

Aurora Yuan and Alice Feng

Team Green Gang

Project Green Challenge 2019

Dear Project Green Challenge and Turning Green,

Each of Project Green Challenge's daily challenges were inspiring and educational, and each of them have helped us on our journey to be true change makers in this world. However, if we had to pick just 5 of our best and the ones that we think exemplify PGC the best, these are our picks:

1. **Day 8 Greenest: Soil-** We chose this challenge because it was the real starting point of inspiration for our climate action project, which is creating an environmental coalition at our school. One of the main projects would focus on expanding and cultivating our school gardens so that they could help feed students at the school and also fight food insecurity. By doing this challenge, we were able to meet such an inspiring teacher and familiarize ourselves with the school garden we never even knew about, and this is now a true fascination of ours that we definitely plan on pursuing as a sustainability project.
2. **Day 10 Greener: Social Justice-** This challenge was inspiring for us because we were able to stand up for a social justice issue that we are both passionate about: healthcare. Our sign read "Healthcare, not wealthcare" because we believe that healthcare is a universal right, not a privilege and we want to stand up and stand by this. We will continue to fight the fight for healthcare for everyone, and this challenge has inspired us to never give up on this fight.
3. **Day 11 Greener: Fashion-** This challenge overall impacted us both a lot. We had no idea what a huge impact the fashion industry and "fast fashion" was having on not only the environment, but the lives of people, especially in developing countries. By wearing the sweater inside out, we were representing the fact that we *will not* accept the status quo and that we are standing *against* the poor treatment of the fashion industry on its workers and on the environment. We were inspired to start shopping from more sustainable companies like Patagonia and Everlane, and only shopping when necessary so we did not fall into the fast fashion trap.
4. **Day 14 Greenest: Meatless Monday-** This challenge had an enormous impact on our lifestyles. We are both meat eaters (although we do not consume that much of it), but after going 1 day eating a complete plant-based diet, we realized that this was a feasible thing we could participate in every week. Not only that, but we have started to implement it at least two or three times a week. We have also been able to convince our parents to try it out, and they after trying it, they realized that it was not so bad after all and are going to continue going meatless, at least on Mondays, with us.
5. **Day 24 Greenest: Climate Justice-** Wow, this challenge was probably one of the most inspiring and empowering ones. I was able to give a speech in front of a couple peers, mimicking a UN speech on climate justice. This is an issue that I have had an interest in for a while now, and being able to give that speech with all the passion and power in my heart was life-changing. We hope that more people are aware of the inappropriate impacts of climate change on some communities versus other more affluent areas, and we hope to enact change and bring awareness to this issue.

Project Green Challenge has been a truly life changing, educational, and mobilizing experience in many ways that we would not have imagined. We are eternally grateful that on that Saturday night at 11 PM, we decided to take a chance and sign up for this challenge. Our lives are greatly changed, and we are passionate about bringing this knowledge to our friends, families, communities, and the world. We are ready to make this planet a more sustainable, environmentally friendly, and just home for everyone and everything.

Thank you for everything,
Aurora Yuan and Alice Feng

Team Green Gang (Aurora Yuan and Alice Feng)

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Screenshot of Registration for Climate Victory Garden:

Garden Name: PHS West garden

Thank You!

You've officially registered your Climate Victory Garden and it has been added to the map.

Thank you for committing your garden to be a part of the climate change solution. We are grateful to people like you who are making a difference in the world.

We're building an international movement of climate gardeners, and we want you to be an active part of this community!

Join the [Climate Victory Garden Facebook Group](#) to connect and share resources with other gardeners. Let your friends and families know that you have joined the Climate Victory Garden movement and get them involved in fighting climate change. Make sure to follow Green America on social media and use the hashtag [#ClimateVictoryGarden](#) when sharing about your garden.



