

ALEC LOORZ: KIDS VS. GLOBAL WARMING

The Bioneers seek to unite nature, culture and spirit in an Earth-honoring vision, and create economic models founded in social justice. This year's annual Bioneers Conference will be held on Oct. 17-19 in San Rafael. For more information visit www.bioneers.org/conference.

Tune in to KVMR 89.5 on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month from 1-2 pm for "Voices of the Bioneers," a program underwritten by Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op.

Special to the Co-op Reporter
By Kellie Roussos

Alec Loorz, 13, the founder of Kids vs. Global Warming, truly inspired many WorldLink students with his enthusiasm, youth and self-confidence in the fight against climate change.

Loorz was the youngest speaker at the WorldLink opening plenary, but the only one to receive a standing ovation. He didn't try to act intellectual or more grown-up, he just honestly let his audience know that kids do care and are going to do something about this climate change "mess" that previous generations got them into.

He knows, "it's discouraging for some kids to think that [we're] inheriting a world that is pretty messed up." However, Loorz doesn't see youth as a drawback, but as an advantage. The young are the ones who are going to have to live with this problem, and are the ones who must eventually do the most about it.

Loorz's target audience for his awareness campaign is kids his own age. He visits schools to make presentations, designed a kid-friendly global warming Web site, and is planning a booth at Earth Day, which will feature activities for kids.

He presented scientific graphs, showing that the temperature of the earth and output of carbon dioxide and carbon have sky rocketed, starting in 1950.

Another chart revealed that the United States produces 28% of the earth's carbon dioxide and China produces 23%. This seems comparable, right? Then Loorz explained that the United States is home to only 4% of the Earth's population, while China contains 20% of the population. "We are clearly using more than our fair share of environmentally destructive gases here in the homeland," he told the delegates.

Loorz explained the flaws in the logic of different types of skeptics, from those who say global warming does not exist because it's cold out, to those who say scientists don't really agree that it exists anyway.

He referred to a University of California study which revealed that out of 928 scientific articles on global warming, none of them disagreed on the existence of global warming. However, out of the 3,543 news, tabloids, and other non-scientific articles, 53% disagreed on global warming's existence.

In response to the "It's cold today so global warming cannot exist" argument, Loorz took it upon himself to teach his audience the difference between weather and climate. Weather, being defined as the actual state of the earth's surface at a given time, and climate, the average or normal state of the earth's surface conditions, are clearly not the same. Thus, it is possible for it to be cold somewhere although the average temperature of the earth is rising, exposing the fallacy of this argument. He clarifies, "cold days do not disprove global warming, and hot days do not prove it."

Loorz's youth-friendly presentations captivate and inform his audience, leaving them empowered and enthusiastic about doing something about global warming. By request he can visit schools, and then start an action team there to help with future events and projects.

To join Alec Loorz, you can visit kids-vs-global-warming.com. Loorz and his supporters have proven that "youth are not on the fringes" in the fight against global warming. They are in the foreground.

To youth, Loorz urges you to remember, "We are the future. But we are more than that: We are the now."

This article is courtesy of the WorldLink Program at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. To learn more about WorldLink, please visit: <http://peace.sandiego.edu/programs/worldlink.html>

To learn more about Alec Loorz and Kids vs. Global Warming, please visit: www.kids-vs-global-warming.com.