WFCP YOUTH CONGRESS 2024
YOUTH DECLARATION

WFCP
World Federation of
Colleges and Polytechnics

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FOREWORD

It is with great enthusiasm that we present this Youth Declaration at **the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics 2024 at Montego Bay, Jamaica**. Bringing together young minds from across the globe, WFCP Youth Congress 2024 embodies the passion, vision, and determination of youth worldwide. This document represents a culmination of our shared experiences and vibrant discussions centered around three pivotal themes: the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in learning, youth empowerment and leadership, and the crucial role of youth in advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). This represents the **passion, vision, and determination of young people from around the world**.

The role of youth in achieving the UN SDGs was also a recurring theme in our dialogues. We recognize that **young people are not just beneficiaries of sustainable development but are also key drivers of change.** Their innovative solutions and passionate advocacy are essential in addressing global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and access to quality education.

Throughout our journey, we explored the transformative potential of AI in education. From personalized learning experiences to innovative teaching methodologies, AI has opened new horizons for both educators and students. Our conversations highlighted the **importance of equipping young minds with the skills and knowledge to navigate and thrive in an AI-driven world**.

Youth empowerment and leadership continued to be at the forefront of our conversations. We discussed the essence of what it means to be a leader and how to live **a life guided by integrity, responsibility, and purpose**. Our discussions emphasized the importance of nurturing leadership qualities and providing opportunities for youth to take on meaningful roles in society. By exploring the principles of effective leadership and ethical living, we are better equipped with the tools we need to make a positive impact in our communities and beyond.

As we reflect on the content of this document, we are reminded of the power of collaboration and the importance of giving the youth a platform to voice their ideas and aspirations. **Together, we can build a future that is inclusive, equitable, and sustainable**. This declaration calls on educators, policymakers, and global leaders to work in partnership with young people, recognizing their vital role in shaping the future.

TESTIMONIALS

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I live in an area that is considered a watershed area where a lot of rivers and a dam is located. It was concerning when the water was being polluted by litter from our own community. This challenge made me start volunteering for beach or road cleanups and play my part in improving life under water and people have clean water.

Aljunae Palmer, Portmore Community College, Jamaica

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For the last three years, I have volunteered at the One World Foundation which is geared to helping children with special needs receive therapy. Through these experiences, I have been able to see that the lack of education and social resources which are available for them is almost non-existent. Those who benefit from the experiences provided by this camp, often show emotions, such as happiness, relaxed, free and cared.

When placed in the educational system, they are oftentimes lost in the system and not given the proper attention which is needed. Due to the lack of resources, families are forced to relocate to other countries for access to the help which that child would need to develop into a successful person in society. This experience has harnessed my drive to bring awareness to the inequalities which children with special needs may face, outside their inability to be understood by the world which they live in.

Chelsea Been, Turks and Caicos Islands Community College, Turks and Caicos Islands

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This experience has positively impacted my life. I have garnered very valuable knowledge that I know will help me to achieve my goals and to impact others positively. I have interacted with a lot of intelligent minds from across the globe and locally I thank God for this unforgettable opportunity. I thank the Council of Community Colleges of Jamaica (CCCJ), and all the organizers of this youth congress for giving me this once in a lifetime opportunity. Additionally, I want to thank my college the Moneague College for believing in me. I am from a rural community and many didn't believe in me and I have learnt to positively move forward in spite of the negative circumstances that I had faced in the past and even presently. In conclusion, it is so powerful the things that can be achieved by us when we cooperate and interact with each other as humans we can be a force to be recon with and we can build each other to sustain and develop our world in a positive way.

Daniel Wallace, Moneague College, Jamaica

YOUTH DECLARATION:

CALL FOR CHANGE

We, the youth of the **WFCP Youth Congress 2024** held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, recognize the critical role of education, sustainability, and youth empowerment in shaping a future that is equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. As young leaders, we present our collective vision and urge policymakers, educational institutions, and decision-makers to take immediate and impactful action in the following areas – Sustainable Development Goals, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Youth Empowerment.

YOUTH DECLARATION

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1.1. We urge global leaders to prioritize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in educational frameworks, focusing on building essential skills to building a future society for our youths to thrive.

1.2. We urge decision-makers to implement policies that promote gender equality in education and the workforce, ensuring that all individuals have equal access to opportunities, without barriers or segregation.

1.3. We urge policymakers to adopt comprehensive climate action plans, prioritizing sustainability and environmental justice. Ambitious goals that reduce carbon emissions and promote renewable energy are essential to safeguarding our planet for future generations.

1.4. We urge policymakers to foster initiatives that support partnerships between local communities, marginalized groups, and international stakeholders to advance SDG efforts. Youth voices must be central in driving initiatives that look out for social equity and sustainability.

1.5. We urge all nations to expedite investments in sustainable energy infrastructure, clean water, and sanitation, with a special focus on developing regions, to ensure these essential resources are accessible to everyone.

1.6. We urge leaders to include Indigenous voices in the decision-making process for SDG-related policies, particularly in areas related to environmental protection, climate action, and resource management, acknowledging the deep relationship between Indigenous peoples and the land.

