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Photo courtesy of Adriana Boutique Y Accesorios

Queens teens travel to Poland to add youth voices climate change discussion

BY ALEJANDRA O'CONNELL-DOMENECH

Three Queens high schoolers took part in the United Nations Framework event on Climate Change (COP24) in Katowice, Poland.

Josiah Dunn, 15, a sophomore at John Adams High School in Ozone Park, Luis Guaman, 16, a senior at William Bryant Cullen High School in Long Island City and Saheedah Majolagbe, 15, a Jamaica resident and sophomore at Brooklyn's High School for Medical Professionals, were among the four New York City high schoolers selected to go abroad.

The trip was sponsored and organized by Global Kids, a nonprofit organization that works to develop youth leadership skills and civic engagement among teenagers. The trio started their 9-day-long trip in

Poland on Dec. 4 and returned on Dec. 12.

The four students selected to go abroad were part of Global Kids' Human Rights Activist Project (HRAP) which led a successful campaign to make climate education mandatory in New York City public schools.

"As a child, I never expected myself to go to the other side of America, much less across the Atlantic to express ideas with the world leaders and inform many other individuals about climate change from a GK youth leader perspective," said Dunn. "I hope that I will be able to learn how the political system works when it is concerned with a global issue as well as learn about the new technologies that people are developing to combat climate change."

During their time at the COP24 summit, the high schoolers participated in various workshops and exhibi-

tions in collaboration with Peace Boat, a global NGO that works to build relationships between groups that work for peace, human rights, environmental protection and sustainable development. All of the students presented a project and spoke with world leaders on the importance of youth voices when it comes to climate change talks.

"Our youth understand the urgent need to hold world leaders as well as our own government accountable to protect their futures," said Evie Hantzopoulos, executive director of Global Kids. "Their voices and opinions are key to finding equitable and just solutions to address climate change."

The teens also hosted climate change workshops at two Polish high schools — IV Liceum Ogólnokształcące im. S. Maczka and Liceum High — on Dec. 7 and 10.



Photo courtesy of Global Kids