



## Youth Leadership Summit 2013 Speaker Bios

### Martha's Vineyard Faculty



**Kaila Binney**  
**Island Grown Schools**

Kaila Binney began her path as a sustainability educator in an eco-village in India teaching permaculture design. Over the past 6 years she has worked with students ages 5 to 65, facilitating learning opportunities in gardens, on farms, in classrooms and in the community. As a Martha's Vineyard Vision Fellow, Kaila created a summer program that employs teenagers to grow, harvest, and distribute fresh, local produce to those in need on the island. She is the Program Director for Island Grown Schools, Martha's Vineyard's Farm-to-School program, whose mission is to raise a new generation of Vineyarders who are connected to local farms and farmers, empowered to make healthy eating choices, informed about the food system, and engaged in growing food for themselves, their families and community. Last year she finished her M.Ed. in Education for Sustainability, and has created a website of K-12 curriculum connecting her work with Island Grown Schools to the Common Core National Standards.



**Signe Benjamin**  
**Vineyard Conservation Society**

Born and raised in Vineyard Haven, Signe enjoyed growing up around the ocean and in a great community. She got her BA in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Traveling to South America was life changing for her -- where she bought a restaurant in Peru -- and she realized how much she enjoyed experiencing new cultures. She lived between Peru and Colorado for a few years before settling down. She now lives back in her hometown with her husband George and 3 children. She is honored to work for the Vineyard Conservation Society and help further their work of protecting the island environment.



**Ben Thompson**  
**350.org Divestiture Campaign**

Ben Thompson is a graduate student at Boston University. In 2012 Ben graduated from Cornell College in Iowa. He has been an environmentalist since 2004, organizing [350.org](http://350.org) events in 2008. In 2012 Ben joined **Students for a Just and Stable Future**. He founded **Divest BU** in the fall 2012. Next year Ben is organizing the climate movement full-time.



## Stone Soup Leadership Institute Faculty



**Marianne Larned**

Marianne is the Executive Director of the Stone Soup Leadership Institute. She is the author of educational series, *Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes*. She has the privilege of working with and learning from youth leaders on island communities in the Martha's Vineyard, Hawaii, the Philippines, Vieques, and Virgin Gorda to develop a vision for their future and green initiatives. They humble and inspire her to have hope, passion and joy for our future. Ms. Larned uses the Stone Soup metaphor to help people see that when we work together we can do more than we thought was possible. Previously Ms. Larned assisted Fortune 500 companies, healthcare systems, and Chambers of Commerce, and education, government, civic and community leaders to develop public-private partnerships to improve education, health care and economic development.



**Marsha Reeves-Jews**

Marsha serves as the President of the Board of Directors of the Stone Soup Leadership Institute. Marsha has served as faculty for the Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative and Virgin Gorda Youth Leadership Initiative. She was event manager and mistress of ceremonies of the Institute's Celebration of Heroes with Walter Cronkite in New York City. Marsha has assisted the Institute's year-long planning in Baltimore; the Institute's first technology grant from Microsoft for the Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative.

Ms. Reeves-Jews Radio Show *Keep It Moving* is a one-hour weekly nationally syndicated show featuring leaders in education, political, social topical issues. Marsha is a leader in using technology for multicultural communities. She was the Project Director at Institute for Learning Technologies at Columbia University overseeing three government grants: 1. Department of Commerce NTIA Harlem Renaissance 2001 Project; 2. Department of Education grant New York Online Neighborhood Network – portal development for 110 community technology centers in the 5 boroughs of Manhattan; 3. New York City Council grant for Community Technology Center (CTC) banks for a viral online supply center. She develops culturally respectful educational programming and technology strategies for educational systems and community based organizations to address the digital divide and innovative STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education technologies. Marsha's clients include: The City of Annapolis' Minority and Small Business Economic Development Enterprise; The Baltimore Empowerment Zone; and National Urban League. She has served on many boards and as a gubernatorial appointee commission for the Maryland Public Television.



### Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative



**Josue Cruz**

Josue serves as the Director of the Institute's Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development. He transformed his life from a C-D student to a third year law school student at the University of Puerto Rico. Josue co-founded the Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative at the age of 14. After reading the Brookings Report declaring that Puerto Rico was the poorest community in the U.S., Josue wrote *The Challenges Facing Vieques Youth*, which is the poorest community in Puerto Rico. This report galvanized support from local, national and international leaders for a four-year bi-lingual demonstration project for the Stone Soup Leadership Institute. Josue and VYLI college youth produced a 2020 Report on Sustainable Development for Vieques, presented at the APEC Youth Summit in Peru in 2008. In 2008 Josue cofounded Comunidad Verde Vieques (Green Vieques). The Mayor dedicated 500 acres to 300 landless families. Thanks to Josue's deep commitment to learning best practices, he helped implement the first "Green Initiative" in Puerto Rico's public schools where more than 5,000 students and 150 teachers created more than 100 school gardens. An inspiring speaker, Josue has received tremendous press including Caribbean Business. In 2010, Josue received the Institute's first Walter Cronkite Award.



**Kassandra Castillo**

Kassandra is a successful entrepreneur and top fashion model in Puerto Rico. She received her Business Marketing Degree from Inter American University. Kassandra was 14 when joined the Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative. Her dream was to become a professional model and a fashion designer. Kassandra helped develop VYLI's Entrepreneurship Initiative where she traveled to the Caribbean Artisan Festival. Her fashion jewelry was featured at the Taste of the Island and other venues. She was a model for UNICA, the top-modeling agency in Puerto Rico. With VYLI she created her portfolio, gave her first speech at VYLI Youth Summit, received her first press, and was introduced to the fashion industry leaders. For VYLI's Job Shadow Day, Kassandra was matched with Ileana Cambó, former Ms. Puerto Rico and VP of L'Oreal. Her modeling career skyrocketed – she has received many awards and professional modeling jobs. She studied swimwear design at Centro de Las Artes del Diseño y la Alta Costura and designed her own line of bathing suits and accessories. After realizing her own dreams of becoming a model, she helped young aspiring models from Vieques providing guidance and organizing fashion shows and professional photo shoots for them. These girls started their portfolio and went to their first casting for fashion week. Kassandra organized a College Prep Workshop for Vieques youth to strive towards higher education. Kassandra is now moving to Boston to attend courses at Harvard University.

## MVYLI & Youth Leadership Summit Project Coordinators



**Nicole Garrity**

Nicole Garrity is a recent graduate of the University of Massachusetts Amherst with a Bachelor of Sciences in Public Health with a concentration in community health education. She was raised with a strong sense of community in the small town of Londonderry, NH. That sense of community carried on with her to college. During Nicole's sophomore year she became a founding member of the UMASS Amherst Community Kitchen. Working with her peers and organizing ways to make a change in the way leftover food at her University was handled, Nicole knew that working with the public was her calling.

During the fall of 2011, she studied abroad in Australia where she participated in beach cleanups and learned of their water conservation policies. Nicole is a strong believer that education is the foundation to building a better future. Her dream is to clean up the earth and teach others the knowledge how to do so. She is devoted to educating and helping people live a happy, healthy, and sustainable lifestyle. Nicole lives in Vineyard Haven with her boyfriend who works at MV Community Services.



