several speakers, a panel on climate justice, an organizing charrette for students, the event culminated with keynote speaker Bill McKibben, followed by a presidential dinner.

Approximately 300 people attended the event.

"We need everyone engaged in this kind of work. Yeah, it's important to get a heat pump in your house, an electric vehicle in your driveway...but the most important thing an individual can do is be **less of an individual** and join together with others in movements large enough to really change the ground rules. We gotta do it." - Bill McKibben, quoted in [BrandeisNOW's coverage](#) of the event



# First Brandeis students to attend COP

Maggie Del Re (ENVS '23) and Matthew Bharmast (ENVS '23) attended the the UN Climate Change Conference COP27 in in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022. It was the first time Brandeis students attended COP.

They received support from Youth Environmental Alliance in Higher Education (YEAH) Network and the Maurice J. and Fay B. Karpf & Ari Hahn Peace Endowment Award to attend.

They presented about Brandeis' Year of Climate Action at the conference.

Maggie received Brandeis' Joseph and Ida Burtman Award, awarded to a student who displays scholarship and general leadership, later in 2023.



# Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts



In honor of the Year of Climate Action, this year's [Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts](#) was themed, "Make Art to Make Change." The festival asked the community to create work that centered the artist as an agent of climate action.

The Festival of the Arts has always prioritized and supported sustainability, and this year they went above and beyond to support the Year of Climate Action.

The following gallery showcases some of the submissions by our talented community members.

# Gallery: Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts



Here's a look back at some of the submissions, funded by grants from [Arts Engagement](#). Photos by Judiana Moise '23 @judianam

1) Humanity's Dichotomy mural, by Bintou Baysmore '25, Liz Sandoval '25, and Monica Claros '26.

2) Voices of a Resilient River, part of an ongoing collaboration between CAST (Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation) and the Charles River Watershed Association.

3) Drowned in Riches: Picture Riddles for a Dystopian Age, by Vicente Cayuela '22.

4) The Principles of Passive House (3D model and presentation), by Harvey Sugiuchi '23.

5) Where the Wild Forests Are, by Ofri Levinson '25.

6) sotto voce, by Jingmian Gong and Yu-Tung Cheng, graduate students in music.





# Bringing Rare's Climate Culture Exhibit to Brandeis

The capstone event for the year was a collaborative research project with the nonprofit [Rare](#), whose [Climate Culture exhibit](#) was on campus for 8 weeks. Rare not only showcased its interactive exhibit on campus, but worked with Brandeis students to generate new content for exhibits that demonstrates how students can adopt individual climate-friendly behaviors on campus. The exhibit was kept on campus during commencement to increase exposure to families as well as students.

In conjunction, Rare and Brandeis also collaborated to formally study the exhibit to determine how effective the exhibit is at changing attitudes toward climate action. Rare recruited 124 community members (not pulling from the student body) to take a pre-exposure survey, visit the exhibits and then take a post-exposure survey. They found that the survey population already held pro-environmental values, and that the exhibits produced varied positive effects: increased likelihood of purchasing an electric car, increased self-confidence around adopting community solar, increases in the belief that eating less meat is an effective way to fight climate change, and increases in the belief that financially supporting nature conservation projects is effective way to fight climate change. Results will be shared in the 2023 Behavior, Energy & Climate Change (BECC) conference.

One student said, "This was probably the best climate change exhibit that I've seen... I was more engaged when viewing the content and remembered more information after I was done reading."



# Give & Go: Our Move-Out Donation Program

Give & Go, Brandeis' move-out donation program, had been on hiatus since 2020 - but we brought it back for the Year of Climate Action. We set up large cardboard boxes in eight residential common areas across campus, and together with a moving company and approximately 20 student and staff volunteers, collected items from those bins and consolidated them in temporary storage containers in an empty parking area, organizing the items according to each of our donation partners' needs. Over three tons of donations were collected over two weeks starting in early May and through Commencement. In addition to the 1,615 lbs of textiles that we recovered and recycled with Bay State Textiles, following is a list of our donation partners and the amount of items they received:

- 1,500 lbs to Grad Bag, which provides a more equitable transition to college by collecting, refreshing, and repackaging lightly used dorm room essentials for redistribution to incoming students in need in the Boston area. Incoming Brandeis students will also be recipients of items from Grad Bag.
- 1,200 lbs to Household Goods, which provides a full-range of good quality donated furniture and household items, free of charge, to 2,500 families in need each year. Household Goods is also a partner of the Waltham Group.
- 1,750 lbs to the Epilepsy Foundation, which leads the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives.
- Face masks to WATCH CDC, which works towards a more just community in the Waltham area by promoting affordable housing, providing adult education and leadership development, and empowering underrepresented residents through civic engagement. WATCH CDC received approximately 200 packaged, sealed face masks that were separated out from our donations and set aside.
- Several yoga mats and sporting equipment to Brandeis Athletics.