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As a child growing up in my town, I personally saw how many children's opportunities and prospects for the future were negatively damaged by a lack of access to high-quality education. One instance was a brilliant, motivated student who was compelled to drop out for lack of resources and assistance. I was profoundly affected to witness the potential growth of this student being wasted due to educational disparities. This encounter stoked my enthusiasm for the Sustainable Development Goal for Quality Education and inspired me to push for universal access to inclusive, equitable, and accessible education.

Ariel Kellyghan, Shortwood Teachers' College, Jamaica

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Frequent visits to the beach made me aware of the pollution affecting both the sea and land, which inspired me to take action. I joined Key Club and Circle K to participate in beach cleanups and other volunteer efforts aimed at protecting the environment, contributing to the goals of preserving marine life (SDG 14) and land ecosystems (SDG 15).

Matai Williams- Montego Bay Community College, Jamaica

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In my town, we have good surface drainage systems; however, people refuse to dispose of their garbage properly. As a result, almost all of the drains are blocked leading to flooding of the roads as soon as the rain starts to fall. Therefore, I urge the government to put policies in place to ensure this does not continue to happen and if policies are already in place ensure they are being enforced.

Ricardo James - Brown's Town Community College, Jamaica

In my Community Whitehall, St. Ann, the challenge of ensuring quality education has become a vital focus for the community, especially as many young men leave primary or high school without pursuing further education. This trend not only stifles their potential but also affects the community's growth. To combat this issue, local leaders and educators are coming together to create engaging mentorship programs and after-school initiatives that highlight the importance of continuous learning. By connecting young men with role models and providing them with resources and support, the community aims to inspire a new generation to value education as a pathway to opportunity and empowerment. Through these efforts, persons in Whitehall are working towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal of quality education, fostering an environment where every young person can thrive.

Olivia Godfrey, Moneague College, Jamaica

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My personal experience led me to focus on the 4th Sustainable Development Goal: Quality Education. This goal has encouraged me to tutor a few individuals in my community from primary school to high school in areas which I have great knowledge and also in passing down and sourcing resources for students. Additionally, seeking financial help in order for them to go back to school and be able to have access to the education they need.

In my community, there are many unattached youths which may be because they are rejected from school, they are not privileged with resources, or they don't have the necessary support and guidance that they need. I think that it was important for me to see the need, highlight it and made a valiant effort in combating this. As such, the SDG 4 Quality Education means a lot to me as all should be able to acquire the education that is needed to make them a worthy Individual and be able to at some point in time pass down the knowledge which will result in sustainability.

Justin Bailey, Moneague College, Jamaica

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I am from a community where the majority of the people have little or no education at all. This is because most or all of them are from low or no income households at all. Therefore, they don't have any access to education. I personally helped some of the community members learn how to read, spell and write. They were so grateful for the help I had to offer. I often reach out to politicians and other neighboring community leaders to help with projects and fundraising to help with the giving back to interesting and qualified individuals who want to further their education and can't afford it.

Dornia Dunkley, Bethlehem Moravian College, Jamaica

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What inspired me to want to make a change is the "I Can For Kids Foundation." This foundation was started by Sutton Garner and her mother when Sutton was only 11 years old. Sutton discovered that some kids in her school did not have food to eat over the summer. In her bid to end childhood summer hunger, she started the foundation, which provides healthy food items to children all over Calgary, Alberta, ensuring they have food to eat during the summer months.

This was a very humbling and inspiring experience for me. Sutton was only 11 when she realized this issue and took action to address it. I had never thought about this problem before, but now I am motivated to do something to end world hunger. Children shouldn't have to worry about where their next meal is coming from.

Chisom Okongwu, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Canada

YOUTH DECLARATION

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

2.1. We urge policymakers to integrate AI-driven personalized learning tools in colleges and polytechnics, ensuring learners are equipped with the skills necessary for a rapidly evolving tech-driven society. This integration must maintain ethical practices and prioritize integrity, responsibility, and the well-being of students.

2.2. We urge leaders to ensure that AI systems are transparent, fair, and free from bias, enabling all students—regardless of background or location—to benefit from these educational advancements.

2.3. We urge policymakers to recognize the transformative power of AI in advancing sustainability efforts while addressing concerns around job displacement, data privacy, and ethical use.

2.4. We urge decision-makers to integrate AI into sustainability initiatives, focusing on its role in research, climate action, and resource management, while ensuring that AI systems are transparent, accountable, and subject to human oversight.

2.5. We urge decision-makers to ensure that the voices of Indigenous communities are represented when crafting policies around AI in education. Indigenous perspectives on technology and education must be included to ensure equitable, culturally appropriate solutions.

