



**High School Environmental Action Summit
February 27, 2026**

**Presented by Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots, the University
of Tampa, and the Tampa Bay Roots & Shoots Alliance**



**Jane Goodall's
Roots & Shoots
USA**



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High School Environmental Action Summit Agenda

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Check-In

Location: Plant Hall Lobby

Students and Teachers should check-in with Roots & Shoots staff at the check-in table located to the right of the East Entrance of Plant Hall Lobby. Please be prepared to choose which workshops you will attend to secure your spot.

10:00 a.m. – 10:25 a.m. Welcome Remarks & Keynote Speaker

Location: Fletcher Lounge

Welcome by Bonnie Eaton, Tampa Bay Basecamp Coordinator, Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots, followed by Keynote Speaker Jasmin Graham of Minorities in Shark Sciences

10:30 a.m. – 11:10 a.m. Workshops Session #1

Locations: Fletcher Lounge, Grand Salon, Music Room

What's happening with our local environment and how can you make a difference? Hear from local environmental experts who will take you on a journey of discovery through our local ecosystems. Learn what it takes to have living shorelines, sustainable cities, and clean water, including examples of projects you can undertake to make a positive impact. Select TWO different Workshops for Sessions #1 and #2 (see choices starting on page 4).

11:15 a.m. – 11:55 a.m. Workshops Session #2

Locations: Fletcher Lounge, Grand Salon, Music Room

Repeat of workshop offerings from Session #1 (see choices starting on page 4).

12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. Lunch

Location: Fletcher Lounge

Lunch will be provided. Please sit with your school group in preparation for Workshop Session #3! During lunch, take the [Career Affinity Survey](#) to see where your interests might align with a career pathway related to the environment, then visit the College Corner of the Environmental Expo to learn how our local colleges and universities can help you get there!

12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Workshop Session #3: Project Planning with Roots & Shoots

Location: Fletcher Lounge

Jane Goodall founded Roots & Shoots in 1991 because she believed in the power of young people to create meaningful change. After exploring our local ecosystems, what actions could you and your classmates take to make a positive impact on the environment? Whether you think big or start small, every action matters. In this interactive workshop, we'll work together to identify an issue you care about and take the first steps toward turning your ideas into action.

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Environmental Expo & Tour of University of Tampa

Location: Plant Hall Lobby, East Veranda

Visit with local environmental organizations to learn about opportunities to get involved and make a difference. Meet in the Lobby around 1:00 p.m. if you'd like to tour the University of Tampa then come back and check out the Expo.

Before you leave, be sure to sign up for [Environmental Action Days](#) next weekend, March 7-8. There are several opportunities across the Tampa Bay area to protect and improve our natural environment!

Select TWO workshop sessions from the list below. Each Workshop is 40 minutes long. Please remain at your chosen session for the length of the presentation and rotate when time is up! To guarantee your spot, ensure you choose your sessions at check-in.

Offered during Workshop Session #1 ONLY:

Panel: College Majors Related to the Environment (Location: Grand Salon-B)

How do you choose a college major if you care about the environment? Dan Huber, Chair of the University of Tampa's Department of Environmental Studies, will moderate a panel of representatives from local colleges and universities. Panelists will introduce a variety of environment-related majors, highlight programs offered at their schools, and share real experiences from their students to help you explore your options and plan your next steps after high school.

How Cities Shape the Environment (and How You Can Too) (Location: Grand Salon-A)

Lauren O'Neill, Urban Planner, and Kayla Caselli, Sustainability and Resilience Officer with the City of Tampa

Cities don't just happen — they're shaped by everyday choices about streets, trees, water, and buildings. In this interactive session, students explore how urban planning impacts the environment, public health, and daily life through real-world examples and hands-on discussion. Participants will leave seeing their neighborhoods differently and understanding how people can shape healthier, more resilient places.

