

Activists Call for Fundamental Change to Avert Global Warming

Donna Dear

Question #1: Is climate change actually happening?

Bob Terrell: “There was a lengthy debate about climate change, but that debate is over. There is plenty of scientific evidence that global warming exists.”



Bob Terrell is Chair of the Board of Directors of Alternatives for Community and the Environment (ACE).

Ronneshia Bolden is active with the Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Program (REEP).



Question #2: What effect is climate change having?

Ronneshia Bolden: “It is causing the sea level to rise, which could put us in danger. And we don’t have the money to pick up and move and start our lives in a new place.”

Question #3: Do you believe that communities of color and low-income communities have been unfairly impacted by climate change?

Handel Dixon: “People in low income communities contribute less to global warming than people living in more affluent areas. This is because we either walk or take the bus where we are going. In the suburbs, they have to drive because the closest store is a mile away. Also, we live in smaller apartments and houses. People with low incomes don’t go on expensive vacations; we travel less. So, yes, it is unfair. We contribute less to global warming, but we will probably have to deal with more of the problems related to it because we won’t be able to buy our way out of them.”



Handel Dixon is active with the Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Program (REEP).

Question #4: What can our communities do to address climate change?

Lisa Sadika Edwards: “Our communities must fight to be included in the decisions that are being made about our environment. How can we do this? Election reform would be a start. A lot of people feel that the system is corrupt and so they don’t bother participating in it. If we want to address climate change, we have to have a political system that people believe in.”



Lisa Sadika Edwards is an activist with T Riders Union (TRU) and is on the Board of ACE.

Michelle McGruder is an activist with T Riders Union (TRU).



Question #5: How can we get young people involved?

Michelle McGruder: “We can teach children about what is acceptable and not acceptable in their own communities. This is one way of getting youth involved in the decision making and the voting process from an early age.”

Question #6: What else can we do?

Elaine Corbin: “The earth is trying to save itself. We need to stop putting all these chemicals in the earth. They need to stop tearing down the trees in the Amazon. It is bad for the planet.”



Elaine Corbin is an activist with Alternatives for Community and the Environment (ACE).

Donna Dear is a resident of Roxbury which is a low income community. She is a member of the T Riders Union (TRU). She abhors injustice and advocates for others whenever she has the chance. She is an avid reader and hopes to re-enter college someday soon.



Background

Donna Dear compiled this piece by interviewing members of ACE, an environmental justice group based in Roxbury, MA. The T Riders Union and the Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Program are both part of ACE, which can be reached at <www.ace-ej.org> or by calling 617-442-3343.