



2021 Environmental Congress Workshop Descriptions

Tuesday, October 19th, 7pm

Keynote Address. -Surili Sutaria Patel

Surili is a trusted voice in public health who champions diversity and works to advance health equity and environmental justice. She approaches health and the environment through thoughtful coalition building and innovative strategies that work to advance equity and improve access. With a profound public health and biomedical research background, she has led the climate and health discussion out of environmental circles and into the broader public health realm.

Surili is a Vice President at the Metropolitan Group – a full-service strategy and creative agency that works exclusively with public agencies, nonprofits, foundations and socially responsible businesses to build a just and sustainable world. At the Metropolitan Group, a certified B Corp, Surili works at the intersection of public health, environment and sustainability and social justice.

Previously, Surili held a visionary leadership position at the American Public Health Association, where she drove strategic development to bridge the gap between public health practice and sound policies. As the architect and director of the Center for Climate, Health and Equity, she inspired action by public health professionals and advanced policy agendas that address health at the nexus of climate and equity. As deputy director for the Center for Public Health Policy, she elevated the association’s environmental health program to the national stage. Surili also has deep issue-based knowledge in environmental health priorities including water safety and security, children’s environmental health, Tribal public and environmental health, transportation and health, and healthy community design.

Surili is the co-founder of Aawaz for Climate, a new network that addresses climate change and health equity through elevating voices represented in a gender and ethnically diverse community.

Wednesday, October 20th, Noon

Environmental Justice Advancement in New Jersey: Tools and Resources

This session will review the recent New Jersey legislation that protects Overburdened Communities along with an overview of the NJDEP Environmental Justice website. Also information on programs and initiative ideas for local environmental commissions and other volunteers to advance in their communities.

Speakers:

- *Kandyce Perry*, Director, Office of Environmental Justice, NJDEP
Kandyce.Perry@dep.nj.gov
- *Renata Barnes*, Coordinator, Outdoor Equity Alliance, rbarnes@fohvos.org>

Wednesday, October 20th, 4pm

Stormwater Management – Challenges and Solutions

Have you noticed that when it rains it really pours these days? Do you have flooding challenges in your town? Is development pressure reducing the opportunities for stormwater to be absorbed naturally into the ground?

Join us for this session on stormwater management as we look at the challenges we face and the remedies and resources available to your municipalities. We will cover stormwater solutions -- the new green infrastructure requirement per the new stormwater regulation, stormwater education, and financing opportunities.

Speakers:

- *Christopher C. Obropta, Ph.D., P.E.*, Extension Specialist in Water Resources, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program
- *Brianne (Bree) Callahan*, Stormwater Manager, New Jersey Future

Wednesday, October 20th, 7pm

Legislative Update

What's going on in the Trenton State House? Our public policy experts will fill you in! Come find out what our state government is doing to combat climate change, save pollinators, reduce plastic pollution, and much more. ANJEC's Policy Associate Alex Ambrose and New Jersey LCV's Policy Director Henry Gajda will walk you through the unprecedented 2020-2021 legislative session and how we are holding our lawmakers accountable for their environmental promises.

Speakers:

- *Henry Gajda*, Public Policy Director for the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters
- *Alex Ambrose*, Policy Associate, ANJEC (Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions)

Thursday, October 21, Noon

Tools for Local Climate Action

In the midst of an ongoing climate crisis, the United Nations has issued a “code red for humanity.” NJ is responding aggressively with policies, programs and tools to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050. The NJ Climate Change Resource Center has collected and integrated a wide variety of information to provide education and outreach support for policy initiatives. Landfills are the third-largest source of methane emissions and a quarter of what we dispose of is food waste. How is NJ tackling the food waste problem statewide and locally? How do municipalities address climate equity? How does Jersey City’s Climate & Energy Action Plan drive their Race to Zero carbon campaign? Join this session for answers to these questions and much more.

Speakers:

- *Jeanne Herb*, Executive Director, Environmental Analysis and Communications Group, Co-Director, NJ Climate Change Resource; Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy; Rutgers University
- *Lucas Marxen* - Associate Director, Office of Research Analytics; Rutgers University
- *Carolina Ramos* - Sustainability Program Manager, Jersey City Office of Sustainability
- *Gary Sondermeyer* – VP of Operations, Bayshore Recycling Corporation

Thursday, October 21, 4pm

Moving Forward with Electric Vehicles

Did you know that the transportation sector accounts for 42% of the greenhouse gas emissions in New Jersey, making it the largest emissions source? The NJ Energy Master Plan calls for 100 percent carbon-neutral electricity generation and maximum electrification of the transportation and building sectors by 2050. Transitioning to EVs is a transformative step toward eliminating the dominant source of local air pollution (including black carbon), especially in EJ communities that have been disproportionately impacted by poor air quality. In this session, learn how your municipality can embrace the EV revolution through passage of local ordinances and utilization of grants and incentive programs. One such opportunity has led to a pilot electric shared mobility project being launched in Trenton.

Speakers:

- *Andrea Friedman*, Supervisor Electric Vehicle Programs; NJDEP
- *Cathleen Lewis*, E-Mobility Program Manager; NJ Board of Public Utilities
- *Kate Miguel*, Clean energy advocate; Isles, Incorporated

Thursday, October 21, 7pm

Clean Energy in New Jersey; Promoting Programs in your community

New Jersey is moving forward on clean energy in a big way. Learn about the current programs available to encourage clean energy use in our state. Hear about new initiatives for

municipalities, homeowners and businesses. Learn about solar siting, the pros and cons of where to place solar arrays as well as options for municipal ordinances to encourage solar in redevelopment and new development.

Speakers:

- NJ Clean Energy Program, NJBPU
- Tom Gilbert, Campaign Director- Energy, Climate & Natural Resources, New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF)

Friday, October 22nd, Noon

Featured Speaker: NJDEP Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette

Appointed by Governor Philip D. Murphy, Shawn M. LaTourette became New Jersey's Commissioner of Environmental Protection on June 14, 2021. He had served as Acting Commissioner since January 16, 2021. Commissioner LaTourette is responsible for formulating statewide environmental policy while directing programs that protect public health and ensure the quality of New Jersey's air, land, water, and natural and historic resources.

Friday, October 22, 4pm

Social Media Engagement for Environmental Commissions Plus Networking Session

- Does your municipality have a social media policy?
- Want to increase your EC's effectiveness?
- Are you confused by how many and when to use hashtags?

Join this engaging session to learn about how to use social media effectively. Get some useful tips and tools from our expert presenter.

Enjoy meeting and chatting with other attendees on a variety of topics in an open networking session.

Speaker:

- *Samantha Adamo*, Social Media Assistant, New Jersey League of Conservation Voters

Friday, October 22, 7pm

Entertainment Session: Kofi & Sankofa 'Unity and Equality expressed by Mother Earth through African Drum and Dance'

Kofi and Sankofa would draw a connection between Mother Nature and the vibration of African Drumming and the resulting movement or dance from our ancestral origins. 'Agbaza' and Sogbadza rhythms of the 'Ewe' traditions of Ghana, West Africa, recounts our history, culture, the healing element of water and the myth behind this community building village experience through sound. This brings everyone together with the recognition of every role deemed so

vital to the other, regardless of gender, education, economic status, religion or talent.
Drumming heals and releases the community back to their natural roots of the spirit.