Link of video: <https://www.instagram.com/p/B3d-42YAoki/?igshid=8n08sbixtcmr>

Reflection:

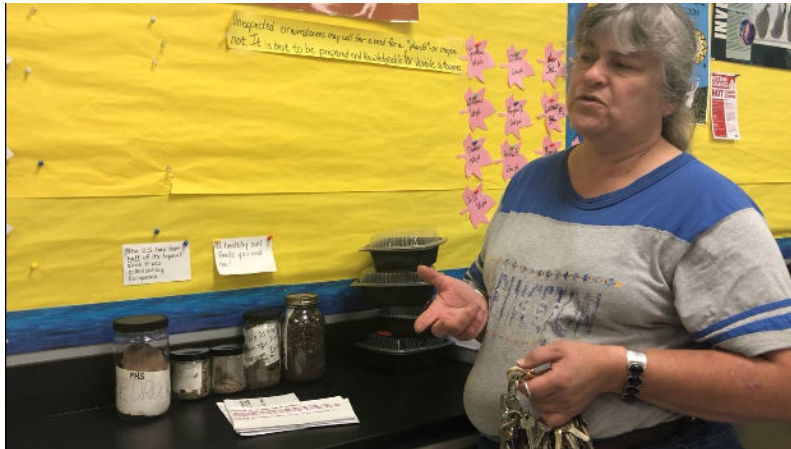
Speaking to Ms. Jakowlew, one of Princeton High School's biology teachers and the care-taker of our school's garden, was one of the most amazing experiences we have had throughout the year. Although we hate to admit it, as juniors, both of us were not aware of our school garden after spending almost three years at this school. After successfully registering our school garden on Climate Victory Gardens, Ms. Jakowlew kindly went over our school's gardening culture (started in 1921) and its current status. Unfortunately, due to the lack of attention and action, the school garden is not at a very popular position at the moment. We hope to contact and talk to the administration in the future about allocating more funds for this wonderful garden, because Ms. Jakowlew knows that if it was better funded, the garden would be able to produce organic and locally farmed food for lunch for the students. Her classes already implement this by having "Salad Days" where her students bring in things like croutons and the lettuce is provided completely fresh by the garden. It would be absolutely amazing if we could implement something like this for the whole school.

Ms. Jakowlew was absolutely supportive of the regenerative organic practices. She had a very positive reaction to us talking to her about this practice because she had never really had students speak with her about this topic before. She is not only extremely knowledgeable on the concepts of regenerative organic farming, but also taught us much more extensively and in depth on the subject. Fortunately, our school garden has already implemented almost all of the

practices already! Ms. Jakowlew went through all of the practices that the garden has implemented, like composting and cover crops, and showed us some of the amazing and beautiful plants being grown, like various forms of lettuce and tomatoes.

This is something that we would hardly step our feet in if it's not because of Project Green Challenge this year and this is a field that really interests us. This challenge opened up a whole new field of study for us and we are extremely excited to learn more about it. Our team is currently planning to start more initiative surrounding our school garden to integrate it into our school culture and create a mutually beneficial relationship between the students and the nature. On another note, we really appreciate PGC for giving us the opportunity to widen our vision and let students experience the thousands of possibilities in regards to sustainability on our earth.

Ms. Jakowlew demonstrating her soil sample projects



School garden with plants like Pak Choi, Lettuce, etc.



Ms. Jakowlew demonstrating the compost system in the school garden



Ms. Jakowlew explaining the cover plants.





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As I stood outside with a sign that says “Healthcare not Wealthcare”, I felt, well, very conflicted. As an immigrant myself, I moved here to the US along with my dad two years ago. Before that for 15 years, I have lived across the ocean in Shanghai, China. Both of my parents were physicians. Therefore, I have had the privilege of never going to the hospital other than regular vaccination visits. To 13 year old me, healthcare is just the easy transaction between a doctor and a patient. Everyone goes to see the doctor and everyone gets treated-- it’s just that simple! I had no concrete understanding of the intricate notion of healthcare until I moved here to the US. Interestingly, healthcare has since then become one of my biggest passion and might be something that I would dedicate my whole life into. After I moved to the US, my dad became unemployed. With no stable income comes the lack of health insurance and essentially a lack of a guarantee. I have relatively severe acne. And just like every other teenage girl, I want to look pretty! But every time when I mention a potential visit to the dermatologist, I would get the same disappointing answer from my dad: “No, you can’t go to the doctor. Too expensive.” Though this always saddens me for a while, I started to understand that the root cause of the problem is the system-- we need healthcare justice. As an aspiring public health professional, I have researched extensively on healthcare policy around the world. I believe that most healthcare should be the right of the people. I started to get more engaged in various climate actions because I understand that climate change poses one of the biggest public health threats we’ve ever seen, and what’s detrimental about it is that the change is gradual. Many would overlook the issue and says its not the time to act. Well, I would say that it’s never too late to act when you look at the data of the growing malaria cases and the growing death related to heat and natural disasters.