**Emily Nuss**

Emily is a junior student at Middlebury College studying biology and global health. Her interest in community service and global development began on her first out of country travel experience in 2006, when she went on a service trip to the Dominican Republic and was exposed to extreme poverty for the first time. Several years later Emily co-founded, with friends and parents, a non-profit called Kids to Kids, with the mission of helping kids in the developing world achieve their educational, athletic, artistic, and environmental aspirations. After partnering with the Peace Corps, the non-profit, which is now called Kids Connect, was able to expand to help and connect with kids in communities all over the developing world. Emily has also become involved with organizations, including Spark Microgrants, an NGO that gives grants to the poorest communities in Rwanda, allowing them to design and implement projects that address their major public health needs. Emily interned for Spark last summer, where she visited and evaluated the success of various projects, in order to help write the annual report and website profiles. In addition, Emily is a member of GlobeMed chapter at Middlebury. As one of 50 chapters, GlobeMed at Middlebury raises money and awareness for their partner organization, Gardens for Health International, to address the issue of food security in Rwanda. GlobeMed chapter members also work to educate themselves and their campus about relevant and significant global health issues. Emily's passion and interest both in biology and medicine and in global development have inspired her to pursue a career in medicine with involvement in global and public health issues.

## MVYLI Visioneers



**Isabella El-Diery**

Bella graduated from MV Regional High School. In the fall she will attend Howard University. Bella is MVYLI's representative on the Governor's Statewide Youth Council. Bella serves as a MVYLI Visioneer (2013) and a youth delegate to MVYLI's 2011 & 2012 Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development. As a multicultural youth leader, Bella championed MVYLI's Cultural Sustainability Initiative. She represented MVYLI at the *Minorities in the MV Public Schools: Panel & Public Forum* at the MV Hebrew Center. This experience inspired Bella to envision the first Multicultural Assembly for 700 people at the MV Regional High School. The re-nown civil rights leader, Charlayne Hunter-Gault was the honored speaker along with youth leaders from different cultures and MVYLI's leader of the Anti-Bullying Campaign. She made a presentation at the 3rd Annual Walter Cronkite Awards Ceremony to acknowledge Nick Clooney for his and his son's work and MVYLI's support for the South Sudan Girls Empowerment Club. Bella was involved with MVYLI's College Prep & Field Trip Program and piloted MVYLI's program to bring the ACT testing to Martha's Vineyard. Bella was born on the Caribbean island of Bequia, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In 2013 she interned with the St. Vincent Government Public Information Officer. She is a member of MVRHS Model UN. She was in the UNICEF Committee studying children and AIDS and children tracking. She was matched with the countries of Angola and Côte d'Ivoire. Her dream is to work with developing nations to help develop a plan to build a equitable country, especially for girls and women.



**Sivana Brown**

Sivana Brown is a graduate Martha's Vineyard Regional High School. In the fall she will attend Lasell College. Sivana served as a youth delegate to MVYLI's Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development (2010 and 2011). An active member of MVYLI's College Prep & Field Trip Program, she visited the Isenberg School of Management at the University of Amherst Massachusetts. It convinced her that she wanted to pursue a career in business. She signed up for classes in marketing and personal finance to help her get a head start towards her goals. For MVYLI's Job Shadow Day 2012, Sivana was mentored by Robert Ripley, Vice President Martha's Vineyard Savings Bank and learning all there is about finance.

Sivana enjoys planning events and helping others. She helped put together a Thanksgiving food drive with Young Sisters Mentoring Group at MVRHS for the less fortunate. Sivana has volunteered at Windemere for two years working with elders. Sivana has a keen sense of beauty and was a runway model with the Martha's Vineyard Fashion Week, which she helped to create for the last two years. For MVYLI's 2013 Job Shadow Day Sivana was matched with Elizabeth Rothwell, Marketing Director at the Harbor View Hotel. Sivana was a member of MVYLI's Multicultural Assembly at the MVRHS. She served as a Production Assistant for the video that was featured at the Assembly. In 2013 she is assistant event planner for the Youth Leadership Summit and the Walter Cronkite Awards Ceremony. Sivana traveled to Spain with Education First that opened her eyes to different cultures and life styles. Born in Sandy Bay Jamaica, Sivana's family moved to Martha's Vineyard when she was 10 years old. She aspires to become a well-known event planner.



