Project Green Schools has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I have been a devoted ambassador since kindergarten and I can honestly say that this organization has shaped me into who I am. When Project Green Schools started, it was stumbling to find its place in the world, just as I was. I remember how my most important job during events was finding rocks to hold our flyers down when it was windy, or to paint faces and give out stickers to raise funds. As the years have passed, I grew up and so did PGS. Progress Green Schools has turned into a widely respected non-profit that has given countless opportunities to kids like me, kids who want to make a difference. Now, I can speak and know that my ideas will be heard and carefully considered. Now, my most important job is to create awareness and to spark a passion for environmental education in others just as PGS did for me; and I couldn’t be more grateful for the sense of purpose that PGS has given me.

My place in PGS has opened doors that I didn’t even believe existed. I have been invited to the White House, Puerto Rico, and Peru (among other places) to speak on behalf of Project Green Schools about my experience and the mission of the organization. But aside from the opportunities that PGS has given me, I also want to acknowledge the ones that PGS has inspired me to go after as well. Specifically a trip to Washington, D.C. that I have taken with the Religious Actions Center consecutively for the last three years where I have gone to Capitol Hill to speak with my state’s legislature about providing support for the Green New Deal, The 100 by 50 Act, and The Clean Economy Act. These opportunities to speak about what is important to me
and to be in leadership roles have shown me how influential each person can be if someone not only believes in himself but also has others who believe in them. I know that if Project Green Schools wasn’t there to guide me in the beginning, I wouldn’t be the strong, confident activist I am today.

Aside from showing me the importance of speaking my truth, Project Green Schools has also taught me about all that nature has to offer. Personally, I love the outdoors. Going for hikes, camping, gardening, all that great stuff. I have always loved nature so it makes sense that I was drawn to an organization that reminded me to care for it. The environment is something that needs to be taken care of, and I know that no matter how much I say that it doesn’t mean anything unless I live a life that backs my statement. And this is something that I have done to the best of my ability. Living in a way where I can take care of myself by taking care of the world around me.

Honestly, my love for nature has greatly influenced my choice on which college I wanted to go to. I have committed to Quinnipiac University for the next four years of my education for many reasons; good teachers, not too far from home, beautiful campus, but one of the most important features that swayed my decision was the state park directly across from the campus. Sleeping Giant State Park was actually my reason for applying to only one college. After seeing college life and nature coexist I knew that there was no other option for me aside from Quinnipiac.

Project Green Schools has guided me for most of my life, which is why I find the idea of moving on difficult. Going away to college and making a life for myself are daunting enough without worrying about not having the backbone that has supported me for over a decade. Even
though I won’t have PGS there to guide me every step of the way, I fully intend on applying all
that I’ve learned to the way that I will live the rest of my life. Continuing to fight for what I
believe in, being an eco-activist, and even the simple things like recycling and turning off the
lights are all things that will be part of the life that I will build for myself and hopefully my
family.

For the next generation, all I have to say is, “Stick with it, it’ll be worth it in the end”. There
have been times where I thought I should quit, or that the work load was too heavy and
difficult. But if you push through, you will come out a better, more conscious person. I would
also like to say that being a part of Project Green Schools has prepared me to be in the real
world. For anyone who is scared of public speaking or being in front of a crowd, it is a
wonderful thing to be given the chance to as a part of PGS. There is such a great group there to
support you and guide you.

Project Green Schools has helped guide me down a path where I’m about to go to a great
college which will give me great opportunities. I am so thankful that I’ve gotten to spend the last
13 years as a proud PGS member, and I plan on continuing my work as a part of a new
generation of environmental leaders.