

Program of United Nations Association-USA Kentucky Division

“The World Needs the UN; the UN Needs Us”

GenX: The Saga of Forever Chemicals

Produced by actor Mark Ruffalo

Preview screening documentary film segments about the worst pollution crisis in world

October 28, 2024 (Monday), 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M. EST in person & zoom ID: 844 0774 9272, Passcode: 357007

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84407749272?pwd=T7KaFx6WVv9kEssCbxd4nRemq1ZPLey.1>

Lang House, 115 S. Ewing Avenue, Louisville, KY 40206

Limited parking behind building or parking on street; limited seating *RSVP* TeenaHal@aol.com

Snacks, tea sandwiches & refreshments



Ruffalo Bilott Rob Bilott Elijah Sammy Bauer Clara Sears Frederick Ekuban Teena Halbig

*****Special Guest: Rob Bilott, Attorney, Author*****

Special Zoom Appearance: Rotary District 6710 Governor Elect Dorsey Ridley

Keynote: Elijah Yetter-Bowman

Founder & Filmmaker, www.etherealfilms.org, Affiliate Researcher,
University NC School of Public Health, National Academies Award

Clara Sears, PhD

UofL Assistant Professor of Medicine

“PFAS Impacts on Maternal and Child Health”

Frederick Adams Ekuban, PhD

UofL Postdoctoral Fellow, Dept. of Pharmacology & Toxicology

“Impact of PFAS and Lifestyle Influences on Health Outcomes”

Sponsors

Gold

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UofL Center for Healthy Air, Water & Soil

UofL Center for Integrative Environmental Health Sciences

UofL Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute

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Floyds Fork Environmental Association

Kentucky Waterways Alliance

League of Women Voters of Louisville

Friends

Rotary District 6710

Rotary Club of Frankfort

UNA-USA Louisville Chapter

UNA-USA Frankfort Chapter

UNA-USA Bluegrass/Lexington Chapter

UNA-USA UN Women at UofL

Greater Louisville Sierra Club

Jan D. Martin

Teena Halbig

This program is presented in collaboration with The Democracy In Action series of The League of Women Voters Natural Resources Committee

This is UN Day PFAS Awareness program is held by [United Nations Association of the USA Kentucky Division and sponsors](#) for the 3rd year

3rd Annual PFAS PROGRAM by United Nations Association of the USA Kentucky Division



UNITED NATIONS DAY

ZOOM

Topic: United Nations Day PFAS Awareness is a Program of United Nations Association of the USA Kentucky Division
Time: Oct 28, 2024, MONDAY, 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84407749272?pwd=T7KaFx6Wv9kEssCbxd4nRemq1ZPLey.1>

Meeting ID: 844 0774 9272

Passcode: 357007

Rob Bilott, famous attorney and author portrayed by actor Mark Ruffalo in the movie “Dark Waters”, known as the “lawyer who became DuPont’s worst nightmare”:

Rob is a partner in the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky offices of the law firm, Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP, where he has practiced in the Environmental and Litigation Practice Groups for over 34 years. During that time, Rob has handled and led some of the most novel and complex cases in the country involving damage from exposure to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (“PFAS”), including the first individual, class action, mass tort, and multi-district litigation proceedings involving PFAS, helping to recover \$ billions for clients impacted by the chemicals. In 2017, Rob received the Right Livelihood Award, known as the “Alternative Nobel Prize,” for his decades of work on behalf of those injured by PFAS chemical contamination.

Rob is the author of the book, *“Exposure: Poisoned Water, Corporate Greed, and One Lawyer’s Twenty-Year Battle Against DuPont,”* and his story is the inspiration for the 2019 motion picture, “Dark Waters,” starring Mark Ruffalo as Rob. Rob’s story and work is also featured in the documentaries, “The Devil We Know,” “Burned: Protecting the Protectors,” and “Revealed: How to Poison a Planet.”

