

Pinecrest teen teaches others of dangers of sea rise, climate change



Palmer Trinity Student Delaney Reynolds, 16, designed 'The Sink or Swim Project.' RODOLFO ROMAN - For the Miami Herald

BY RODOLFO ROMAN
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Pinecrest resident Robert Reynolds remembers taking his family for a boat ride to the Florida Keys. The trips to the ocean inspired his 16-year-old daughter, Palmer Trinity student Delaney Reynolds, to orchestrate an initiative with the goal of educating the public on climate change.

"That certainly has fueled her passion for marine biology and has evolved to her passion or concern into the future of our community because of the climate change," he said in a phone interview.

Delaney, an 11th-grader, designed "The Sink or Swim Project," which informs and engages all ages on rising sea levels.

"What motivates me is that kids understand that it's a problem here in South Florida and they want to know what they can do to help," she said. "I wanted to be a leader. People will listen if you go to the community. It's our generation's problem. When I started the project, I thought it was only for the class but then I realized there was much more than the South Florida issue. This is a state, national and global issue."

Her project has picked up so much steam that National Geographic recently recorded one of her presentations. The taping will be part of the show *Years of Living Dangerously*, which will air later this year.

Delaney was interviewed by actor and comedian Jack Black.

"It was amazing," she said. "He is the coolest guy ever. He is super laid back. He is the same guy you see in the movies."

The project started when she was in elementary school and wrote three books on ecology topics. Through researching, she learned about climate change and sea level rise in South Florida after interviewing scientists and policy makers.

Delaney has given presentations locally to elementary, middle, school and college students. She has also given presentations through Skype to students in India. She has also created the project's website, www.miamisearise.com. Visitors can read her blog, purchase her books, toys and No Politics buttons. All proceeds help the project.

"It's wonderful to see support for a young person who has a passion and to see people's reaction to the passion," her father said. "She's found her voice through this and to see children and adults react in a positive way is amazing. It's an important issue. It's an issue she's educated my wife and me."

Delaney, who plans to study marine biology in college, recently presented The Sink or Swim Project at TEDxYouth at the Adrienne Arsht Center for Performing Arts. The Technology, Entertainment and Design is a global nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas.

The basketball player plans on continuing with the project after she has completed high school.

"I want to keep going with this initiative after high school," she said.

ONLINE

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