



*Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action*

## **A Health Voice for Climate Solutions in Virginia**

*Samantha Ahdoot, MD*

*Chair and Co-Founder*

*Pediatrician, Pediatric Associates of Alexandria*

*Assistant Professor of Education, UVA School of Medicine*

# 2017-VCCA is Launched

## Mission

Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action educates and mobilizes clinician leaders to bring the health voice to climate policymaking in Virginia.

## Vision

Virginia will become a national model for equitable climate change solutions that protect the health of all Virginians.

## Theory of Change

Clinicians have the knowledge and mission to play a vital role in protecting the health of Virginia's families and communities from the effects of climate change. This clinical voice can overcome entrenched partisan and economic barriers, by focusing on the health benefits of climate solutions and the health dangers of inaction.



**Health in a Changing Climate**  
Understanding the Impacts on Virginians



# VCCA Structure

All licensed health care professionals and trainees

Physicians, Nurses, Pharmacists, Psychologists,  
Public Health Professionals, etc.

~650 General Members

~15 Steering Committee Members

Staff: Executive Director, Communications Manager, Fellows

Committees: Education, Advocacy and Healthcare Sustainability

Statewide representation

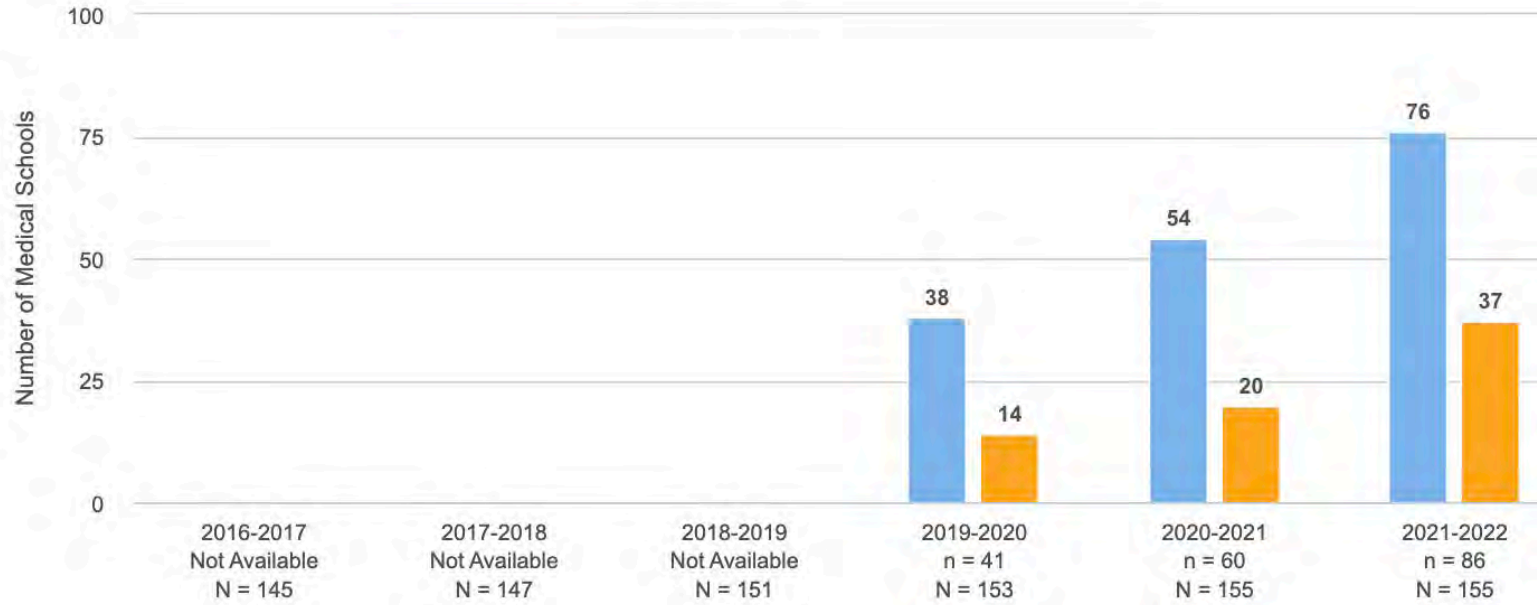
Northern Virginia, Richmond, Charlottesville, Roanoke, Hampton Roads



# Climate and Health Education

Number of Medical Schools Including Topic in Required Courses and Elective Courses: Climate Change

Please select a topic:



Click a legend item below to add or remove a column from the report.

