

EHJ Advocates gathered on January 23rd to kick-off the 2024 new year's plan. The session began by acknowledging their contribution to science followed by Fanny Mairena, Information Technology Support Analyst at New York Presbyterian Hospital, and founder of LENY, Latinas En NY and Dr. Ornelas Van Horne sharing career paths with the youth. The session closed with EHJ Advocates identifying EHJ projects and youth development needs and next steps.

EHJ Advocates have participated in CCCEH research since birth. Anabel Cole, COTC Youth engagement coordinator began the meeting by reviewing how their family's participation in the Center studies for the last 18+ years allowed the Center to collect essential data that informed policy. Policy changes that the Center's research has contributed to include, transforming the public bus fleet to electric power, improving air quality in Harlem and all of NYC; elimination of pesticides containing Chlorpyrifos and Diazinon for household use; and the recent NYC Clean Heat Initiative to decrease air pollution in NYC. Ms. Cole referenced these tangible environmental policy gains offering sincere gratitude and recognition of how their study participation has contributed to improving community health.

The session then moved to address youth development through career exploration. Youth heard from Fanny Mairena, Information Technology Support Analyst at New York Presbyterian Hospital, and founder of LENY, Latinas En NY. She discussed her experience pursuing her STEM studies and her IT career path. Dr. Yoshira Ornelas Van Horne, from Mailman's Environmental Health Sciences Department shared her experience in pursuing her PhD in environmental health and her passion to do research from a community-centered approach.

Youth then shared their views on projects and strategies for the EHJ Advocates to further engage the community on Children's Environmental Health and Justice. To start, EHJ Advocates will work on developing a survey to 1) identify with their peers' needs in career development and educational attainment and 2) identify strategies to increase EHJ Advocates' engagement in disseminating CCCEH's research. Stay tuned.