



### **MVYLI Team Explores Sustainable Development Best Practices**

Cerina Gordon has big dreams for her life and for her island. A senior at MVRHS, she aspires to become an engineer. At this summer's annual Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development, Cerina was inspired to join the MVYLI Sustainable Vineyard Map Team. Developed in partnership with the Martha's Vineyard Commission, the MVYLI Map Project originated last year in response to the Island Plan. It's about Vineyard youth involved with envisioning and planning for their collective future.

Every Wednesday, Cerina's team meets with Emma HallBilsback, Eva Faber, Andrew Randall and Julia Cooper. Each youth leader is developing a section for the MVYLI 2020 Report. Next month, they will present it to the Town of Tisbury Selectmen. The Town voted to become the first green community on Martha's Vineyard.

Cerina chose to focus on Sustainable Building. Born and raised in West Tisbury, she has learned about the challenges and opportunities of sustainable building from her father's business Indian Hill Builders.

Last weekend, Cerina traveled to the University of Massachusetts Amherst to study best practices with Dr. David Damery, Director Building & Construction Technology Department of Environmental Conservation. Dr. Damery was impressed with Cerina's thoughtful questions, providing her practical information, resources and a textbook.

Combined with MVYLI College Preparatory and Field Trip Program, Cerina was accompanied by juniors Shav Anderson and Sivana Brown. They also met with Professor John Gerber, a Sustainable Agriculture leader and a frequent Vineyard sailor. He leads the Living Routes, an educational collaborative that helps students earn college credit for the study and practice of sustainable living in eco-villages around the world. During their College Field Trip, MVYLI youth stayed at the Sirius Eco-Village. Founded in 1970's it is a leader in sustainable building.

MVYLI youth also visited the Permaculture Garden at the Franklin Dining Commons. Designed by Professor Gerber's students Ryan Harb and Nathan Aldrich, inaugurated this week by Frances Moore Lappe. Cerina, Shav and Sivana enjoyed connecting with Vineyard UMass students Jillian Sedlier and Genevieve Hammond.

They enjoyed a tour with business major and Sivana was intrigued by UMass Amherst's Isenberg Business School. Each Thursday, MVYLI youth work with India Rose, Doris Clark and other Vineyard mentors to explore their career options and plan for their next college field trip to Boston.

The Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative is a project of the Stone Soup Leadership Institute. To learn more visit: [www.mvyli.org](http://www.mvyli.org) or [mvyouthleaders@gmail.com](mailto:mvyouthleaders@gmail.com) and Facebook at mvyouthleaders.