



New Website Devoted To Increasing Awareness of Environmental Health and Justice Concerns

Lexington, MA:

Upstream, a website and new-media platform (located at www.upstrm.org), has been officially launched to serve as a resource for individuals and organizations interested in learning more about the harmful health effects of environmental toxins. Through long-form video interviews, *Upstream* highlights the discoveries, insights, and successes of scholars, writers, and activists working to prevent environmental illness and promote environmental justice.

Upstream's creator, Emily Hanson, is a high-school student from Lexington, Massachusetts. Hanson began work on this project in 2009 when her brother was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, six years after her sister was diagnosed with the disease—two casualties of what some call a diabetes epidemic. Hanson grew concerned about the causes of the trend and began reading books and scholarly articles on the topic.

She learned that the incidence of many diseases, not just type 1 diabetes, has been spiking to unprecedented levels in recent decades and that a growing group of environmental scientists now know a great deal about the causal role played by toxins in our environment. Disturbed by all that she was learning, Hanson combined her hobbies of videography and web design to create *Upstream*, “to give experts an opportunity to describe their work to laypeople in a venue unfiltered by translators or unconstrained by time limits.”

Currently, the website includes interviews of several renowned scholars, such as Dr. Phil Brown (Brown University), Dr. Frederica Perera (Columbia University), Dr. Carlos Sonnenschein and Dr. Ana Soto of Tufts University, and Dr. Leo Trasande (Mount Sinai Hospital). It also includes an interview of award-winning environmental activist Peggy Shepard (of North Manhattan's *WEACT*). There are more interviews on the way.

Upstream has already received high praise from environmental experts. Doug Kysar, the Joseph M. Field '55 Professor of Law at Yale University and author of “Regulating from Nowhere: Environmental Law and the Search for Objectivity,” recently had this to say:

"We know that pervasive chemical exposure plagues us. We know how to reduce that exposure through industrial process changes, substitute technologies, and stringent regulations. What we do not know is how to convince our political representatives to act wisely on our behalf. Upstream is a huge step in the right direction, presenting essential information about our environmental ills in a vivid and accessible way. Learn from Upstream and then demand that your representatives start learning too."

Among other elements of the *Upstream* network is the *Upstream Blog* (<http://upstrm.wordpress.com/>), which will include regular posts and serves as a forum for scholars, students, activists, and interested citizens to explore and discuss issues related to environmental health and justice.

For further information please e-mail: upstrm@gmail.com.

UPSTREAM
HEAL THE PLANET. HEAL OURSELVES