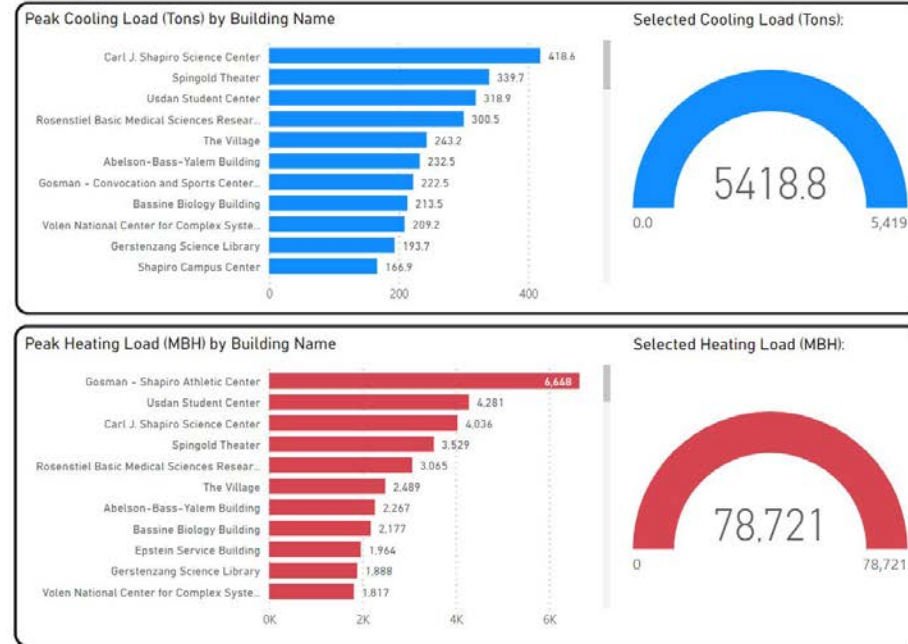
# Institutional Initiatives

In addition to educational opportunities, Brandeis launched several institutional initiatives to reduce our climate impacts during the Year of Climate Action.

# Decarbonization Study and Action Plan

Together with a team of experts, Brandeis' [Capital Programs](#) group began developing a plan to transform energy use, reduce emissions on campus and set the university on a path to carbon neutrality. The team is conducting a rigorous assessment of the work needed to transform the campus' heating, cooling, and electricity usage to become fossil fuel free. The resulting Decarbonization Action Plan will give Brandeis the analysis and tools needed to commit to new greenhouse gas reduction targets for our scope 1 and scope 2 emissions. The plan will include a capital investment and energy procurement strategy that leverages our existing 10-year deferred maintenance plan, augmented with lower-emitting and less energy-intensive solutions.

The study was launched in summer 2022 is in completion as of June 2023.



Building heating and cooling peak loads from the decarbonization action plan.



# Improving Land Management Practices


In 2022, Brandeis piloted several [organic land management](#) practices. The pilot included replacing the herbicide Roundup, which contains glyphosate, with an organic and non-glyphosate product on an as-needed basis; replacing a pesticide used to treat grubs, insects that feed on the roots of grass, with an organic product on an as-needed basis; using organic fertilizer instead of synthetic fertilizer on the 7 acres of lower campus (area south of Loop Road); purchasing its first electric leaf blower and electric trimmer (the team already uses an electric chainsaw and electric hedge trimmers); and incorporating additional measures to improve the soil naturally, such as applying compost to nourish the vegetation, and purchasing and applying more drought-tolerant grass seed.

The pilot was successful and is being expanded into parts of upper campus in 2023, with plans to continue to the rest of campus in the coming seasons. Brandeis also announced it is upgrading its irrigation system in early 2023, which is estimated to save approximately 1.5 million gallons of water per year.



