

# Climate Resilience Projects

## Community Resilience Ambassador Workshop



**South Mountain Community College (SMCC)**  
Submitted by Brian Grant, Phoenix CRUX Coordinator

### Summary

SMCC developed a workshop to educate students on climate resilience, introduce various community organizations working on related issues, and complete a resilience action plan. The event began with an overview on climate resilience and brief introductions from the represented community organizations, such as Trees Matter, Keep Phoenix Beautiful, and Tiger Mountain Foundation. Students were then engaged in an extreme heat simulation developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). Upon completing the simulation, students were asked to complete a resilience action plan, and pledge to be Resilience Ambassadors.



### Location

The workshop was held in SMCC's Student Union.

### Implementation Partners & Funding

The workshop was implemented by the SMCC Sustainability Committee and the Maricopa County Community College District's Office of Sustainability. Partners involved included the City of Phoenix, NOAA, and Arizona State University. The project was funded through an external grant.

### Challenges & Lessons Learned

The workshop was 4.5 hours long, including lunch and two 15-minute breaks throughout the afternoon. This time frame worked well and kept students engaged the entire time. However, it was a challenge to fit all of the desired materials and activities into this window of time. SMCC created a concise agenda prior to the workshop. It was also a challenge to secure student participants, so various prizes were raffled off at the end of the workshop, the main prize being a Chromebook laptop. Once there, both the students and community leaders showed great enthusiasm and passion for creating better resilience to climate stress in Phoenix.

### Resilience Assessment Outcomes

One of the primary climate hazards identified in the resilience assessment for SMCC is extreme heat and urban heat island effect, which is why the workshop focused on that particular climate stress. SMCC also realized that, while there is a lot of work happening on heat-related issues in Phoenix, the focus tends to be on faculty, staff, and community leaders with students often left out. For this reason the workshop was specifically tailored for students.

### Vulnerabilities Reduced by these Activities

- Heat related illness
- Lack of social cohesion
- Lack of knowledge of available resources

### Strengths Reinforced by these Activities

- Greater social cohesion among students and community organizations
- Greater awareness of available resources to mitigate and cope with extreme heat
- Increased student involvement in resilience-related activities



### Measuring Impact and Next Steps

This was a pilot workshop with the intent of doing similar workshops at other community colleges across Maricopa County. Currently there are two other workshops scheduled for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. The students whom attended will be contacted by the organizations specified in their action plans for volunteer work as well as related events put on by the City of Phoenix and Maricopa County Community College District.

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