**Mary Ollen**

Mary Ollen is an incoming senior at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School. Mary served as a youth delegate to MVYLI's 2012 Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development. Last summer Mary volunteered for Elizabeth Warren's campaign on Martha's Vineyard. For MVYLI's Job Shadow Day, Mary was matched with U.S. Senator Warren's Offices. Mary enjoys MVRHS extra curricular activities from being President of the Junior Class, to playing both Varsity Lacrosse and Field Hockey, to being a member of Peer Outreach, as well as being a board member of the Safe Rides Program. She also coaches the Vineyard Girls Youth Lacrosse Team and is a Teacher's Assistant for the Special Education program at the high school. Mary will pursue a career in the field of either Political Science or Law. Mary hopes to one day to be at least a U.S. Senator.

a youth delegate to MVYLI's 2012 Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development. Now in her second year as a member of MVYLI, Isabel has created many goals for herself, including her dreams of one day becoming a physical therapist and owning her own business. Her broader goal is being totally fluent in Spanish as she wishes to travel more extensively in South America/Latin America and help in the aid of providing medical treatment to the underprivileged. As an assistant coach for the Youth Girl's Lacrosse Team, the upcoming captain of both the varsity lacrosse and field hockey programs, a teacher's assistant for the special education program and upcoming counselor at Camp Jabberwocky, as well as a former participant of the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, Isabel has delved into the many aspects of becoming a leader, as she wishes to turn those steps into a successful future.

**Special Vineyard youth speaker**



**Max Conway**

Max Conway is an incoming senior at Georgetown Preparatory School in Washington, DC. He plays varsity basketball and tennis. He spends every summer on Martha's Vineyard. He works as an assistant Harbor Master in Edgartown. Last year Max and his family visited the Orkeeswa Secondary School in Tanzania, Africa. While there, he and his father came up with the idea of Island Connects, a youth success preparations program. This summer Max plans to work along side MVYLI in hopes to forge closer bonds between the people who share this beautiful island. Max plans to attend college majoring in finance and economics. His broader goal is to go into politics, hopefully becoming a United States Senator. As for now, he continues to work to better the Island leaving it in better shape than he found it, each and every year.



**Isabel Smith**

Isabel was born and raised on Martha's Vineyard. She's an incoming senior at MVRHS. Isabel served as

## Youth Leadership Summit Video Team



**Shavanae Anderson**

Shav is a graduate of MV Regional High School. In the fall she will attend Suffolk University as a communications major. Shav was the youngest founding member of the Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative. She served as a delegate to the Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development (2010 & 2011). Shav participated in MVYLI's College Prep & Field Trip Program (2010-2012). For MVYLI's 2012 Job Shadow Day she was matched with Pediatrician Dr. Melanie Miller and in 2011 with Managing Nurse Barbara Morgan at the MV Hospital Operating Room. She was featured in MV Hospital's Annual Reports in 2011 and 2012. Shav helped create an inspiring presentation on Cultural Health for the NAACP Juneteenth conference. Born in Jamaica, Shav was a member of the Model UN Club and the Young Sisters Mentoring Program where she volunteered for the Living Local Harvest Festival and helped organize a food drive at Thanksgiving and a winter coat drive.

For 2013, Shav chose to be matched with documentary filmmaker Liz Witham, Film-Truth Productions. She served as an intern at the MV Community Television.

Shav (with Meagan) produced the Passing of the Torch video for Amnesty International's 50th Anniversary with Harry Belafonte, Dr. Henry Gates Jr., Rose Styron and others. The video was premiered at the 2011 Martha's Vineyard International Film Festival. She received the 2012 Walter Cronkite Award for her "kindness, commitment, willingness, flexibility, dedication and for using the power of the media to feature inspiring young people on Martha's Vineyard.



**Meagan McDonough**

Meagan is a graduate of the MV Charter School. She just completed her Gap Year in Australia. She will attend Warren Wilson College in the fall.