# New Energy Efficiency Project Dashboard

Brandeis University			
TOTAL PROJECTS FUNDED (COMPLETED / IN-PROGRESS) <b>14 / 2</b>	TOTAL INVESTED TO DATE * <b>\$ 1,335,235</b>	AVERAGE PAYBACK PERIOD <b>4.23 years</b>	AVERAGE ANNUAL ENERGY SAVINGS <b>1,539.13 mmbtu</b>
AVERAGE ANNUAL EMISSIONS ABATED <b>110.44 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	TOTAL FINANCIAL SAVINGS TO DATE <b>\$ 485,043</b>	TOTAL EMISSIONS ABATED TO DATE <b>1,552 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>	AVERAGE UNIT COST / MTCO <sub>2</sub> E ABATED <b>\$ 74.67 / MTCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>

Efficiency data powered by  GRITS

\* Includes investments to in-progress projects without savings to date  
Last updated 08/13/2022

Every year, Brandeis implements multiple energy reduction projects. This year we debuted a new energy efficiency project tracker and [dashboard](#) for public visibility. Now, all of our current and some past energy efficiency projects are [available publicly in GRITS](#), a project-management web platform, so anyone can see the energy, financial, and carbon savings data from our campus projects, as well as view a catalog of completed projects from other institutions that have opted into public sharing. New projects will be incorporated into the public catalog and dashboard going forward.

# Continuing to measure the carbon footprint of our endowment



Tarek Saghir



Emily Williams

Brandeis' Office of Investment Management is [continuing to develop](#) a measurement and analysis tool set to measure and disclose the [Scope 1 and Scope 2](#) emissions associated with our entire endowment holdings as part of our sustainability goals. This tool set will quantify both our progress and success in reducing the direct and indirect greenhouse emissions associated with our endowment holdings.

Tarek Saghir, Chief Investment Officer, and Emily Williams, Operations Analyst, from the Office of Investment Management are leading the effort. They presented on their efforts at both the Finance and Administration Town Hall in 2022, and the Brandeis International Business School's Business of Climate Change Week in 2023.



# **Planning Committee**

# Planning team

Mary Fischer, Associate Director, Sustainability Programs

Colleen Hitchcock, Chair, Environmental Studies Program; Associate Professor, Biology Department; Co-Chair, Brandeis Sustainability Committee

Sally Warner, Assistant Professor of Climate Science

Sabine von Mering, Professor of German and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Director, Center for German and European Studies; Program faculty, Environmental Studies

Rachel Kramer Theodorou, Assistant Director of Elementary Education

Jasmine (Jazz) Dottin, Academic Administrator, International and Global Studies Program and Environmental Studies Program



Organizers pose with keynote speaker Bill McKibben at the CGES 25th anniversary event. From left: Sally Warner, Colleen Hitchcock, Rachel Kramer Theodorou, Bill McKibben, Mary Fischer, and Sabine von Mering.



# Brandeis Sustainability Ambassadors

The Brandeis Sustainability Ambassadors (BSAs), a group of undergraduate students passionate about sustainability, provided [a great deal of support](#) to the planning and implementation of the Year of Climate Action.

Whether advertising through newsletters, social media and in-person events or planning events, the BSAs were a consistent force throughout the year. They tabled on Kindness Day, at the Global Bazaar, and in Upper Usdan throughout the semester. They organized multiple clothing swap events to help bring awareness to the impacts of fast fashion, and they also led a sustainability tour of campus for parents and students on parents' weekend.



BSAs (from left to right): Forrest Shimazu, Lotem Sagi, Dina Millerman, Eleftheria Topaloglou, and Dalen Weathersby



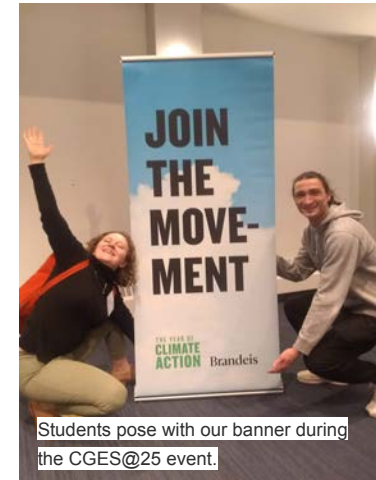
# Gallery



More images of the Caterpillar Lab visits to campus in September 2022.



