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Second student-organized Climate Strike to take place in Downtown Binghamton

Jo Myers/Pipe Dream Illustrator

Demonstration aims to highlight worldwide environmental crisis, serve as call for climate action
By MELANIE GULBAS AND JANE MOU - SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

The topic of global warming is heating up, with another Climate Strike set to take place in Downtown Binghamton this week.

Last Friday, Binghamton hosted a Climate Strike that aimed to call attention to government policy issues regarding climate change. A new strike is set to take place this Friday from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. at the Peacemaker's Stage, addressing similar issues. According to Isabel Jordan, a sophomore majoring in environmental studies and a member of Generation Repairing Our World (GROW), a group helping organize the strike, the event is a product of more than a dozen community organizations working together to bring climate change issues forward.

"This strike also recognizes that the climate crisis is here, and we cannot continue to rely only on politicians or famous faces to do the work for us," Jordan said. "For a healthy future, we all must sacrifice and we all must work together. We need to build resiliency now by asking: What can we do within ourselves and with our own resources?"

GROW, according to Jordan, is an unofficial group of BU students and Binghamton citizens who have come together to organize advocacy events. Other groups helping organize the strike include Citizen Action of New York's Southern Tier chapter, Vestal Residents for Safe Energy, the Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition and Binghamton High School students.

The environmental crisis is documented in a World Meteorological Organization (WMO) report, which has seen an increase of carbon dioxide levels and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The protests aim to serve a larger purpose in Broome County by addressing climate change issues associated with race and financial inequality, according to organizers.

Dylan Feliciano, a senior majoring in philosophy, politics and law, was one of the main organizers for the last Friday's Climate Strike and said even though the demonstrations are separate, two strikes are better than one.

"We began planning our strikes individually," Feliciano said. "And when we found each other we thought it better to have two events pushing for climate action than just one."

Michael-Luca Natt, a junior majoring in environmental studies, also helped organize the previous Climate Strike. He said he feels that climate change is a pressing issue that has to be addressed immediately.

"Climate change is obviously something that is already ravaging the world in pretty much every aspect," Natt said. "It disturbs me every day that there is no significant action being taken by global powers to mitigate the damage that's being done."

Nicky Anichich, a junior double-majoring in geography and anthropology, said he attended the previous Climate Strike because of the immediate importance of climate change.

"I went to the climate strike because this is the single most important issue that the entire world is facing and as one of the major contributors, the U.S. government is doing literally nothing to help," Anichich said. "We need to show that this is an important issue that needs to be addressed immediately."

According to Jordan, having one event will not be enough to make the changes necessary to begin halting global warming. Local climate activists plan to continue strategizing ways to bring attention to environmental concerns.

"Rallies can be beautiful, but usually energy dissipates quickly," Jordan said. "There will be a follow-up meeting to translate momentum into tangible goals on Oct. 6 at 4 p.m. at 85 Walnut Street."