I have seen so many cases of people influenced by an unfair healthcare system. I have many friends who are affected by respiratory diseases like asthma, and one of my dearest friends has Type I Diabetes. The increasing cost of inhalers or insulin has really posed some burden on their family. I also volunteer at a world renowned hospital every Saturday, which is located in a hispanic neighborhood. As I watch the patients and the visitors pass by, I have observed disparity between the people and I understand that a systematic change is needed for the US healthcare system.

Therefore, I stood on the street today to show my support for a better healthcare plan that helps everyone get easy access to quality care with an affordable cost that also would sustain the system in the long term. This is hard and there'll never be a perfect solution. But as long as people demand action, express their needs, and are actively engaged in this conversation, we can make it happen. Under the current political climate, we still need to maintain the faith in our government, instead of focusing on party politics. Healthcare is bi-partisan. Healthcare justice is for all. Let us make it happen. Healthcare, not Wealthcare.

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Day 11- Greener

PART I:

My product: Pink Sweater

Brand name: H&M

Materials used: Shell (62%), Acrylic (28%), Polyamide (8%), Wool (2%), Elastane

Produced in: China

Although H&M is taking some positive steps towards sustainability, there are still various human and environmental impacts of the company that cannot be overlooked. For example, only about 1-25% of traced factories of H&M supply chain pay a living wage to their workers. It was reported in 2018 that H&M was abusing female garment workers. H&M is taking a few steps towards sustainability like how it is a member of the Better Cotton Initiative and offers a recycling program. However, it is still the second biggest producer of clothes in the unsustainable fast fashion industry.

Picture of the sweater:



Source:

1. https://goodonyou.eco/how-ethical-is-hm-e03/?utm_expid=.Ra3r2yVOTpOGcdTPpBPwsQ.1&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F

PART II:

Pictures of me wearing my shirt inside out!



Today I talked to a few people about the unsustainable and environmentally harmful ways of fast fashion. The most impactful was when one of my friends said greeted me today during lunch and then pointed out that I had my sweater on backwards discreetly, and then pointed to the bathroom near me to signal that I had a place to go change. However, I told him that I was using this as a sign of protest against the fast-fashion industry. He was pretty surprised and intrigued when I first told him this, and genuinely wanted to know more. I talked to him for a few minutes regarding this problem of fast fashion we have and how we never think of the consequences this kind of lifestyle has on the environment and labor workers living in poorer areas of the world. He responded saying that “I just never thought that deep about this kind of stuff...”, which shows that a problem is that consumers are not informed about the companies they are buying from and what is happening behind the scenes. If consumers understood what was happening, they could truly want to implement changes in their lifestyles.

Day 14 Greenest: Meatless Monday

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Breakfast (Me)

For breakfast, I had an almond croissant that we bought from a bakery nearby. It was super creamy, fresh, and delicious, and the best part is that it was meat-free!



Breakfast (My Mom)

For breakfast, my mom had some strawberry yogurt topped with some granola, strawberry and blueberry (like a parfait)



Lunch (Me)

For lunch, I bought food at my school's cafeteria. The options are pretty limited, so the only things I could find that did not include meat was pizza and fries. I got a slice of cheese pizza instead of my usual pepperoni, and some fries. It was a good enough meal, although I usually do not eat fast food so it made me feel kind of weird afterward.



Lunch (My Mom)

For lunch, my mom warmed two pieces of Naan in a pan and ate them dipped in organic hummus



Dinner (Me and My mom)

— — —
For dinner, I used leftover linguine (from last week's FLOSN Day 5 extra credit → Zero waste life) to make linguine with tomato sauce. I made the sauce by chopping up tomatoes, adding broccoli, and then pouring in some tomato sauce. I made a large enough portion to feed two people. My mom and I were both really happy with this meal as it was very delicious. 10/10 would eat it again.



Making dinner!