Students marching on campus during a climate rally associated with Dr. Prakash Kashwan's climate justice course.



Students pose with our banner during the CGES@25 event.



More images of the climate stripes banner sewing day, which invited several students and staff to participate.



"Voices of a Resilient River". Part of an ongoing collaboration between the CAST program and the Charles River Watershed Association, an assemblage of individually crafted lanterns shed light on lost or hidden voices from and about the river.



Sustainability on Campus tours, led by the Brandeis Sustainability Ambassadors (right), for parents and families in October 2022. This was a new addition in honor of the year.



# Flyers & posts from selected events

## GIVE & GO

### MOVE OUT DONATION DRIVE

**FIND DONATION BINS IN YOUR RESIDENCE QUAD**

**MAY 5TH-MAY 22ND**



Brandeis OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION

## CLIMATE RALLY

Join us for...

- Speeches
- Poetry
- Sign-making

Make your voice heard and enjoy powerful performances about climate-related issues from the community. There will be a microphone available for those interested in expressing themselves!

March 23, 2023  
2:20-3:40 PM  
Udson lawn (near the bus stop by Rabb Graduate Center)



## THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION

### Brandeis Environmental Studies

#### LUNCH WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL LOBBYIST



Tue, Jan 31  
12:30 - 2:00 pm

Katharine Lange  
Policy Specialist  
Massachusetts Rivers Alliance

## DEIS CLIMATE ACTIVISTS AT EARTHVEST!

APRIL 21

IN SCC ATRIUM 12:30-2:30

### CLIMATE NEWS

SEE WHAT CLIMATE JUSTICE MEDIA SEA FOLLOWS: HIGHLIGHT OF CLIMATE NEWS SOURCES AND CLIMATE ACTIVISTS FROM SEA

### BILLS

LEARN ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL BILLS

### STUDENT ACTIVISTS

LEARN ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL BILLS

LIZ SANDOVAL: COME PLAY LIZ'S CLIMATE JUSTICE VIDEO GAME!  
MAGGIE DEL RAY: HEAR ABOUT HER TRIP TO COP27 EGYPT!

## STUDENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

### THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION



## Colonialism and Climate Crisis

A talk with Aviva Chomsky, Professor of History and Coordinator of Latin American Studies, Salem State University

Thursday November 10th  
12:00 - 1:30 in Room G-4



Brandeis THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION

Sponsored by the Office of the Dean, the Institute for Economic and Racial Equity, the Master of Public Policy Program, and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management and the Brandeis University Office of Sustainability



## Local Environmental Justice Panel with Maria Belen Power

Hosted by the Heller School for Social Policy and Management. Part of the Laura Goldin Lecture Series on Climate Change, Health and Social Justice.

Hybrid Zoom webinar. Registration is required. Lunch will be provided for in-person attendees.

September 28, 2022, 12 - 1:30 p.m.



EDUCATE. COMMUNICATE. ACT.



Brandeis Hillel

## Earth Day Gathering

Friday April 21

Fellows Garden & Booths (SCC rain location)  
12-3:30 pm tables and activities

Join in circle and dance to listen to each other and the earth!

- acting from a sense of kinship -

Brandeis Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Brandeis

CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

WCS

Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies

Brandeis

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

LEARNING EXPERIENCE  
FESTIVAL OF CREATIVE ARTS





# Flyers & posts from selected events (cont'd)

**THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION** Brandeis Environmental Studies

## International Panel on the Science, Policy, and Politics of Climate Geoengineering

2:30 - 4:00 pm Jan 31, 2023  
Rapaport Treasure Hall  
Brandeis University Library, Waltham



**Wil Burns**  
Northwestern University  
Visiting Professor of Environmental Policy and Culture and Energy and Sustainability



**Aarti Gupta**  
Wageningen University  
Professor of Global Environmental Governance



**Bill Moomaw**  
Tufts University  
Professor Emeritus of International Environmental Policy

Moderated by Prakash Kashwan  
Brandeis University  
Associate Professor of Environmental Studies and Affiliated Faculty at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management

For panelist bios, please follow the QR code



**THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION** **BRANDEIS ALUMNI CLIMATE CAREER PANEL**

Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2:20-3:40pm  
Register on Handshake for the Hybrid Event



