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Students attend Midwest Power Shift gathering

Summary: The grassroots national movement is an opportunity for young people to make their voices heard for climate justice.

(October 27, 2011)-Sixteen University of Minnesota, Morris students road tripped to Cleveland, Ohio, for a Midwest Power Shift gathering. A grassroots national youth climate movement, Power Shift advocates for clean energy, transparent energy finances and politics, sustainable agriculture, a green economy, and sustainable cities. Joseph Hartmann '12, National Wildlife Federation Campus Ecology Fellow, says that the Morris group attended leadership and activism workshops.

The Midwest Power Shift movement is an opportunity for young people to make their voices heard for climate justice and a “call on the rest of the country to follow” their lead. The October 21–23, 2011, gathering was billed as a “weekend that offers everything from a good ol’ fashioned teach-ins on corporate money in democracy, to direct action trainings on coal, and everything from workshops on alternative business models and urban revitalization, to trainings and resources to pass local community fracking bans.”

Morris participants included Naomi Wente '13, Dodge Center, environmental studies, political science, and gender, women, sexuality studies, Joe Hartmann '12, Roseville, environmental studies, Jordan Wente '15 Dodge Center, economics and statistics, Kristian Nyberg '14, Minnetonka, environmental studies, and political science, Kayla Pridmore '12, Minneapolis, environmental studies, River Ostrow '14, St. Paul, environmental studies and English, Ande Saunders '13 Bloomington, environmental studies, Lucas Felts '13 Bemidji, economics, philosophy, Molly Donovan '14, Minneapolis, political science, history, Spanish minor, Maria Fleck '14, St. Stephen, psychology, philosophy, Sienna Nesser '14, St. Anthony Village, environmental studies, and Letian Zheng '12, Shanghai, China/Cincinnati, Ohio, sociology.

During the weekend, Midwest Power Shift attendees also stood in solidarity with OccupyCleveland participants.

Says Naomi Wente, “I enjoyed learning about what urban initiatives are taking place to lessen the amount of ‘food deserts’ and thus increase the availability and accessibility of produce and healthier foods. However, what I took to heart was the OccupyCleveland rally.... Change needs to happen. Our generation must step up. The time is now.”

Photo credit: Ben Hejkal

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in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.