From Rescue to Release: Inside Wildlife Rehabilitation for High Schoolers (Location: Music Room-B)

Presented by Owl's Nest Sanctuary for Wildlife

In this fast-moving presentation, our Director takes students on a thrilling journey through the rescue, medical care, and release of Florida's native wildlife. Watch how a single phone call launches volunteer dispatch, intake exams, life-saving treatments, and species-specific rehabilitation. Meet ambassador animals up close as we reveal real rescue stories, common injuries, and the surprising ways people impact wildlife. Students learn essential safety tips, behind-the-scenes procedures, and simple actions they can take to protect local species. Get ready for an eye-opening, inspiring look at how every rescue becomes a second chance.

Offered during Workshop Session #2 ONLY:

Panel: Career Pathways Related to the Environment (Location: Grand Salon-B)

What does a career in protecting the environment really look like? Lynn Grinnell, faculty member in the Sustainability Management program at St. Petersburg College's College of Business, will moderate a panel of local environmental professionals who work in a variety of fields. Panelists will share their personal career journeys, the paths they took after high school, and the many ways students can turn an interest in the environment into a meaningful career.

Writing for a Cause (Location: Grand Salon-A)

Mia McCormick, Executive Director of Florida Botanical Gardens

Motivating people to take action and join a cause is most effective when you use crafted messaging designed to inspire and uplift. Former journalist and creative content professional Mia McCormick will give you the keys to developing written content designed to make a positive impact.

All other workshops below will be repeated during Workshops Sessions #1 & #2**Microplastics and You!** (Location: Music Room-A)

Devon Francke with Keep Pinellas Beautiful

Plastic is all around us in our daily lives and single-use plastic has become the most littered material on the planet. Although this is a concern for many reasons, it's extra dangerous as in the environment plastics break down into microplastics which can cause problems for wildlife and for people. In this workshop we'll learn all about the dangers of microplastics through hands-on activities and demonstrations and learn what we can do to make a difference!

Why Clean Water Matters in Tampa Bay (Location: Music Room-C)

Jordan Grard with Tampa Bay Waterkeeper

During the presentation, we will explore the background and history of Tampa Bay and our local watershed. You will learn what clean water looks like from a water quality perspective and why engaged communities matter. Then you will get an understanding of Tampa Bay Waterkeeper's strategies for ensuring fishable, swimmable, and drinkable water and how you can become an advocate for clean water.

Saving Life on Earth One Comment at a Time (Location: Fletcher Lounge-B)

Elise Bennett with the Center for Biological Diversity

Whether it's protecting diamondback terrapins from getting caught in traps or defending endangered pine Rockland forests from development, the strongest conservation action happens when there's a legal framework for protection, strong scientific foundation, and vigorous public support. Public hearings and comment periods offer an open opportunity to speak up for the most vulnerable creatures and places—and make a real difference. This workshop will briefly review case studies where public comments helped protect some of Florida's most iconic and endangered species, then lead the group through drafting comments to send during an open public comment period on a current conservation issue in Florida.

Weathering Climate Change: Impacts on Florida Ecosystems (Location: Fletcher Lounge-A)

Christy Folk with the CLEO Institute

Participants of this workshop will gain an understanding of climate change science, causes, and solutions, in addition to exploring the ways that Florida's ecosystems are impacted by climate change and why they should be protected. After an interactive activity, attendees will leave with resources and knowledge on how to take action.

How to Train a Gator (and why we do) (Location: Fletcher Lounge-D)

Matt Allen with the Florida Aquarium

This workshop explores alligator natural behavior and the remarkable adaptations that allow them to thrive in Florida's freshwater ecosystems. Participants will also get an inside look at how alligators are trained at the Florida Aquarium to support animal care, enrichment, and education. The experience connects these behaviors to conservation, highlighting why protecting alligators and their habitats is essential to Florida's wildlife story.