■ Pre-Clerkship <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/curriculum-reports/data/curriculum-topics-required-and-elective-courses-medical-school-programs>

■ Clerkship

n indicates the total number of medical schools that included the topic in either a required or an elective course in the given academic year.

N indicates the total number of medical schools that participated in the survey for the given academic year.

Source: LCME Annual Medical School Questionnaire Part II, 2016-2017 through 2021-2022.



**HARVARD**  
MEDICAL SCHOOL

## Connecting Climate Change and Health

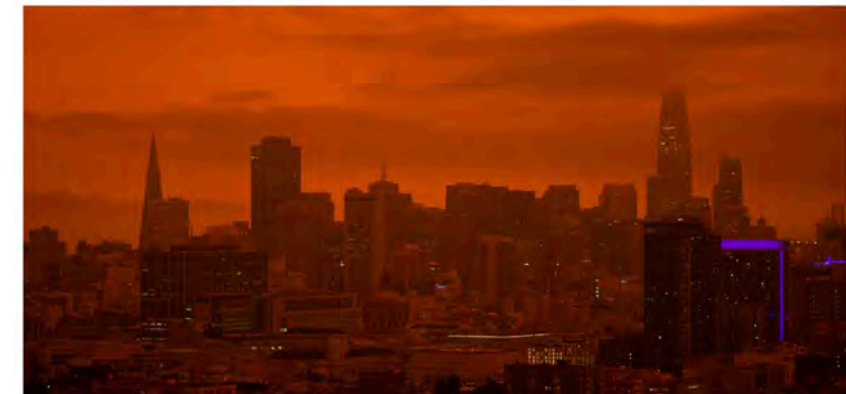
HMS to embed climate change, impact on health in MD curriculum

By M.R.F. BUCKLEY | January 9, 2023 | Education, Care Delivery

### Georgetown University Medical Center

About the Medical Center | Anti-Racism & Racial Justice | Research | Education | Patient Care | News & Events | Giving | HSSI Planning

## School of Medicine Adds Environmental Health and Medicine Track



# Climate and Health Education

Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action Presents

## 2023 VIRGINIA CLIMATE AND HEALTH EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE SUMMIT



Join us for our annual summit to discuss the state of climate and health in medical education! Members from numerous health professional schools will give progress reports and tips for success, with a workshop geared toward integration of climate and health content in your school's curriculum. This is a hybrid event with on-site and online participation.

### VCCA

Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action



RSVP Now!



May 5-6, 2023



Fri 6:00 -9:00PM  
Sat 8:00AM -1:30 PM



Roanoke, VA  
Zoom participation

[www.virginiaclinicians.org/vchec](http://www.virginiaclinicians.org/vchec)



### VCCA

Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action

# Climate and Health Education

## UVA SOM Annual Climate and Health Elective Introduced 2022

### SCHOOL OF MEDICINE COURSE OFFERINGS

Initiated by a cohort of hardworking medical and nursing students, UVA's first **Planetary Health Report Card** identified opportunities to strengthen environmental curricular offerings in the School of Medicine. Continuing this work into 2022, students helped co-create a new SOM elective called "Climate Change and Health" supervised by Dr. Homan Wai and Dr. Samantha Ahdoot. The two-week intensive course was offered in January with over 25 students enrolled, and over 15 guest speakers helping equip physicians-in-training with the tools to provide more effective and informed care and advocacy in an ever-changing world.

#### Week #1 1/22-1/26/24

| Monday 1/22                                      | Tuesday 1/23                 | Wednesday 1/24                            | Thursday 1/25    | Friday 1/26                        |
|--|------------------------------|---|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Introduction to the Science of Climate Change | 2. Healthcare Sustainability | 3. Air Pollution and Increasing Allergens | 4. Water Quality | 5. Extreme Heat and Severe Weather |

#### Week #2 1/29-2/2/24

| Monday 1/29      | Tuesday 1/30           | Wednesday 1/31                                | Thursday 2/1 | Friday 2/2                                    |
|------------------|------------------------|---|--------------|---|
| 6. Mental Health | 7. Infectious Diseases | 8. Climate Migration, Water and Food Security | 9. Advocacy  | 10. Student Selected Topics/ Capstone Project |



