Patricia Haines Gooding has been passionate about the arts and their power to inspire creativity and critical thinking for years. Her volunteer efforts focus on the relationship between the arts and climate change, particularly in engaging young people to become stewards of the environment through artistic expression.

Patricia has led various projects, including organizing events such as "The Art of Climate Resilience", which aimed to use engagement with the arts to get young people connected to climate change issues and to help build local resilience and flexibility in the face of the realities of climate change. The event took place at Stewart Park in connection with the Reggae Festival in June 2022 and featured local artists around themes of climate change through music, drawing, posters, and even creating short videos on TikTok.
Outside of her volunteer work, Patricia enjoys gardening, particularly tending to her vegetable garden. She also shares a special bond with her husband, a 90-year-old gardener who loves to cut firewood. Patricia has an academic background in adult and extension education, which influenced her volunteer work, and was a grant writing officer for Cornell's fundraising arm for the College of Arts and Sciences before pursuing her doctoral work. Despite her age, Patricia is always eager to learn and create opportunities to put her knowledge to work and is looking to put together a set of essays about art and climate change. Patricia hopes to expand the program to young people as she believes that working with younger generations is crucial for the future and that they have the potential to make significant impacts in the fight against climate change.

Patricia was motivated to volunteer due to her concern about the impact of climate change on water quality in her community. She focused her efforts on learning about the local ecology and the effects of agriculture, rain events, and temperature changes on the lake. Patricia is also concerned about larger climate change issues, including the death of coral, melting ice caps, and rising sea levels. Her passion for environmental protection led her to volunteer and actively engage with her community.

To Patricia, the best part of volunteering is the opportunity to put her knowledge and skills to work for the betterment of her community without worrying about career advancement or financial concerns. She appreciates the chance to make a difference and work towards causes she cares about, such as community organizing and food pantries. Patricia values being a support volunteer and helping out without the stress of being in charge.

The Cornell Climate Stewards Program trains volunteers on the science and solutions to climate change, so that they can support their communities with local climate action projects. For more information, visit the Cornell Climate Stewards website at https://climatetestewards.cornell.edu/