



Climate issues are abuzz in the media these days. But often missing are the disproportionate impacts on disadvantaged communities and people of color. With issues related to access to clean water, healthy food and the impact of severe weather, this discussion is not only relevant but imperative.

Joining us for a conversation this year is **Dr. Mustafa Santiago Ali**, Senior Vice President of Climate, Environmental Justice & Community Revitalization for the Hip Hop Caucus and former environmental justice leader at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Dr. Ali has appeared on MSNBC, CNN, VICE, and Democracy NOW, as well as being featured and cited in over 250 news publications including GQ, New Republic, Ebony, The Guardian, The Root, Los Angeles Times, and Washington Post. He has worked in over 500 communities both domestically and internationally, as well as been a guest lecturer at over 100 colleges and universities. Currently he is a board member of the National Wildlife Federation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Union of Concerned Scientists, TREE and Climate Hawks Vote.

Aquinas College Performing Arts Center
1703 Robinson Road SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Lecture is free and open to the public
Reception will follow.

LIMITED SEATING
RSVP by April 4, 2019 to aquinas.edu/wegespeaker



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Grand Rapids Urban League • Latina Network of West Michigan • LINC UP
NAACP Greater Grand Rapids Branch • Sierra Club Michigan Chapter

Wege Speaker Series 2019

Educator Resource Guide

A Presentation on Climate Justice, by Mustafa Santiago Ali

The following is a guide of supporting resources and prompts intended for use by any High School educator interested in engaging their students in discussion regarding the 2019 Wege Speaker presentation by Mustafa Santiago Ali. Mr. Santiago Ali is presenting on the topic of Climate Justice which studies the adverse and disproportionate impacts of climate change on disadvantaged and minority populations.

Live stream available at www.grps.tv

Event Details

Afternoon Event -

Open to GRPS City High Students Only (Live Stream available to public):

The Wege Foundation (www.wegefoundation.org) will host the 23rd Wege Speaker Series on Thursday, April 11 at 1:30pm at Grand Rapids Public Schools City Middle/High School. This event is open to GRPS City High Students and Staff ONLY - All other high schools can view the event via the Live Stream link at www.grps.tv

Evening Event - Open to the Public

The Wege Foundation (www.wegefoundation.org) will host the 22nd Wege Speaker Series on Thursday, April 11 at 4pm at the Aquinas College Performing Arts Center, 1703 Robinson Road SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The lecture is free and open to the public Reception and book signing will follow. LIMITED SEATING RSVP by April 4, 2019 to aquinas.edu/wegespeaker

Event Description

This year's speaker is Dr. Mustafa Santiago Ali, Senior Vice President of Climate, Environmental Justice & Community Revitalization for the Hip Hop Caucus and former leader at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He will present about how to elevate environmental justice issues and strengthen environmental justice policies, programs and initiatives.

"This lecture will focus on a new 21st century paradigm," said Dr. Ali. "It's one that embraces community power by honoring the transformative abilities of culture to build bridges, by educating in non-traditional ways and by creating authentic collaborative partnerships that support our most vulnerable communities as they move from surviving to thriving." "Ali is one of America's environmental justice leaders and currently focuses on using the arts in addressing pressing issues such as climate change," said Mark Van Putten, President of The Wege Foundation.

Speaker Background

Mustafa Santiago Ali is a co-host of Hip Hop Caucus' "Think 100% – The Coolest Show on Climate Change," and recently took on the role of Vice President for Environmental Justice, Climate and Community Revitalization for the National Wildlife Federation, America's largest conservation organization with 51 state

and territorial affiliates and more than six million members. Previously Mustafa served as the former Senior Vice President of Climate, Environmental Justice & Community Revitalization for the Hip Hop Caucus. Mustafa is renowned as a National Speaker, Trainer and Facilitator specializing in Social Justice issues focused on revitalizing our most vulnerable communities. Throughout his career, Mr. Ali has conducted over 1,000 presentations across the country, including speeches, guest lectures and trainings. He has also worked with over 500 domestic and international communities to secure environmental, health and economic justice.

Ali is a nationally-recognized leader on environmental justice and climate policy. His work has been grounded in the 17 principles of the environmental justice movement. The first principle affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.