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> AI has been gradually advancing the modern world past its limits in education and industries. We were exposed to a variety of AI programs that support productivity and efficiency for various purposes. Discussions around ethics and morality with AI has been a dominant topic in this session. I learned that AI is a tool, as much as a hammer is to a carpenter; the tool itself is independent from the intention of the person that causes good or harm whether to make or destroy a building. Similarly, the AI is upon the discretion of human use until sentient awareness of AI is apparent. AI can be graceful as long as people have clarity with their intention upon using the tool.
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> *Flloyd Tan, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Canada*

YOUTH DECLARATION

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

3.1. We urge policymakers to actively include youth in decision-making processes, ensuring equal representation in educational institutions, governance, and policy discussions, particularly in areas concerning climate action, social equity, and sustainability.

3.2. We urge decision-makers to create pathways for inclusive youth representation in governance, advocating for policies that empower marginalized voices in decision-making processes at both local and national levels.

3.3. We urge governments to remove barriers that prevent youth participation in leadership, ensuring that young people have a meaningful voice in shaping their future.

3.4. We urge policymakers to involve youth voices before creating policies that directly impact them, ensuring that the perspectives, experiences, and aspirations of young people are fully considered and integrated into the policy-making process.

3.5. We urge educational leaders to promote mentorship and leadership development programs that empower young people to advocate for positive change within their communities.

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> As a student leader, I believe that youth empowerment is pivotal in achieving and supporting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our generation holds the key to driving change, and when we are empowered, we can tackle pressing global issues like poverty, inequality, and climate change. Through collaboration, innovation, and active participation, we can create impactful solutions that resonate within our communities and beyond. By engaging in initiatives that promote awareness and action around the SDGs, we not only uplift ourselves but also inspire others to join the movement. Empowering youth means providing us with the resources, opportunities, and platforms to voice our ideas and implement our visions. Together, we can work towards a sustainable future, ensuring that the goals we strive for become a reality for generations to come.
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> *Rohan Sanath KV, George Brown College, Canada*

YOUTH DECLARATION

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

3.6. We urge policymakers to establish guidelines that promote responsible social media use, emphasizing the importance of transparency, digital literacy, and mental health awareness. These guidelines must protect users from misinformation and foster positive online interactions.

3.7. We urge governments to allocate funding and support initiatives that provide accessible mental health resources in schools and communities. Prioritizing mental well-being is essential to ensuring that all young people receive the support they need to thrive.

3.8. We urge educational institutions to integrate financial literacy into school curricula, equipping students with practical skills in budgeting, saving, and investing. Financial literacy programs are critical to empowering youth to make informed financial decisions and secure their futures.

3.9. We urge policymakers to actively include Indigenous voices in youth empowerment initiatives to ensure that the diverse cultural and historical perspectives of Indigenous communities are respected and represented in governance and decision-making processes.

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Youth empowerment is crucial in shaping a future driven by innovation and inclusivity. Through the youth congress, I've connected with diverse student leaders from different parts of the world, enriching my perspective and deepening my ability to inspire and advocate for others. These global insights have strengthened my resolve to cultivate change and empower the next generation to lead with purpose and impact.

Ajanè Adams, Centennial College, Canada

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Youth empowerment is crucial for the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, as it enables young people to take active roles in shaping their communities and driving meaningful change. By harnessing our energy, creativity, and passion, we can contribute innovative solutions to global challenges and ensure a sustainable future for all.

Svitlana Zghurieva,Button and South Derbyshire college, United Kingdom

This declaration is a call to action. We, the youth of the **WFCP Youth Congress 2024**, stand united in our commitment to creating a future where education, sustainability, and equality are accessible to all. We urge decision-makers to act swiftly and decisively in implementing these changes, ensuring that our generation —and those to come—have the tools and opportunities to succeed.

CONCLUSION

In our pursuit of sustainability, we pledge to champion the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with unwavering commitment. We urge leaders to integrate sustainable practices into every facet of education, ensuring that our institutions become beacons of environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

As we stand at the crossroads of innovation and responsibility, we, the youth of the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics, call upon leaders worldwide to embrace the transformative power of Artificial Intelligence in education. Let us harness AI to create inclusive, personalized learning experiences that empower every student to reach their full potential.

Leadership in the 21st century demands vision, courage, and collaboration. We implore leaders to foster environments where young minds can thrive, innovate, and lead with integrity. Together, let us build a future where education is a catalyst for positive change, sustainability is a shared mission, and leadership is defined by empathy and action.

The time to act is now. Let us unite in our efforts to create a world where education, sustainability, and leadership are the cornerstones of a brighter, more equitable future for all.

I hope this resonates with your audience and inspires meaningful action! If you need any adjustments or additional elements, feel free to let me know.

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS OF THE WFCP YOUTH CONGRESS 2024

- Bethlehem Moravian College, Jamaica
- Burton and South Derbyshire College, United Kingdom
- Centennial College, Canada
- College of Agriculture Science and Education, Jamaica
- George Brown College, Canada
- HEART/NSTA Trust, Jamaica
- Knox Community College, Jamaica
- Moneague College, Jamaica
- Montego Bay Community College, Jamaica
- Niagara College, Canada
- Portmore Community College, Jamaica
- Shortwood Teachers' College, Jamaica
- Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Canada
- The Turks and Caicos Islands Community College, Turks and Caicos Islands
- Trench Town Polytechnic College, Jamaica