Manatee Rescue! (Location: Grand Salon-C)

Amy Dachino, Sara Ziegenfuss, Lily Carter with ZooTampa at Lowry Park

Manatees are an iconic Florida species that sometimes need our help! Join ZooTampa Educators to learn about the lifesaving work that takes place at our David A. Straz, Jr. Manatee Critical Care Center. Participate in a case study to follow the journey of one of our critical patients, and find out what it takes to rescue, rehabilitate, and eventually release these majestic animals back to Florida waters.

Coral Restoration in Action: How Science and Stewardship Save Reefs (Location: Fletcher Lounge-C)

Lindsay Humbles, Educational Outreach & Program Director, Ocean Rescue Alliance International

This interactive workshop introduces high school students to the science and real-world practice of coral restoration. Students will explore why coral reefs matter, how human activity impacts reef systems, and how hands-on restoration efforts can help rebuild and protect these critical marine ecosystems. The session emphasizes youth empowerment, conservation careers, and actionable ways students can make a difference.

Rooted in Resilience: Roots, Mud, & Magic: Mangrove Potting & Coastal Biodiversity Workshop

(Location: West Veranda)

Veronica Morejon & Harmony Dawson plus Interns Jenna and Leila from Breach the Surface

Come plant mangroves and discover how these powerful coastal plants support Florida's biodiversity! In this hands-on workshop, young people will pot mangroves that will be used in future restoration efforts to strengthen Florida's shorelines, protect coastal communities, and support diverse marine and wildlife habitats. Participants are also encouraged to join our March 8th Mangrove Planting Event to see these mangroves planted in action. Learn more and register at breachthesurface.org/events.

Wild Encounters in Florida's Waters (Location: Fletcher Lounge-C)

Kelly McAdams with Clearwater Aquarium

Florida's future conservationists have the opportunity to be some of the most impactful stewards of Florida's beautiful waterways and biodiversity. Our actions influence our wild spaces, so join me for a fun and engaging conversation about our aquatic biodiversity and learn practical ways you can make a positive impact on our one-of-a-kind ecosystems. We will discuss our waterways, diverse species, common threats to aquatic habitats and species, and how you can make a difference.

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Environmental Expo

Plant Hall Lobby

- Ecosphere Restoration Institute
- Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful
- Rice's Whale Coalition
- Roots & Shoots
- Tampa Bay Watch
- The Art of Science, LLC
- Ocean Rescue Alliance
- University of Tampa Roots & Shoots
- 15th Street Farm
- City of Tampa Green Team
- Coastal Crusaders
- Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation
- Ocean Conservancy
- Clearwater Marine Aquarium
- Florida Botanical Gardens
- Keep Pinellas Beautiful
- Birds in Helping Hands

College Corner (just off lobby area)

