

# 2026 DELAWARE COUNTY SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE AGENDA

**8:00 – 8:45 AM: Registration & Light Refreshments with Exhibitors (Eldridge Commons, Science Center)**

*\*Attendees will register for afternoon breakouts upon their arrival in the morning. Spots for Swarthmore tours are limited. Come early to secure your seat!*

**9:00 - 9:10 AM: Welcome & Introductions – (Lang Center for Performing Arts)**

Emcee: Becca Yurkovich

Elaine Paul Schaefer, Delaware County Council

Conlen Booth, Mayor of Swarthmore Borough

Elizabeth Drake, Assistant Vice President for Sustainability & Strategic Initiatives, Swarthmore College

**9:10 – 9:50 AM: Keynote Address – Is This the Place For Me? My Professional and Personal Journey in Downtown Scranton (Lang Center for Performing Arts)**

Steve Ward, Project Manager, Scranton Tomorrow

**9:50 – 10:05 AM: Swarthmore College Sustainability – (Lang Center for Performing Arts)**

Melanie Patapis, Climate Action Manager, Swarthmore College Office of Sustainability

Clare Hyre, Associate Director of Sustainability, Swarthmore College Office of Sustainability

**10:05 – 10:40 AM: Plenary Session – From Cloud to Community – Understanding Data Center Impacts (Lang Center for Performing Arts)**

Anneke van Rossum, Advancement & Advocacy Coordinator, Delaware Riverkeeper Network

Robert Routh, Pennsylvania Policy Director, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

**10:40 – 10:55 AM: Delaware County Office of Sustainability Update – (Lang Center for Performing Arts)**

Becca Yurkovich, Sustainability Officer, Delaware County Office of Sustainability

**10:55 – 11:00 AM: Morning Session Closing Remarks (Lang Center for Performing Arts)**

**11:00 – 12:10 PM: Networking with Exhibitors (Eldridge Commons, Science Center)**

*\*Attendees can stay until 12:20pm for networking, if they wish*

**12:10 – 1:05 PM: Lunch (Dining Center)**

**1:15 – 2:15 PM: Break Out Sessions**

**Option #1 – The Case for Zero Waste – Rethinking Our System from Policy to Practice –  
Science Center, Room 199**

Emcees: Jaclyn Rhoads & David Director of the Delaware County Sustainability Commission

Mike Ewall, Executive Director & Founder, *Energy Justice Network*

Sarah Alessio Shea, Executive Director, *Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC)*

Danielle Ruttenberg, Co-Founder, *Remark Glass & Bottle Underground*

**Option #2 – Community Projects Lightning Rounds – Science Center, Room 101**

Emcee: Michael Schneller of the Delaware County Sustainability Commission

Deb Soutar & Karen Murphy, *Penn State Extension Master Gardeners*

Steve Jacobs, Director of Parks and Recreation, *Concord Township*

Sarah Newmann & Carol Armstrong, *Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards*

Joy Baxter, Environmental Advisory Council, *Haverford Township*

Woody Kotch, *Transition Town Greater Media*

**Option #3 – Tour of Swarthmore College – Zero Waste Features (Compost Shed, Food Recovery Fridge, and more)** (Meeting in the Eldridge Commons)

*\* Tour capacity: 50 participants (two groups of 25)*

**2:15 – 2:30 PM: Travel Time to Sessions (short bio break and networking time)**

**2:30 – 3:30 PM: Breakout Sessions**

**Option #1 – Zero Waste Panel – Science Center, Room 199 (repeat)**

**Option #2 – Community Projects Lightning Rounds – Science Center, Room 101 (repeat)**

**Option #3 – Tour of Swarthmore College – Geo-Exchange (meeting in the Eldridge Commons)**

*\* Tour capacity: 50 participants*