

# Thirty Students Launch Projects to Improve Community and World After Participating in Educational Program and Studying Climate Change in Bangladesh

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., April 3, 2012 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Thirty youth leaders from the San Francisco, New York and Minnesota areas are implementing social action projects designed to help their communities in particular and the planet in general, says nonprofit World Savvy. The projects are the students' way of sharing the knowledge they gained after participation in an innovative one-month immersion trip to Bangladesh to study climate change.

In these impactful projects, students are fusing their first-hand experiences in Bangladesh to their respective local communities in the United States. Since students observed how regional actions could have a direct impact on global sustainability, their action projects will empower their local communities to make a change in order to prevent further global destruction.

In December 2011, thirty youth leaders and five educators from across the United States earned the unique opportunity to experience how climate change is affecting the local environment and community in Bangladesh firsthand. The international trip was part of the American Youth Leadership Program (AYLP), an initiative sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and global education nonprofit World Savvy.

The program is administered by World Savvy ([www.worldsavvy.org](http://www.worldsavvy.org)), a non-profit organization that educates and engages youth in community and global affairs. Program goals include fostering mutual understanding, respect, and civic engagement among young Americans and their Bangladeshi peers.

“Enabling students to meet individuals affected by climate change in Bangladesh helps illustrate the connections between issues, events and people, locally and globally, in a way that promotes informed, positive action,” explained World Savvy’s Executive Director and Co-Founder Dana Mortenson. “Since major issues such as the environment, economy, natural resource distribution, and immigration are truly global in scope, it is essential that we provide students with educational opportunities to view these issues from multiple perspectives.”

While in Bangladesh, youth leaders and educators witnessed the devastation in the Sundarbans, the world’s largest mangrove forest, and additionally, visited communities that lost farmland as a direct result of climate change. These and many other first-hand experiences provided youth leaders and educators with the understanding that our actions in the United States can have an impact halfway across the world.

After traveling to Bangladesh, Natasha Wood (San Francisco University High School, San Francisco, CA) realized how poverty in Bangladesh and in the world could be decreased by better allocating natural resources. Inspired by this epiphany, she is working to install solar panels in her school in order to decrease excessive consumption. Aury Hernandez (Flushing International High School, Queens, NY) is also focusing on decreasing consumption at his school through lobbying for and raising funds to replace paper towels with hand dryers in school restrooms.

Filip Kostanecki (Wayzata High School, Plymouth, MN) is addressing the lack of awareness amongst his peers in the Minnesota area about climate change by developing an informational website that will also include local events related to climate change that students can attend. Filip is hoping that his website and the events that he is recommending will inspire students to learn more about global issues and encourage them to be more involved in the local and global community.

**About World Savvy:**

World Savvy educates and engages youth in community and world affairs, to learn, work and thrive as responsible global citizens in the 21st century. Learn more at: <http://www.worldsavvy.org> .

\* Photo Caption: From left to right: American Youth Leadership Program participants Steven Torrasi, Tania Ahmed, educator Linda Stern, Judy Yang, Amirah Birt, and Aury Hernandez at the closing ceremony of their month in Bangladesh.

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