Mustafa Ali joined the Hip Hop Caucus in 2017, after working 24 years at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. At the EPA, he served as the Assistant Associate Administrator for Environmental Justice and Senior Advisor for Environmental Justice and Community Revitalization. Mustafa elevated environmental justice issues and worked across federal agencies to strengthen environmental justice policies, programs and initiatives.

Mustafa Ali was a Brookings Institution Congressional Fellow in the Office of Congressman John Conyers from 2007 through 2008. His portfolio as a Legislative Assistant focused on Foreign Policy in Africa and South America, Homeland Security, Health Care, Veterans Affairs, Appropriations and Environmental Justice. He has also been a guest lecturer at Yale University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Spelman College, Albany Law School and Howard University School of Law. Mustafa is a former instructor at West Virginia University and Stanford University in Washington, and the former co-host of the “Spirit in Action” radio show which focused on social justice issues.

“No one in America has done more to empower communities to address long-standing environmental injustices than Mustafa Santiago Ali,” said Collin O’Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. “As our nation confronts the cascading impacts of climate change, Mustafa has led the effort to ensure that the conservation community pursues intersectional solutions that will simultaneously maximize opportunities to revitalize frontline communities, bolster resilience, improve public health, restore natural resources and wildlife populations, and create well-paying jobs. We are honored to have him join the National Wildlife Federation family and look forward to working together to enact solutions that help every community across our nation.”

Classroom Discussion Prompts

These prompts are suggestions for discussion before and after the Wege Speaker Visit:

- *What are the expected impacts of climate change in your community/region?*
- *How might the effects of climate change (such as flooding, droughts, severe weather) have an impact on cities, rural areas, and our environment?*
- *Adapting to changes in our climate will be key to fostering sustainable communities. How does access to property/health insurance, monetary savings, and wealth in general have an impact on one’s ability to flourish amidst a changing climate?*
- *What is meant by the term “climate ethics”?*
- *What is meant by the following statement?: “A fundamental proposition of climate justice is that those who are least responsible for climate change suffer its gravest consequences.”*
- *What are the actions and steps being taken in your community/region to mitigate climate change and who is leading those efforts? Also, how could you as a citizen get involved?*

Resources

Web Links

- Climate Change & Michigan - https://www.miclimaction.org/climate_change_and_Michigan
- Great Lakes Regional Climate Change Maps - <http://glisa.umich.edu/resources/great-lakes-regional-climate-change-maps>
- Managing the Impacts of Climate Change on Poverty - https://www.gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/publication/Shock_Waves.pdf
- West Michigan Climate Resiliency Study, by WMEAC- <https://wmeac.org/climate-resiliency-report/>

Videos and Clips

- "Power!" -- Mustafa Santiago Ali of Hip Hop Caucus Speaks at Taking Nature Black-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7--mxS6J1cl>
- Mustafa Santiago Ali, Senior Vice President of Climate, Environmental Justice & Community Revitalization, Hip Hop Caucus- Interviewed by C2ES President Bob Perciasepe. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXPADOiDqPA>
- Mustafa Santiago Ali, Senior Vice President of the Hip Hop Caucus, fires up the crowd at Netroots Nation 2018 by connecting the dots between environmental devastation, systemic racism, and runaway capitalism. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hyq62bL1BZw>
- Mustafa Santiago Ali – Still Moving Toward Environmental Justice <https://youtu.be/pXO6ANoAJOs>

Local Efforts

- Youth Virtual Conference on Climate: see archived video recording of this years' conference hosted by City High/Middle which includes student presentations on climate/energy/sustainability issues from Grand Rapids MI, Minna Nigeria, La Paz Costa Rica, and Portland OR. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k07Q1-LW62Y>
- WMEAC Climate Resiliency Report- A Regional Forecast of Climate Change Impacts to West Michigan and the Great Lakes Region....Very Interesting report which also includes a brief, easy to read summary for a quick look at how our weather is already changing due to changes to our climate. <https://wmeac.org/climate-resiliency-report/>
- Citizens' Climate Lobby is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots advocacy organization empowering people to experience breakthroughs exercising their personal and political power both locally and at higher levels. https://citizensclimatelobby.org/chapters/MI_Grand_Rapids/

Literature Resources

- Below are websites to gain more information on literature associated with climate change. <https://fivebooks.com/best-books/cli-fi-dan-bloom/>
https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/36205.Cli_Fi_Climate_Change_Fiction
<https://electricliterature.com/these-8-books-are-fiction-but-climate-change-is-not-977f94d7b30>