# Climate and Health Education

VIRGINIA:

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF VIRGINIA

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| _____                                   | ) |  |
| LAYLA H., by her next friend            | ) |  |
| Maria Hussainzadah, <i>et al.</i> ,     | ) |  |
|   | ) |  |
| Plaintiff-Appellants,                   | ) |  |
|   | ) |  |
| v.                                      | ) |  |
|   | ) |  |
| COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, <i>et al.</i> | ) |  |
|   | ) |  |
| Defendant-Appellees.                    | ) |  |
| _____                                   | ) |  |

Record No. 1639-22-2

**BRIEF OF AMICUS CURIAE**  
**VIRGINIA CLINICIANS FOR CLIMATE ACTION**  
**IN SUPPORT OF APPELLANTS**

Cale Jaffe (Va. State Bar. No. 65581)  
Professor of Law, General Faculty  
Director, Environmental Law and Community Engagement Clinic  
University of Virginia School of Law  
Tel: (434) 924-4776  
[cjaffe@law.virginia.edu](mailto:cjaffe@law.virginia.edu)

COUNSEL TO VIRGINIA CLINICIANS FOR CLIMATE ACTION

UVA SUSTAINABILITY'S 2023 COMMUNITY MLK CELEBRATION EVENT

### MEDICAL CENTER HOUR: ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INEQUITY

**DR. EBONY HILTON**  
UVA ANESTHESIOLOGIST

**DR. IRÈNE MATHIEU**  
UVA PEDIATRICIAN

with Tracy Kelly (UVA Pediatric Nurse Practitioner) and Lena Bichell (UVA Medical Student)

Wednesday, January 25th  
Noon - 1PM

UVA Pinn Hall Conference Center Auditorium OR on Zoom at [bit.ly/uvaehc](https://bit.ly/uvaehc)

CO-HOSTED BY:

SUSTAINABILITY - UVA  
*From the Grounds Up*

**VCCA**  
Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action

the medical center hour  
*Medicine in Service to Communities*  
A Program of the University of Virginia Health System

Lunch provided for first 50 in-person attendees.  
This program eligible for continuing education credit.

# Climate and Health Education

**Honorable Mention  
Award Winner  
EPA 2022  
"Let's Talk About  
Heat" Challenge**



## KEEP IT COOL, KIDS!

HOW TO RECOGNIZE, PREVENT & TREAT HEAT ILLNESS IN STUDENT ATHLETES

### VIRGINIA SUMMERS ARE GETTING HOTTER DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

July 2020 was the hottest July ever in Virginia. Hotter summers mean it is more important than ever to keep active kids safe.

Kids can get sick from heat easier than adults.

Heat illness is a rising risk for student athletes and football players are at highest risk.

### SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

#### HEAT CRAMPS

Brief muscle cramps or spasms

#### DEHYDRATION

Increased thirst or dry mouth; headache; lack of energy; reduced or darker urine

#### HEAT EXHAUSTION

Dehydration; headache; dizziness; heavy sweating; nausea or vomiting; muscle cramps

#### HEAT STROKE

Headache; dizziness; heavy sweating; nausea or vomiting; fainting; hot skin; high heart rate and breathing; potential seizures

### TREATING HEAT ILLNESS

Consult your coach for your team's action plan. Treatments include:

- Remove extra clothing and equipment
- Move to a shaded or air-conditioned area
- Cool the body with cold cloths or ice
- Drink cold water or sports drink if not nauseated or vomiting
- Raise legs above heart level to support blood flow
- Call 911 if signs and symptoms continue or become worse

### HOW TO PREVENT HEAT ILLNESS

- Drink plenty of water.** Don't wait until your child feels thirsty.
- Look for shade.** Provide a shaded space for breaks.
- Enforce more breaks.** Increase the number of breaks in shaded areas with water.
- Limit equipment whenever safe.** Limit activities that require heavy equipment like helmets and shoulder pads.
- Schedule events earlier or later.** Schedule events earlier or later when it is cooler.
- Consider climate change.** Keep summers safe by helping reduce air pollution.

