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Triton College

For immediate release: **July 13, 2023**

GreenTown Holds Climate & Equity Conference at Triton College
400 People from Across the Midwest Gathered at Triton



Pictured at the GreenTown event displaying the award (back row, left to right) – Avery Smith, GreenTown Youth Delegate; Illinois State Sen. Don Harmon, Vicki Scaman, village president of Oak Park; Katrina Thompson, mayor of Broadview; and Darnell Johnson, CEO of Urban Efficiency Group.

(Front row, left to right) Gary Cuneen, executive director of Seven Generations Ahead; Kate Wallace, GreenTown youth delegate; Judy Sheahan, US Conference of Mayors; Jessica Beal, American Beverage Association; Briana Taylor, Rising Senior at Northern Illinois University; and Cathy Adduci, village president of River Forest.

RIVER GROVE, Ill. – GreenTown Climate & Equity held a conference tackling climate change, equity and sustainability on Thursday, June 22, at Triton College. The conference brought in 400 people from across the Midwest, including 125 youth, with topics including transportation, waste management, water conservation and equitable solutions to the climate crisis.

The focal point of the event was the Cross Community Climate Collaborative (C4), an initiative formed through a Memorandum of Understanding. The C4 was signed by 15 mayors around Cook County,

including the villages of River Grove, Broadview, Oak Park, Forest Park, River Forest and Maywood, among others, with a mission to drive sustainability into those communities.

John Harris, a Triton College Foundation board member and co-founder of GreenTown, decided to hold the conference at Triton. Harris is also the co-founder of a5 Branding & Digital.

“I love the mission, vision and energy of Triton College,” Harris explained. “Triton is a part of the C4 community. Triton’s community and leadership are tremendous. It was just a natural fit.”

The conference began at 7:30 a.m. with an Elected Officials Breakfast in Café 64. Triton College President Mary-Rita Moore gave welcoming remarks at the breakfast, greeting attendees to Triton’s campus.

The morning continued with Welcome and Introductions in the Student Center Cafeteria. President Moore gave more opening remarks along with Cathy Adduci, the village president of River Forest; Katrina Thompson, the mayor of Broadview; Vicki Scaman, the village president of Oak Park; and Darnell Johnson, president of Urban Efficiency Group.

The keynote address was Dr. Tony G. Reames, deputy director for Energy Justice at the US Department of Energy.

After lunch and breakout sessions, the Mayor’s Press Conference featured panel discussions from Mayor Thompson, Village President Adduci and Village President Scaman, regarding climate change and sustainability. Illinois State Sen. Don Harmon was also in attendance.

“I’m thrilled to be here,” said Sen. Harmon. “Collaboration on a local level is assuring and inspiring. Climate change is an issue that really drives young people, so Triton is a logical and ideal location for GreenTown.”

At the conference, Jessica Beal from the American Beverage Association presented a \$125,000 grant to the Cross Community Climate Collaborative (C4) to help with the health and wellness of children, cities, neighbors and families.

The event ended with breakout sessions, an afternoon plenary and an ending reception with Kinslahger Brewing at 4:30 p.m.

“We hope to engage with attendees and give them enough awareness and education to take action,” said Harris. “By using inspiration, aspiration and action, individuals can do good in their communities.”

Harris said GreenTown began as a way for people to come together to create healthy, sustainable communities. The first GreenTown conference was held in 2007 at Unity Temple in Oak Park. Since then, there has been 24 conferences, including Triton’s event.

“When the day ends, it’s just the beginning,” said Harris.

For more information, please visit <http://greentownconference.com/>.

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ABOUT TRITON COLLEGE

Triton College is a two-year college dedicated to helping members of the 25 Western Cook County communities in our district and beyond to achieve educational, professional and personal success. Located in River Grove, Ill., Triton offers more than 120 degree and certificate programs on its 110-acre campus, featuring a comfortable, friendly and diverse atmosphere. Triton also holds classes at satellite locations and offers online learning opportunities. Triton's dedicated faculty and staff work to provide high quality, convenient and affordable educational opportunities to more than 14,000 students each year. Triton College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Learn more at <http://www.triton.edu/>.