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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022

by Cassie Hollasch '22 | *English, Writing and Business Administration*

UNH students
Gabrielle Sott '22,
[International Business & Economics](#) with
[Sustainability dual major](#) and Briella



Hirsch '22, [Business Management](#) and Sustainability dual major, organized and hosted UNH's first global climate strike. They were inspired to organize the strike after coming across an article about the global climate strike through [Fridays for the Future](#). After some

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investigation into the event, the students found that there were no strikes registered nearby so they decided to host their own. Gabrielle said, “Briella and I have always been passionate about educating our circles on the importance of climate knowledge, so we were very excited to bring together our circles in a creative way. When planning the event, our goal was to simply educate students and the community on climate change and sustainability in an open and interactive way. The band that performed, Funny You Should Ask, did a great job of inviting the community into a space where they felt welcomed.” Briella added, “As we got further into organizing, our goal expanded to providing students with resources, and informing them of local businesses to support so that they could engage with sustainability after they left the event. We have participated in many opportunities related to sustainability at UNH and have gotten so much value out of them, that we wanted to help connect others to these amazing opportunities.

Tom Kelly, Chief Sustainability Officer at UNH, spoke at the event on the importance of climate action and urged students to get involved with university programs related to sustainability. During his speech Kelly said, “We are taking action because we want to overcome the climate crisis and create a society that lives in harmony with its fellow beings and the environment.” Kelly reminded the crowd not to lose hope as, “action gives the basis of hope” and working together connects our school to an even bigger global movement. Kelly highlighted the opportunities for students at the Sustainability Institute including hands on collaborative work with [Task Forces](#) across campus and through programs like: [Semester in the City](#), [B Impact Clinic](#), the summer [Sustainability Fellowship](#), the [Social Venture Innovation Challenge](#), and the [Sustainability Advocates](#) (peer to peer learning). He closed the talk by thanking and congratulating the crowd for all their efforts leading up to the strike and moving forward.



Dr. Cameron Wake, [Sustainability Dual Major](#)
Chair and Sustainability Institute’s Josephine A.



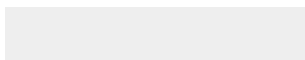
Lamprey Professor in Climate and Sustainability, also spoke on the importance of climate action and how this generation of students can be immensely powerful in facilitating that change. He highlighted 12 words on climate change: “It’s real, it’s us, scientists agree, it’s bad, we can fix it.” His moving speech reiterated that our climate future is in our hands and the more students organize and pressure institutions to change the more we can limit the amount of global warming to 1.1 degrees C. For every tenth of a degree Celsius warming, millions and millions will suffer. Wake then highlighted the climate “weirdness” humanity is beginning to see such as the rising temperatures at the poles (50 degrees above average at the north and 70 above average at the south). Wake is proud of UNH student leaders such as Sott and Hirsch, for being the change they want to see in the world and demanding fundamental change to better our climate and society. He closed his speech by encouraging the crowd to keep educating themselves, participate in elections, build networks, and continue pushing for change.

The strike ended with the crowd walking a loop around campus with their homemade signs; both students were extremely proud and happy with the turnout. Briella reflected, “It was an amazing learning experience and I feel even more inspired and motivated to take action.”

Learn more about how to get involved with the [Sustainability Institute](#) and its [Changemaker Collaborative](#)'s experiential programs.

Read Dr. Wake’s [blog](#) on why climate change is the innovation opportunity of the 21st century.

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