Rob is a 1987 graduate of New College in Sarasota, Florida, and a 1990 graduate of the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. Rob also serves on the Boards of Less Cancer, Green Umbrella, and the New College of Florida Foundation, and is frequently invited to provide keynote lectures and talks at law schools, universities, colleges, communities and other organizations all over the world. Rob is a fellow in the Right Livelihood College, a Lecturer at the Yale School of Public Health, Department of Environmental Health Sciences, a member of the American College of Environmental Lawyers, and an Honorary Professor at the National University of Cordoba in Argentina.

Rob also has received Honorary Doctorate Degrees from The Ohio State University, New College of Florida, and Thomas More University. In 2020, Rob received the “Distinguished Lawyer” award from the Kentucky Bar Association.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/10/magazine/the-lawyer-who-became-duponts-worst-nightmare.html#:~:text=Among%20those%20who%20called%20was,those%20people%20to%20see%20it>

Elijah Yetter-Bowman attended University North Carolina Chapel Hill to pursue a career in public health but saw that many complex issues lacked creative communication. He founded Ethereal Films to help solve problems with media, storytelling, and impact campaigns. He directs films, leads impact campaigns with events and conversations, and research as an Affiliate at the UNC School of Public Health. Elijah’s work has received several awards, including, “Excellence in Science Communication” award from the National Academies of Sciences and he has been featured in Forbes’ Peoples Magazine, the Wall Street Journal and Telegram.

He worked in polymers 2 years to better understand the chemicals. As a young scientist, he read a headline revealing that his hometown in NC had been heavily polluted for more than 40 years with PFAS Chemicals. Digging deeper, it became clear that a much larger problem was at hand but there was disconnect in public understanding. He realized his hometown was just a symptom of a systemic problem. He resolved to tell the world and continues to use filmmaking to tell the story about PFAS/Forever Chemicals linked to health effects. Also the story of community strength, love and hope.

Elijah grew up in Wilmington, NC as a curious problem solver with a penchant for asking questions. Since he was little, he was fascinated with how things work. The late Carl Sagan was a major inspiration during his childhood because Sagan had this ability to share the wonder of discovering how the universe works. That left a lasting impact with him. He is the child of two amazing people and one brother. Elijah's skills and interests include documentary filmmaking, storytelling, public performance, scientific research, communication, impact campaigns, public engagement and restructuring a better society. He is also a competitive rock climber, musician, cyclist, queer business owner and intersectional feminist. His wife is Sammy Bauer.

Awards & Honors

- "Excellence in Science Communication" National Academies 2024
- Title of "Honorable Colonel" the highest Civilian honor of Kentucky
- Challenge Coin from Notre Dame, Durham and Hanover County fire
- Last Call Foundation social impact grant for Burned
- NC Black Alliance environmental justice grant
- Southern Circuit Fellow of 2023 for Burned
- Longleaf 2023 "Best Documentary" for Angel of Alabama
- Dell Brooks Film Grant for GenX
- Triangle Community Foundation Grant for GenX
- Miller/Packan Documentary Film Grant for GenX
- Footcandle Film Society Award for GenX
- Natural Resources Defense Counsel documentary grantee
- Southern Documentary Fund fiscal sponsor
- Silver Medalist at Chapel Hill rock climbing competition
- Southern Exposure Film Fellow 2021
- "Honors Thespian" from International Thespian Society

Sammy Bauer, Producer, is a seasoned documentary producer and North Carolina native. She is passionate about education and crafts impactful community campaigns for films and works as an environmental education coordinator for local government. She is a board member of the Environmental Educators of NC. Sammy has a Masters of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from the University of NC at Chapel Hill.

Clara Sears, PhD joined the Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute at the University of Louisville in 2021 after completing her postdoctoral studies at Brown University School of Public Health. Dr. Sears' research in epidemiology investigates the effects of environmental factors on maternal and child health. Dr. Sears has over 50 scientific peer-reviewed publications. In 2023, she was awarded an R01 from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) that focuses on identifying the impacts of early life exposures to environmental toxicant mixtures, including per-/polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), on adolescent sleep and cardiovascular health.

TOPIC: Dr. Sears will discuss common sources of exposure to PFAS during pregnancy and early life development, as well as emerging evidence linking these exposures with long-term impacts on maternal health and child development. This discussion will highlight the importance of public health regulations to reduce these exposures and protect people during these critical periods of heightened susceptibility.