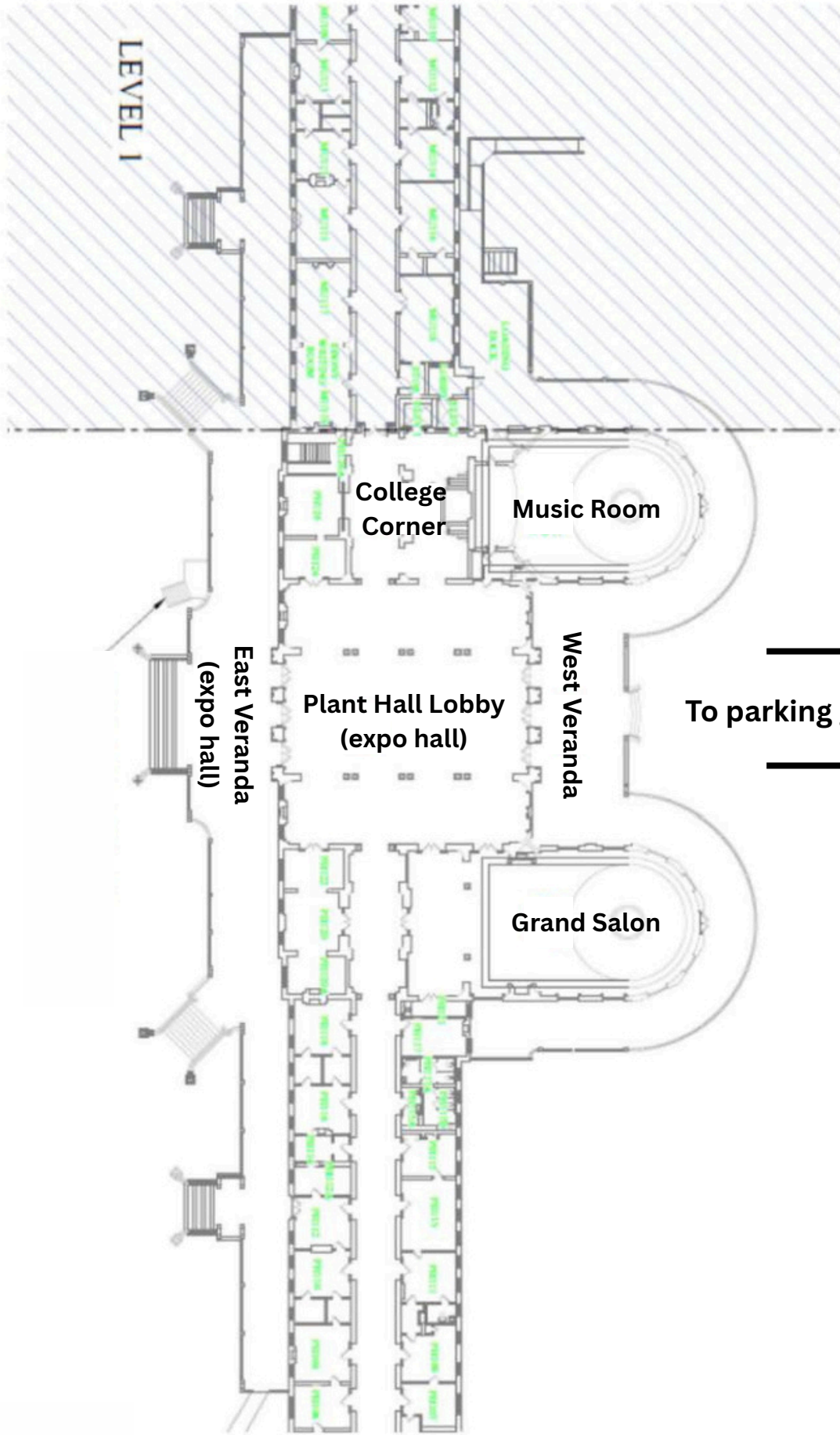
- Eckerd College
- Hillsborough College
- St. Petersburg College
- University of Florida - Plant City
- University of of South Florida
- University of Tampa

East Veranda

- UF/IFAS Hillsborough County
- Water Warrior Alliance
- Tampa Bay Waterkeeper
- Tampa Audubon
- Suncoast Native Plant Society
- Lubee Bat Conservancy
- Awesome Animal Academy
- ZooTampa
- Hillsborough County Waste Reduction & Recycling Program
- Owl's Nest Sanctuary for Wildlife
- Suncoast Youth Conservation Center
- Tampa Bay Aquatic Preserves
- FL Dept of Environmental Protection R.O.A.R. program
- Minorities in Shark Sciences
- Renuable LLC
- Youth Environmental Alliance
- Nature's Classroom Environmental Education Center
- The Fishes Wishes
- Cap Cycle Creations
- Rosebud Continuum Sustainability Education and Research Center
- GenCLEO (The CLEO Institute)
- Wisdom from the Wild (Julie Henry)

Links to all of the organizations presenting a workshop or exhibiting in the expo can be found on the next page. Please visit them to learn more about their programs and volunteer opportunities!





LEVEL 1

College Corner

Music Room

East Veranda
(expo hall)

Plant Hall Lobby
(expo hall)

West Veranda

Grand Salon



To parking garages



5 FEET



Continue down hallway
to reach Fletcher Lounge