**PHILIP LU '11**  
Senior Permits Biologist, International Affairs Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



**HANNAH MOSHAY '18**  
Extension Associate, Organic Commodities, North Carolina State University



**MOSES ONG '03**  
Hatchery Supervisor, Spira Valley State Fish Hatchery, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources



**JEN SINGER '00**  
Senior Managing Consultant, Energy and Sustainability Programs, ICF

## Call to Artists

Design a window decal to prevent bird deaths on campus  
Win a \$200 prize

Apply by February 27  
[tinyurl.com/brandeisbird](http://tinyurl.com/brandeisbird)

Sponsored by Environmental Studies, Brandeis MakerLab, the Office of Sustainability, and Arts Engagement

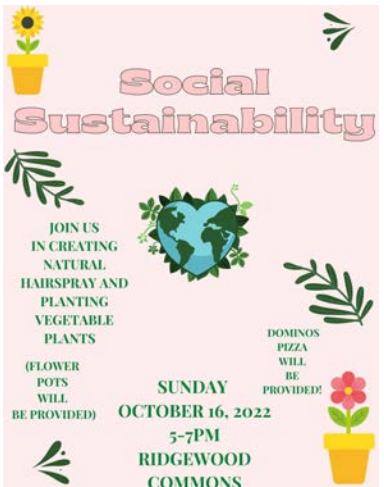
## Social Sustainability

JOIN US IN CREATING NATURAL HAIRSPRAY AND PLANTING VEGETABLE PLANTS

(FLOWER POTS WILL BE PROVIDED)

SUNDAY  
OCTOBER 16, 2022  
5-7PM  
RIDGEWOOD COMMONS

DOMINOS PIZZA WILL BE PROVIDED!



## ACTION DINNERS WITH BRANDEIS' CLIMATE ORGANIZER-IN-RESIDENCE


Oct. 13 What are MA's Youth Climate Advocates Up to? Spotlight on the Indigenous Legislative Agenda (Registration deadline 10/7)

Nov. 1 MA-Specific Environmental Justice Challenges and Intersectionalities (Registration deadline 10/25)

Nov. 15 How Educational Institutions Need to Change to Become Part of the Solution (Registration deadline 11/8)

Nov. 30 How Brandeis Holds its Legislators Accountable (Registration deadline 11/23)

REGISTRATION REQUIRED



Ben Bein, the Massachusetts Field & Education Manager for Our Climate and Administrator for the Massachusetts Youth Climate Coalition, will lead several trainings for students on how to advocate for the science-based, equitable, and intersectional climate justice policies we need.

**THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION** Brandeis  
SAMUELS CENTER FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND CIVIC TRANSFORMATION  
Brandeis  
CENTER FOR GERMAN AND EUROPEAN STUDIES

**YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION EVENT**

# BREAKING BOUNDARIES

MOVIE SCREENING + DISCUSSION TO FOLLOW



HOSTED BY: SENATE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

WHEN: WED 15 FEB | 7:30 - 9:00 PM  
WHERE: SKYLINE COMMONS

INSOMNIA COOKIES | POPCORN | HOT CHOCOLATE FOR ALL!


FROM KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION:  
**THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS**

PSYCHOLOGIST LEA DOHM PRESENTS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS BEHIND THE INSUFFICIENT ACTION, POSSIBLE STRATEGIES TO RESPOND IN A HEALTHY WAY, AND WHAT EVERYONE CAN CONTRIBUTE.

TUESDAY, OCT. 18,  
12 - 1:30PM EST (US)  
ZOOM WEBINAR

RSVP: LINKINBIO

Brandeis OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY  
Brandeis CENTER FOR GERMAN AND EUROPEAN STUDIES



# Gallery of contributions by the Brandeis Sustainability Ambassadors



Redoing trash signs in upper Usdan dining hall



Tabling in Upper Usdan



Advertising clothing swaps



Hanging up the warming stripes banner



## Media gallery

Custom posters, wordmark, buttons, stickers, a banner and Instagram templates were created by our talented staff in the Office of Communications, Marketing and External Relations, Deborah Wieder and Claudia Herman.



THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION



# Looking Forward

Building on the [successes of this year](#), we hope that this year will be the first of many years of climate action to come. More specifically, we aim to:

- Further develop the decarbonization action plan into concrete next steps, including, in the near term, setting a substantial carbon reduction goal and writing a new climate action plan.
- Release an addendum to the Framework for the Future that addresses sustainability and climate action.
- Continue development of several initiatives, such as planting more pollinator-friendly areas of campus, sending more students to COP, expanding dining sustainability programs, and more.
- Continue expanding climate change education, both in existing courses and in new courses with new faculty.

