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Main Stage Sessions and Speakers Bridge Traditional Wisdom and Future Resilience WOHESC is March 5-7, 2025, in Portland, Oregon

February 3, 2025 – Portland, OR – The **Washington Oregon Cascadia Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC)** has unveiled a dynamic lineup of main stage keynote speakers and plenary sessions for the upcoming event, taking place at Portland Community College Sylvania Campus March 5-7 in Portland, Oregon. This year's theme, *Cultivating Sustainable Communities*, will explore the intentional care required to build resilient, inclusive communities across campuses, neighborhoods, and ecosystems. WOHESC 2025 will feature an inspiring lineup of diverse keynote speakers and two thought-provoking plenaries that highlight the intersection of traditional knowledge, sustainability, and the future of humanity.

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Adrien L. Bennings | President, Portland Community College serves as the first permanent female president in college history, with a background as an advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Brianna Fruean | Pacific Climate Warrior, Activist, and Environmental Advocate is the youth representative of the Pacific Climate Warriors Council of Elders and was chosen by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) as their first ever youth ambassador to include young people in environmental conservation.

Sarah Jaquette Ray | Author, *A Field Guide to Climate Anxiety: How to Keep Your Cool on a Warming Planet* and *The Existential Toolkit for Climate Justice Educators* will speak on the role of emotions in climate advocacy and will offer tools that help foster a sense of collective efficacy and climate wisdom in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

Judy Bluehorse Skelton | Associate Professor of Indigenous Nations Studies at Portland State University will share the details on courses that she has developed including the Indigenous Traditional Ecological and Cultural Knowledge (ITECK) Certificate Program; Indigenous Ecological Healing Practices; Indigenous Leadership for Sustainable Futures, and Indigenous Gardens and Food Justice.

Acclaimed Authors Plenary Session

Intersections and Constellations – On Being Human Now and in the Future

The following acclaimed authors will examine humanity's resilience in an era of crisis. As climate change, extreme weather, pandemics, and social upheaval intersect, panelists will explore how grief, adaptation, and hope shape our collective future. This session promises to be a powerful exploration of the personal and collective dimensions of sustainability, justice, and the resilience of the human spirit.

Led by Sarah Stoeckl, PhD | Director, Office of Sustainability, University of Oregon

Featured Authors:

Thea Prieto | Author, *From the Caves*

Sarah Jaquette Ray | Author, *A Field Guide to Climate Anxiety*

Madeline Ostrander | Author, *At Home on an Unruly Planet*

Erin Sharkey | Author, *A Darker Wilderness: Black Nature Writing from Soil to Stars*

Attendees will have the opportunity to meet the authors post session, to purchase books and to get their books signed.

Traditional Teachings for a Modern Crisis – Indigenous Climate Solutions

This session unites Indigenous leaders from Pacific Island and Native American communities to explore sustainability through storytelling and dialogue, addressing shared challenges like rising sea levels and environmental injustice. By bridging ancestral wisdom with innovation, they will inspire a renewed commitment to protecting our planet for future generations.

Featured experts:

Sophia Agtarap | Race and Social Justice Lead Advisor, City of Seattle's Office of Civil Rights

Brianna Fruean | Pacific Climate Warrior, Activist, and Environmental Advocate

Makerusa Porotesano | Director of Multicultural Services, Portland Community College

Gabe Sheoships | Executive Director, Friends of Tryon Creek

Judy Bluehorse Skelton | Associate Professor of Indigenous Nations Studies, Portland State University

Conference Details

Washington Oregon Cascadia Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC)

Date: March 5-7, 2025

Location:

Portland Community College Sylvania Campus - 12000 SW 49th Avenue Portland, OR 97219

Program: <https://wohesc.org/program/>

Tickets can be purchased [online](#) or by phone at 503.226.2377.

About WOHESC

The Washington Oregon Cascadia Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC) is a platform for inspiring change, facilitating action, and promoting collaboration related to sustainability and social justice within the region's higher education institutions. As a regional conference, WOHEsc promotes a local focus, with dialogue specifically addressing issues in the Cascadia region. Solutions will be tailored for implementation and action in our unique political, social, economic, and environmental climate. More information at <https://wohesc.org/>.

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