

Climate Conversations: D.C. Crossroads

Speakers – February 10, 2026

Moderator



Dr. Amanda Staudt is an atmospheric scientist with more than 20 years of experience connecting science to society to inform decision making, inspire innovation, and support resilience across multiple sectors. As the inaugural director for Climate Crossroads at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, she helped launch the Climate Crossroads Congressional Fellowship, a continuing education experience for current staff working in the U.S. Congress; a Roundtable on Artificial Intelligence and Climate Change; and a suite of activities related to Coordination of Earth Observations and Data Stewardship. From

2013 to 2023, Staudt directed the National Academies' Board on Atmospheric Sciences and Climate (BASC) and Polar Research Board (PRB), providing advice to the U.S. government and the nation related to climate change, weather, air pollution, the Arctic, and Antarctica. From 2007 to 2013, Staudt was at the National Wildlife Federation, where she focused on communicating climate science and impacts, developing the intellectual and practical foundation for climate-informed ecosystem conservation, and advancing climate science education. Staudt began her career in public service at the National Academies, where she directed the Climate Research Committee and several studies that advised federal agencies on weather, air quality, and climate science. Staudt received a B.A. in environmental science and engineering (1996) and a Ph.D. in atmospheric sciences (2001), both from Harvard University.

Connecting Communities to Trusted Science Information - 4:00pm ET



Amy Bolton is a creative informal science education leader with more than 25 years' experience designing and developing innovative educational museum programs, products, and spaces and producing educational television and media. She is the Director of Learning and Engagement at the U. S. Botanic Garden, responsible for education, visitor services, community engagement, exhibits, and special events. Her team provides a consistent visitor experience for the Garden's 1 million visitors, develops high-quality educational programming online, on-site and in the community, creates beautiful and engaging exhibits and interpretation, and coordinates memorable evening events at the

Garden. Previously Amy held key education roles at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History where she served on the teams that developed the innovative educational space Q?rius and Deep Time, the museum's new fossil hall. Amy also was an independent television and media producer focusing on educational programs in science, history, art, and culture for a variety of audiences locally and nationally.



Dr. Sweta Chakraborty is a behavioral scientist who is regularly interviewed on major, international news media outlets (e.g. CNN, the BBC, MSNBC). Sweta is the CEO of We Don't Have Time-North America, the world's largest multimedia company for climate content development, broadcast, and distribution. She is a judge and nominator for Prince William's Earthshot Prize, and received the Woman in Green Award at last year's Earth Day Gala. She is a partner at Pioneer Public Affairs and is on the steering committee of the Global Commons Alliance. She is an Independent Director for the publicly traded company: Lightbridge Corp., and is on several advisory boards like the New York Academy of Sciences

and Climate Power. She is a book author from her time as a postdoc at Oxford University. She is a TEDx, SXSW, and globally recognized keynote speaker and consultant for several Fortune 100 companies.



Joelle Novey directs Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVA), through which congregations of many traditions are coming together to respond to climate change. She speaks widely about the role of faith communities in addressing the climate crisis. As the Director of the local affiliate of Interfaith Power & Light since 2009, Joelle has worked to bring heart-opening conversations about the future we face to hundreds of people in the sanctuaries where they pray, reflect, celebrate, grieve, and seek to live better. Today, the small team at Interfaith Power & Light presides over a growing religious climate movement, giving particular attention to supporting climate action and environmental justice work in local

Black churches, and in Hindu, Jain, and Sikh communities.

Climate Action Leadership in the DMV – 5:20pm ET



Maribeth DeLorenzo serves as Deputy Director at the Department of Energy & Environment, responsible for the Urban Sustainability Administration. In this role, Maribeth leads the team working to make DC carbon neutral and climate resilient through partnership and policy innovation, as well as leading the team responsible for advancing the city's overall sustainability. She is responsible for guiding implementation of key city plans: Sustainable DC, Climate Ready DC, Keep Cool DC, and Carbon Free DC.

Prior to this position, Maribeth worked across the public and private sectors developing and financing affordable housing, particularly green and high-performance buildings, and has over two decades of experience serving the community. Maribeth earned her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). She is a long-term resident of Washington, DC who loves working towards a healthier, greener, more livable city for all residents.



John Morrill is the Director of the Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination at Fairfax County, where he leads implementation of the county's climate mitigation and resilience plans, addressing both the causes and the effects of climate change. He joined Fairfax County staff in late 2020. Prior to joining Fairfax, John was with Arlington County for 20 years, where he led a broad portfolio of work in energy management and policy. John began his career with 17 years at the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) in Washington DC, where he held various research and management positions and coauthored two books on energy efficiency and indoor air quality. He holds a

bachelors degree from Clark University, and a masters in urban and environmental planning from the University of Virginia.



Mara Parker (she/her) works as the Climate Adaptation Program Manager in the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) in Montgomery County, Maryland. Her work focuses on equitable adaptation and mitigation in response to rising climate-related disasters. She is a member of the County's Climate Leadership Team and worked with the Climate Adaptation and Carbon Sequestration workgroups to help develop those sections of the County's Climate Action Plan. She also serves as the Public Information Officer for OEMHS and does extensive work on community outreach and engagement. Before coming to OEMHS, she worked for over ten years as a senior legislative aide at the

Montgomery County Council. Mara grew up in Alaska and Washington state, where she studied Geography at the University of Washington.