Frederick Adams Ekuban, PhD is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Pharmacology & Toxicology, Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition at the University of Louisville. His research focuses on how environmental pollutants, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), impact alcohol-associated liver disease. He previously held postdoctoral positions at The University of Tennessee Health Science Center and North Carolina Central University, where he explored the role of nuclear receptors, including the Pregnane X receptor (PXR), in alcohol-associated liver disease and obesity.

Dr. Ekuban earned his Ph.D. in Pharmacoscience and Toxicology from the Tokyo University of Science, where he studied the role of the Nrf2 pathway in the neurotoxicity of environmental electrophiles. Prior to that, he received his MSc in General Toxicology & Environmental Health Risk Assessment from the University of Eastern Finland, and a BSc in Medical Laboratory Technology from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana. His global training across Asia, Europe, and Africa enriches the depth and scope of his expertise, contributing to a strong background in toxicology, which spans in vivo studies, molecular biology, neurotoxicology, and mechanistic toxicology among others.

Dr. Ekuban has published several peer-reviewed articles in high-impact journals and presented his research at numerous national and international conferences. He is an active member of the Society of Toxicology (SOT), serving as a Councilor for the Postdoctoral Assembly, and is also a member of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD).

TOPIC: Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), widely known as "forever chemicals," are synthetic compounds used in numerous industrial and consumer products. Their persistence and bioaccumulation have made PFAS ubiquitous in the environment, causing widespread human exposure. Mounting evidence connects PFAS to health issues like immune dysfunction, thyroid problems, developmental issues, and increased risk of metabolic-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD). As PFAS health concerns grow, researchers are exploring how lifestyle factors, such as diet and alcohol use, may interact with PFAS exposure and influence the severity of health impacts. This emerging research aims to understand how PFAS could amplify the damaging effects of unhealthy lifestyle habits. The findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions and empowering informed health decisions in the face of pervasive PFAS exposure. This talk will discuss the current knowledge, ongoing research, and the critical need to address the combined risks of PFAS and lifestyle factors.

Teena Robinson-Halbig, Moderator

EDUCATION

- U of L Bachelor of Science
- UofL Certificate of Medical Technology
- MT(ASCP) board certified Medical Technologist by American Society of Clinical Pathologists
- U of L Medical Researcher 15 years (Cytogenetics; Hematology/Oncology)
- Microbiologist, Jewish Hospital
- Virology (trained at CDC), Jewish Hospital
- successful CEO & President Small Business owner/entrepreneur
- PFAS/Forever Chemicals medical researching since 2019
- Some CIVIC WORKS:
- Co-Founder Floyds Fork Environmental Association, 1991 (30+ years Clean Water Advocate)
- Past Co-President, then President League of Women Voters of Louisville, next President LWV of KY
- Metro Parks Advisory Commissioner 6 years
- KY Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Advisory Commissioner (3 years)
- Past 6 year President United Nations Association – USA KY Div.; 1 yr. Vice Pres; 2024 President
- Past UNA-USA National Council 6 years: Advocacy Chair 3 years; Vice Chair 2 years; Ethics Chair 2 years; Nominating Committee Member 1 year; UNA Women Leader (since created) and Chair Commission on the Status of Women in NY several years, including upcoming 2025; ipast 6 years Mid-East Regional Representative
- American Association of University Women of Louisville Public Policy Chair (7 yrs.) & AAUW of KY Public Policy Chair (5yrs.); current Secretary
- KY Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force, Awareness & Prevention
- Rotary Club of Louisville Suburban (RCLS) : RCLS Chair Water for Goma, DRC! Global Grant; RCLS Chair International Services Committee
- over 60 awards, citations, honors,

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Link to interactive map – find KY, see the information from Environmental Working Group.

https://www.ewg.org/interactive-maps/pfas_contamination/map/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=202409Newsletter4&utm_medium=email&utm_content=defaul&emci=f41d0b7f-2e79-ef11-991a-6045bdee6681&emdi=cd1b1f86-2e79-ef11-991a-6045bdee6681&ceid=1578820



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

