



YWL Speaker Series

Young Women Leaders Tackle Current Topics at the Speaker Series

The young leaders spoke expertly and engagingly on a range of topics during the 2021 Speaker Series last month. Their presentations were all geared toward informing, promoting social discourse and encouraging youth to take action locally. The presentations included research findings, guest speakers and interactive games. Energetic and enthusiastic, the young leaders provided education and motivation through their inspiring words. The audience gave overwhelmingly positive reviews to all of the speakers. Read about their presentations [HERE](#).

Saturday Speakers, April 17, 2021

An Introduction to Menstrual Equity was presented by Roma Shah, Megan Dill, Alyssa Manzur and Rachel Fox. Viewers were educated on unequal access to menstrual products, the menstrual tax imposed by some governments and how some menstrual products have harmful toxins. Discussion also included the stigma attached to a women's menstrual cycle and common misconceptions. The talk was re-capped with a lively Kahoot game. Team members Grace Taira and Q Negrate coordinated a local menstrual product drive with the drop-off site at BookSmart until May 5th. Online references such as [Period.org](https://www.period.org) were offered as a way to donate and get involved.

In *What You Think You Know About Toxic Masculinity*, speaker Kate Marcotullio shared facts and statistics of how it affects men and boys. Kate cited [The Good Men Project](https://goodmenproject.com), <https://goodmenproject.com>, which defines toxic masculinity as a narrow and repressive description of manhood. In offering her own perspective, Kate stressed the importance of distinguishing the positive aspects of masculinity and challenging the toxic expectations of society on boys and men. Her presentation closed with the entrancing documentary trailer from *The Mask We Live In* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc45-ptHMxo>, and she encouraged us to watch the film.

Propaganda and Persuasion - An engaging mini workshop that revealed some ways news media and advertising sway our opinions. Team leaders Lili Jaquet and Alyssa Manzur walked the audience through explanations of basic terms such as 'stereotyping' and progressed to more complex techniques used in arguments such as 'artificial dichotomy'. Their lively discussion was interspersed with pictorial quizzes, some easy, some rather challenging. The wrap-up involved the importance of recognizing our own biases and the acknowledgement that marketing and PR firms try to tap into our biases.

Sunday Speakers, April 18, 2021

Our Wildlife Neighbors & How We Protect Them was launched by speaker Kyla Spencer who described climate change effects and the current legislative status. Diya Kandhra focused on the biodiversity found in Coyote Valley and the importance of protecting it from urban sprawl and pollution. Guest speaker Swanee Edwards described the Lake Anderson Dam retrofit. Upon completion, it will control

flooding and provide Coyote Creek with enough water to sustain local fauna and wildlife. With content contributed by U.S. EPA representative, Luisa Valiela, team member Gelasia Tiwana described current water pollution problems in the San Francisco Bay and Delta watersheds. Habitat destruction in the watersheds from pollution and population growth has resulted in a decline of bay area fish species. In a home or apartment setting, the final student presenter discussed the many ways to save water. She also pointed out that beef consumption is a very water intensive dietary choice, and, we can save water by eliminating junkmail at Ecocycle.org/junkmail. Their presentation wrapped up with a round of Kahoots and questions from the audience.

Lets Talk Waste was led by Susan Kirchhoff, Stella Gaudy and Sofia Barreras. Recology guest speaker Shana McCracken described the complexities of working towards the goal of zero waste. One of her company's mottos is: "It's only waste if you waste it." Sofia described the misuse and overuse of packaging and offered solutions. The benefits of recycling were discussed by Susan and how the recycling business in the United States needs a major fix. Stella focused on the clothes industry and related how the dying of textiles is the second largest source of water pollution. She targeted fast fashion companies who use unethical labor practices and produce disposable garments which are tossed out after one season. The team offered several suggestions what you can do to help reduce waste.

Food for Thought, presented by Molly Waddington and Ria Despande, started with a discussion of the many advantages of purchasing locally grown food. How a plant-based diet is good for the environment was explained, as well as the negative aspects of a meat-based diet. There are a lot of meat substitutes available and they made the audience aware of the new stem cell meats coming into the market. Their slides were interspersed with interactive questions that enhanced understanding. Their enthusiasm was very infectious and break-out rooms were created to discuss vegetarian recipes. At the end, they shared a comprehensive **LIST** https://docs.google.com/document/d/1owfWSxzJRTJuez8xGgr1VwGUIAD8RqD_cobvdtIL89o/edit of nutritious recipes, local vegan restaurants and food blogs as resources when exploring a plant-based diet.