### CONTACT US

For more information about heat illness or the effects of climate change:

VCCA

Virginia Center for Climate Action  
Recreation provided by VDH





# Climate and Health Education



Search NOAA sites



Home / Offices / Office of Education / Environmental Literacy Program

## NOAA awards \$4 million to advance community resilience through education

Nine projects will engage children, youth, and adults around extreme weather and climate change

Focus areas: Education Offices: Office of Education Programs: Environmental Literacy Program

Share:

September 27, 2022 — NOAA's [Environmental Literacy Program](#) is funding [nine projects](#) that will use education to build the foundation for resilience to extreme weather and climate change in their communities. Together, these projects will receive a total of \$4.1 million to empower people to protect themselves and their communities from local climate impacts.

### RESOURCES //

[About the Environmental Literacy Program](#) >

[NOAA's Community Resilience Education Theory of Change](#) >

[Environmental Literacy Program resilience hub](#) >



## Building Heat Resilience in Southwest Virginia

*Roanoke, VA*

\*Carilion Medical Center

City of Roanoke

Virginia Tech University

Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action



Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action

# Climate and Health Education

*120  
features  
and  
counting!*

## **REGULATING POWER PLANTS IS A HEALTH ISSUE**

*DOCTORS MUST GET MORE INVOLVED IN THE PUBLIC  
HEALTH CRISES THAT CLIMATE CHANGE WILL BRING*

# **SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN**

MATTHEW MEYER, MD



*Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action*

# VCCA 7<sup>TH</sup> Annual Advocacy Day 2/1/24



# Climate and Health Advocacy

## Landmark Climate Bills Supported by VCCA

Clean Cars- **PASSED 2021, UPHELD 2023/2024**

Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative- **PASSED 2020, UPHELD 2023, SUPPORTING 2024**

Virginia Clean Economy Act- **PASSED 2020, UPHELD 2023/2024**

# Healthcare Sustainability



Image Source: [Health Care without Harm](#)

# Healthcare Sustainability



Samim Atmar, Abigail Hankin-Wei, & Sara Wohlford  
Climate Health Organizing Fellows 2022-23

- 1) High-level speakers at monthly meetings
- 2) Sustainability Group within Valley Health System
- 3) Presenting at CleanMed Conference 2024
- 4) Healthcare Sustainability VCCA landing page
- 5) Engagement with MSCCH - State Network Healthcare Decarbonization Working Group
- 6) Developing Climate Rx badge initiative in VA

# Healthcare Sustainability

## Green Business Alliance 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



### OUR PLEDGE: DEEP EMISSIONS REDUCTION

The Green Business Alliance (GBA), led by The Community Climate Collaborative (C3), is a leadership circle of Virginia-based businesses who have committed to reduce their collective emissions. The inaugural 15 GBA businesses and nonprofits expanded this year to 25 strong! Collectively, these organizations have joined forces to address climate change and ready our economy for a clean energy future.

GBA members employ more than 3,300 community members representing key industry sectors, and are recognized influencers statewide, nationally, and in some cases internationally. Their leadership is key to addressing climate change.



## UVA Health

HOME / PROGRAMS & SERVICES / UVA HEALTH

**UVA Health is widely recognized for outstanding patient care and academic and research achievements. As part of the broader University community, the system's sustainability goals align with UVA's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030 and fossil fuel free by 2050 and to reduce waste by 70% by 2023.**

The UVA Health Sustainability Committee meets regularly to advance sustainability practices and policies in the system. A survey the committee conducted in 2022 showed enthusiastic interest in sustainability among UVA healthcare workers, with the vast majority wanting more opportunities to engage in reducing waste, saving energy and other sustainability practices.

In addition, numerous health practitioners, staff, faculty and students are undertaking projects within their departments to reduce waste, minimize energy use and make their workplaces safer and healthier. Here are a few of their stories:



Ms. Wohlford is the director of sustainability for Carilion Clinic. The Roanoke, Va.-based health system has numerous awards and recognitions for its sustainability efforts that include everything from installing solar-power receptors to hiring sheep to keep the lawn. Carilion Clinic.

## Inova's Sustainability Program

Inova Health System understands that being a responsible member of our community requires that we do our part to not only keep our patients and [team members](#) healthy, but to help keep our earth healthy as well.

Inova believes that this vision can be accomplished through thoughtful consideration of the effects of our actions on our surrounding community and the environment. From the energy we use to power life-saving medical equipment to the materials purchased for new construction projects, Inova is committed to incorporating environmental sustainability into all aspects of our core business operations. This requires balancing superior patient care with the intersection of the environment, the economy and our community.





*Join VCCA Right Now!*