***“It fills me with gratitude to know that I could engage in such an active way in this event, and I hope that this spirit of justice and action stays with me.”***

*- Student response to attending Year of Climate Action events*

A large, fluffy white cloud is the central focus, set against a clear, bright blue sky. The cloud has a soft, billowy texture and extends horizontally across the middle of the frame. The word "APPENDIX" is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font, centered over the cloud. In the lower-left quadrant, there is a small, faint, light blue mark that resembles a stylized bird or a small aircraft.

# APPENDIX



# List of All Known Events

Events are also [listed online](#)

- New Student Book Forum
- A Very Brief History of Sustainability
- Action Dinners with Brandeis' Climate Organizer-in-Residence (4 dinners)
- APS Topical Group on the Physics of Climate: "Whither Sea Ice?"
- Beyond Hope and Doubt: Thoughts on Resistance in the Climate Crisis
- Boston Youth Climate Rally
- Breaking Boundaries film screening
- Campus Sustainability Tours for Family Weekend (2 tours)
- CGES@25: Beginning to End the Climate Crisis
- Climate Career alumni panel
- Climate Concerns: Eco-Anxiety Support Group (fall)
- Climate Concerns: Eco-Anxiety Support Group (spring)
- Climate geoengineering: Science, policy and governance
- Colonialism and Climate Crisis
- Curb your (green) enthusiasm: German Greens keen to govern, faced with a war in Europe and coalition drama
- Earth Day 2023
- Farm Table Dinner
- Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Creative Arts
- From Knowledge to Action: About the Psychology of the Climate Crisis
- Giant Recycled Puppet Project Drop-In Workshops (3 workshops)
- Give & Go move-out donation program
- I Am Global Bazaar
- Hold Thy Peace performance of Hurricane Diane (3 performances)
- How We End Our Fatal Dependence on Fossil Gas from Russia or Anywhere
- Indigenous Climate Justice event
- Jewish Environmental Values and the Book of Genesis with Rabbi Winberg
- Kindness Day trivia table
- Lemberg Children's Center Garden carbon sequestration project
- Local Environmental Justice Panel with Maria Belen Power
- Lunch with an Environmental Lobbyist
- Rare exhibit
- Refining Canadian Oil Today: Four Methods
- Sojourn Theatre Residency: Year of Climate Action / A Devised Participatory Performance (3 performances)
- Students attending COP
- The Business of Climate Change Week at the Brandeis International Business School
- The Caterpillar Lab @ Brandeis
- The Multicultural Hair, Art, and Empowerment Club
- Transatlantic Climate Conversation #1: Climate Change and Business: Sustainable Alliances and Sustainable Operations
- Transatlantic Climate Conversation #2: Energy Systems: When Ocean Meets Public Transport
- Transatlantic Climate Conversation #3: Business Economy and Net Zero Targets: Challenges and Promises of Decarbonized Energy Transitions"
- Walk-Through and Luncheon with German Climate Photographer Barbara Dombrowski
- Food & Climate Week
- What's Your "Food" Print? With Earthling Ed

# Marketing and Media

## Targeted email

- Email communications included the [Office of Sustainability newsletter](#), newsletters and emails from campus partners, and InBrief (Brandeis internal biweekly newsletter)

## Print materials

- [Posters, buttons and stickers](#)

## Campus media

- [Mazzi Ingram '25 is slowing down fast fashion](#)
- [Fourth biannual clothing swap fights worldwide fast fashion trends](#)
- [Beginning to End the Climate Crisis conference tackles climate change](#)
- [Brandeis hosts second Climate Action Dinner](#)
- [Countering Columbus and colonization: Indigenous Peoples' Day at Brandeis](#)
- [Brandeis Kicks Off the Year of Climate Action](#)
- Hoot [editorial](#) and [rebuttal](#)

## [Year of Climate Action website](#)

## Social media

- [Brandeis Office of Sustainability Instagram](#) account posted frequently on Instagram and Facebook. Instagram remains the strongest of the social media platforms. Instagram page and profile visits increased 42% during the Year of Climate Action vs. the prior year, while reach increased 8%.