

# Vineyard Youth Summit for Sustainable Development Ends a Successful Week



On Friday, June 24, the 2011 Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative ended its week-long Summit for Sustainable Development with an awarding of certificates, presentations of hopes and dreams and some delicious ice cream provided by the one and only Ben & Jerry's.

The students who took part in the summit spent the last five days putting their heads together with each other and members of the local and national community on important issues that affect the Island such as: Health, Sustainable Islands and Buildings, Sustainable Business, Cultural Sustainability and Sustainable Living for the Future. There were even students from other Islands brought in to compare and discuss Martha's Vineyard's work and progress toward sustainability with other islands, such as Hawaii, Vieques, the British Virgin Islands, and of course, Nantucket. At the end of every day, they spent time exploring their dreams for the future. Friday's events consisted of the giving of a certificate and a copy of "Stone Soup for the World," a book edited by the group's leader, Marianne Larned. Delegates also presented their Sustainable Vineyard Map and shared a few dreams for their lives, Islands and world.

Three of the group's leaders, Shawna Brown, Amoy Anderson and Emma HallBilsback were torch carriers from last year's summit to this one. HallBilsback, who worked on the Sustainable Vineyard Map Part I last summer, helped kids from the Vineyard and other islands on the Sustainable Vineyard Map Part II this summer. "My group helped me work on a presentation that I am going to give to the Town of Tisbury," HallBilsback explained. She then worked with students from Nantucket and Hawaii to create similar maps of sustainable points on their islands.

Anderson and Brown both presented their work on the Cultural Health Project that they also presented last month at the NAACP's Juneteenth Celebration. Now that the summit is over, they've still got plenty of work to do. Summer for this group consists of "College visits, SAT workshops, scholarship workshops and preparing for next year's events, like Job Shadow Day," explained Brown, who is off to Washington Adventist University in Maryland in the fall. Anderson will be attending Suffolk University in Boston, but neither girl has any thought of leaving MVYLI far behind. "And Emma will still be here," said Anderson of the rising senior. "So we'll definitely be back."