

Climate Connection

Students Show the Way

By Lynne Baker



L to R: Sophie Wassef, Arya Adhye, Gemma Roberts, Claire Mulligan, Kate Bit. Photo credit: N. Wassef.

On July 23, accompanied by elected officials, staffers, community supporters, mentors, friends and family members – including one enormously proud grandfather – five young women received commendations for their exemplary climate advocacy. 2026 high school graduates Arya Adhye, Kate Bit, Claire Mulligan, Gemma Roberts and Sophie Wassef – all leaders in Napa Schools for Climate Action (S4CA) – leave in their wake an impressive array of achievements. They embody the group’s motto: *No school should be a silent witness to climate injustice.*

What inspired these students to become climate activists?

Claire Mulligan said, “I have been involved with Schools for Climate Action since the fall of my junior year, prompted by a presidential election that left me feeling anxious and frustrated with how the climate crisis would be addressed by our leaders. Ever since I’ve been deeply engaged with this organization.”

Sophie Wassef reflected, “My involvement opened my eyes to how our government works and showed me that even small voices are capable of bringing change if they have enough passion.”

With unstoppable determination the students sought to teach, advocate for, and bid schools, governments, agencies, and organizations to come together in adopting climate restoration resolutions. They met with elected officials, commission members, and staffers. They gave public presentations at community meetings and gatherings. They were widely recognized for their tenacity, commitment, and deep knowledge of the issues.

After bringing climate emergency declarations to their schools and to the municipalities and county of Napa, the S4CA students met with Congressman Mike Thompson and his staff, proposing a climate restoration resolution. A legislative fellow from Thompson’s Washington office became their liaison, and together they crafted the language for H.Res.1563, introduced in 2024 in the 118th Congress, and reintroduced July 25, 2025, as House Concurrent Resolution 46. Their work is enshrined in the record of the 119th Congress: “the United States is committed to ensuring a safe and healthy climate for future generations, and thus to restoring the climate.”

(<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/119/hconres46/text>)

Sophie Wassef, quoted in the press release, said: “The Climate Restoration Resolution ushers in a new paradigm for addressing the climate crisis, one that not only prevents the worst-case scenario but also revitalizes our communities and economy in the long term. ... As a young person and leader of Napa Schools for Climate Action, working on this resolution and watching its support grow from a district to a national level has renewed my hope for a sustainable future.”

(<https://mikethompson.house.gov/newsroom/press-releases/thompson-napa-schools-climate-action-lead-climate-restoration-resolution>)

Through it all, the students found time to play volleyball and soccer, run track and field, take music lessons, participate in recitals and musical events, serve as class officers, be part of peer-support groups, join a diverse array of school clubs, and work after-school jobs.

Some students also received college scholarships, funded by Napa Recycling and Waste Services (Napa Recycling) as part of its Community Benefit Agreement with Napa Climate NOW!

Upon presenting awards from the County of Napa, Supervisor Amber Manfree reminded the students to enjoy their journey, take time to refresh themselves, and replenish their energy.

Asked how they would like community leaders to take action, the students offered timely recommendations.

Arya Adhye said, “Now is the turning point. I ask my community leaders to prioritize climate change. It is THE most pressing issue, and without urgency, no action will be taken.” UC Berkeley will welcome Arya into the Environmental Science program.

Gemma Roberts reflected, “I have the power to use my voice, but as a community leader, you have the power to take influence from my words and implement real change.” She will attend the University of Washington where she will study Public Service and Policy.

Sophie Wassef elaborated, “I want leaders to listen to young people, take our concerns seriously and follow through with science-based action. We’re ready to be part of the solution. It gives my generation hope that Napa can remain a place we’re proud to call home.” Her college destination is MIT, where she intends to become a geophysical researcher.

Claire Mulligan said, “Our future is in your hands. We need drastic action now to ensure a safe climate for future generations.” Her declared major is Environmental Science, which she will study at UCLA.

Kate Bit concluded: “It is absolutely crucial that we do everything we can to prevent or minimize the impact of climate change.” UC Davis is Kate’s college destination, where she will major in Ecology, Evolution and Biodiversity. She also has a strong interest in public health.

We are in good hands.

More information available at [Schools for Climate Action](#)

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