1. Was it harder or easier than you thought to go without meat for the day?

- a. **Me:** To be honest, it was actually easier than I thought to go without meat for the day. I realized that I do not actually eat meat that frequently anyways, so it was not that hard to give up.
- b. **My mom:** Today's menu is something that I would normally eat, so it was not hard for me. However, I know it would become much more difficult every day I did this.

2. How do you feel after a day of no meat?

- a. **Me:** I feel great! I am definitely content with the food I had today and not hungry. I am excited and proud that I was actually able to do Meatless Monday today because I have been doing my best to implement it in my life for the past two weeks.
- b. **My mom:** I feel normal and like I usually do. I am happy I was able to do this with my daughter though, and am proud that we were able to accomplish this together.

3. Do you think you will continue to participate in Meatless Mondays or consider adopting a plant-based, vegetarian, vegan, or flexitarian diet?

— — —

- a. **Me:** Yes, for sure! I will 100% continue to participate in Meatless Mondays (as I have already been doing) because even one day can make such a huge impact. I am also thinking about adopting a flexitarian diet because even though I do not think I am ready to take a full step towards being vegetarian or vegan, but I can do my best to become flexitarian.
- b. **My mom:** Yes, I will try to do Meatless Mondays as often as I can. However, even though I do not like foods like beef, chicken, etc. I love seafood and I do not think I could give that up (so maybe pescatarian?)

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Day 24- Greenest

Video link (should be viewable for everyone with the link):

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1uozbXhae3HyfnH4tGTZYA6cH4rN88hk->

Script I used:

Hi everyone. Imagine yourself in 56 years, in the year 2075. What kind of life do you picture yourself to be living? When I wonder about this, I think of my ideal day as a 72 year old as being at peace, playing with my grandkids in a beautiful meadow outside of my house, the blue skies shimmering over my head and the air fresh enough to smell like flowers. But this kind of future is being threatened by the worst existential crisis we have ever faced: climate change. As oil and gas companies continue to dig, drill, and frack away, we are the ones paying the price. This problem has increased in intensity exponentially in the last couple of decades, as years of science and data have been ignored, and the greed for profits has replaced them. You can see the effects of the climate crisis all over the world, from the alarmingly quick rising temperatures at the poles to the natural disasters plummeting the earth. And most personally for me, Hurricane Sandy ravaging my hometown and state of New Jersey and killing at least 223 people back in 2012, when I was only 9 years old. As I held onto my phone as my grandma called me last year, terrified of the impending typhoon about to strike her home in Shanghai, I realized that this was not just a problem. It was a survival issue. The worst part is the people most affected by the climate crisis are the ones who are least to blame for it. Climate justice realizes the fact that the climate crisis is not just about the environment, but also about social and economic issues. For example, developing countries as well as marginalized or minority populations almost feel the worst impacts of climate change, yet they also lack the resources to combat these catastrophes and natural disasters. I believe that the main solution to this is that we must recognize this inequality and make sure that it is not ignored. We must provide aid to these communities, or make sure that they are away from danger zones. When we write policy to combat climate change, we should be required to include the opinions, thoughts, and ideas of environmental justice communities and organizations just as much as every other group. Also, another group disproportionately affected by the climate crisis are women. You can see its impacts from all over the world. To resolve this issue, the first step is to include women in the conversation and bringing their experiences and ideas to the table because they are so often left out in decision making. Furthermore, indigenous people were the first people on their land, but they are treated so poorly when in reality, their thousands of years of experiences and way of life could dramatically help resolve many of the world's great climate threats. They and their lands need to

be treated with respect by the government of citizens of the country. As with women and minority communities, their voices need to be amplified, listened to, and taken into consideration when deciding climate policies because of the valuable input they bring. Finally, we as youth have been forgotten about as previous generations have left the burden of solving the climate crisis on our shoulders. Therefore, we must fight for our futures, and demand bold action through things like passing the Green New Deal, which addresses many different parts of climate justice, and joining in global climate strikes. Millions of young people all over the world have begun to demand and take action in order to fight for their futures and the future generations. I am one of them.

Our generation will be the one to fight back against the years of inaction. When I am 72 years old, and I see my grandchildren playing and laughing on the meadow, I want to be able to tell them that I did absolutely everything in my power to make sure their lives and the lives that come after them are cherished and cared for, because we decided that it was our number one priority to safeguard their future. We owe it to the future generations and everyone and everything that comes after us to create that change today.