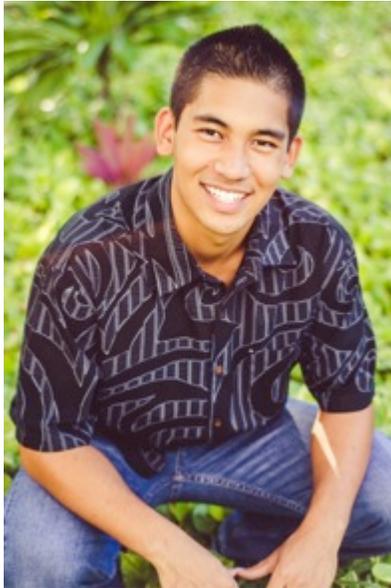
Meagan served as a delegate to the 2010 Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development. Her dream is to become an educational media producer. She feels strongly about the need for positive educational media, especially to inspire young people. Meagan was an intern at the Martha's Vineyard Community Television Station (MVTV).

For MVYLI's Job Shadow Day, Meagan was matched with Len Morris, Galen Film Productions. She produced MVYLI's Job Shadow Day video. Meagan also took initiative on a special project – producing a video to encourage students to visit colleges. She interviewed MVYLI seniors about their College Field Trip experience and then produced a video that was featured on MVTV. Meagan traveled to Boston to present the MVYLI Sustainable Vineyard Map to Senator John Kerry's staff and to ABC-TV. She served as MVYLI's representative to the Cape & Islands Youth Congress where she shared her perspective about the importance of giving young people an opportunity to share their ideas with their communities and the world.

Meagan is the 2011 Youth Winner of the Institute's Walter Cronkite Award. Meagan (with Shav) produced Passing the Torch video for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Amnesty International.



**Sustainable Hawaii Youth Leadership Initiative  
Faculty**



**Trevor Tanaka**

Trevor graduated from Konawaena High School and will attend Chapman College in the fall. He is a SHYLI founding member, attending the 2012 Youth Leadership Summit. During the last year Trevor championed his Sustainable Education Resolution that was passed in the House and the Senate. Trevor is a Harvard Book Award recipient and Honorable Mention Awardee of the County of Hawaii "Student Malama Award: Celebrating Student Leadership in Sustainability." He is a member of the Hawaii State Student Council and serves as Vice Chair of the Council's Environment of Care Committee. He was the Student Body Vice President, President of Konawaena High School's Leo Club, National Honor Society member. Trevor was a member of the state championship Konawaena High School Varsity Basketball and Volleyball Teams. Trevor will pursue a career in Pre-Med and Engineering (Biosystems) with a minor in business. At SHYLI's Job Shadow Day, Trevor was matched with Dr. Edwin Herd M.D. at Ali'i Health Care & Kona Community Hospital.



**Alex Frost**

Alex is a champion for sustainability. As the County of Hawaii Sustainability and Resource Coordinator from 2006 to 2012, he co-founded the Hawaii County Green Team and developed the green government initiative. He facilitated this through community based collaboration and capacity building services to support island families, organizations, and government to embrace practices that led to a just and sustainable society. Alex is 2009 recipient of the Hawaii Lualaba Leadership Award. He conducted the first government carbon emission footprint analysis in the State of Hawaii, identifying potential savings worth \$42 million in 10 years through renewable energy, energy efficiency and waste reduction measures. Alex supported community development by co-authoring a holistic asset-building policy and action roadmap to promote family financial empowerment, sustainable and livable communities, and economic localization. He supported grass roots action, community gardening and food security workshop, by awarding community capacity building grants annually through the County of Hawaii Department of Research and Development. Alex led the outreach and engagement phases of the Puna, North Kohala, and South Kohala Regional Community Development Plans. He coordinated the outreach efforts of State of Hawai'i 2050 Sustainability Plan for the Hawaii Island in 2007. After graduating from University of Richmond in London, England, he served as a Non-Profit Program Manager in Palawan, Philippines to build local indigenous capacity via Peace Corps. For the past year and half he is on a pilgrimage visiting sacred sites around the world. He speaks three languages and has travelled extensively. He loves the combination of surfing, yoga, and meditation to keep him grounded. Alex will begin his graduate study this August in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Hawaii.