

FALL 2026

ENVIRONMENTAL CONNECTION



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» Summer 2026 in the Kaufman Pollinator Garden!

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A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings Alums, Friends and Supporters of ENST!

Every two years, I look forward to the publication of The Environmental Connection newsletter. It provides the Environmental Studies Department's faculty, staff and students an opportunity to share updates and reflect on our collective accomplishments. It serves as a moment to hear from our co-curricular programs that offer unique and important experiences that we all value. It works to connect us all, and for a moment at least, bring together our ever-expanding community. Wherever you are, and however long you've been away from campus, it is important to remember the bond we share.

As I finish up my latest stint as chair of ENST, I remain humbled by the wonderful departmental colleagues that inspire me and make my work at Dickinson such a joy. The updates in this newsletter highlight their unwavering dedication to teaching, their top-notch research agendas, and the many ways they serve ENST, Dickinson and the larger community. I encourage you to read about all they are doing.

I would like to congratulate Professor Maggie Douglas who was awarded tenure last year. I would also like to formally welcome Visiting Instructors Sarah Sterner and Amina Naliaka, who have brought new energy to our department. I am also thrilled that Professor Kristin Strock is back on campus after two years directing the Dickinson-in-England program. Finally, I want to express my sincere gratitude to Kerri Thauby (Academic Department Coordinator) and Liz Burke (Academic Technician) for all they do, often behind the scenes, to keep the department humming along.

It is with mixed feelings that we must say goodbye to Professor Kim Van Fleet who retired this year. Kim taught at Dickinson for over 15 years and gave absolutely everything to her students and the department. We genuinely appreciate all she has done to give our students rigorous field-based courses. We will miss her tremendously as she starts a new chapter in life.

Of course, what makes ENST so truly magical are the students that inspire and challenge us daily. Each student that passes through Kaufman Hall adds to the vibrancy and spirit of the department. For that we are grateful. Special congratulations go out to our most recent award recipients for Environmental Scholarship and Research (Olive Stern '25 and Cara Kamoie '26) and Environmental Activism and Social Change (Genesis Whitlock '25 and Marja Barrett '26). I'd also like to acknowledge the growing list of students that have been awarded [departmental honors](#) and the important work of the ENST Majors Committee.

To wrap up, it is important to acknowledge the unprecedented retreat from science and rollback of environmental protections that is harming communities and ecosystems across the world. Our ENST community must stand up, be active, be engaged, and be heard. We are the people we've been waiting for.

As always, we are eager to hear from you, learn about what you have been doing, and get updates. I hope you enjoy the newsletter and please keep in touch.

Best wishes,

Michael Beevers

PROFESSOR MICHAEL BEEVERS

It is hard to believe that this year will be my 15th at Dickinson. In that time, I have seen the Department of Environmental Studies grow and evolve. We are now one of the largest majors on campus and have a continuous flow of wonderful, inspiring, and creative students that keep us on our feet and keep us thinking and innovating. We have a remarkable group of faculty that are experts in their fields, and I am able to learn from them every day. And Dickinson gives me the freedom to push the boundaries of teaching to give students the experiences, tools, and knowledge that I feel are vital for understanding today's complex environmental challenges.

What has also transpired, albeit more recently, is a political moment that belittles science and scientists and ignores environmental degradation, pollution, and climate change that we know adversely affects ecosystems, human health, and well-being. Like many of us, I have been wrestling with how to respond and how to talk about these dynamics in the classroom and beyond. Through it all, I have come away more dedicated than ever to help students develop a deep knowledge of environmental issues by fostering critical thinking, analytical, cross-cultural, and communication skills that will help them be tomorrow's changemakers and problem solvers. Indeed, while I continue to teach an array of classes at the introductory and advanced levels, my focus tends to be on understanding the underlying political, economic, and social dynamics that make environmental issues writ-large both hard to address and essential for crafting solutions. I also like to emphasize the importance of action and agency by getting students engaged with stakeholders or community partners wherever possible. My recent senior seminar 'Environmental Leadership for Social Action,' for example, pushed students to work with others in service of a larger goal or outcome. And in my 'Environmental Policy' class, we continue to work with the Carlisle Borough to surface policies and actions that can further climate action goals.

My research agenda continues to move forward in interesting, and I hope, important ways. Whereas my research agenda for a number of years examined how natural resource governance shapes the dynamics of conflict and peace, my [latest work](#) looks at the ways climate change impacts (or will impact) countries considered fragile and conflict prone. Recently, I worked with ENST major Marja Barrett '26 on a research project to better understand the extent to which conflict sensitivity is embedded in 90+ climate adaptation projects in 16 countries emerging from or in a state of armed conflict. We hope to get this work published in the next year. I am also at work on a new book "Putting Environmental Peacebuilding to Work," which examines the development and emergence of 'environmental peacebuilding' not only as a field of study but as a policy arena that has attracted the attention of national governments and international organizations. Finally, I have been working on a project that endeavors to create the 'Carpathian Peace Park' between Romania and Ukraine that can foster cooperation and build trust through environmental management. In October 2025, I gave a keynote talk "The Importance of Narratives in Peacebuilding Initiatives and Peace Parks" that argued for greater clarity on competing narratives as discussions about creating a peace park were ongoing.

I am proud to report that I was promoted this year to the rank of Full Professor and was awarded the endowed John J. and Ann Conser Curley Chair in Global Education at Dickinson. Recently, I also became a Research Fellow at the Network for Education and Research on Peace and Sustainability ([NERPS](#)) at Hiroshima University in Japan.

Anyway, that is a brief update from me. I feel your frustrations during the difficult and turbulent time. But let's not get discouraged and let's keep moving forward with our heads held high. Please keep in touch and feel free to drop me a line. I always look forward to connecting with alums, hearing about your lives, and how you are making the world a better place.

PROFESSOR WANDE BENKA-COKER

Hello alums,

It's a pleasure to share these updates, and I hope you are all doing wonderfully. For me, the past two years have brought new classrooms, new collaborators, and new questions to chase, and I'm excited to share some of it. I had the opportunity to teach a First-Year Seminar for the first time last fall, working with students at the very start of their college journeys. It was unexpectedly energizing to watch them find their own way into complex questions about the course's theme on how what we grow, raise, and burn shapes the air we breathe. I was also lucky enough to teach Environmental Epidemiology in Practice (ENST 305) for the first time, and it was especially rewarding to watch students get excited about work so close to my own: understanding how environmental exposures affect human health and applying scientific tools to real-world problems. I'm continually reminded of how thoughtful, curious, and engaged our students are, and how much their questions push me to keep learning, too.

My research remains a source of real joy. My lab keeps growing, and I've found so much value in student-faculty projects that dig into environmental exposures in and around Carlisle and their implications for human (and animal!) health. Last summer, Lila Brown '26 and Max Carfrey '26 worked on research projects on the College Farm. Lila, on the pre-health track, examined how occupational exposures affect cardiopulmonary health markers in farmworkers, while Max drew on his film & media studies minor to explore how cow behavior shifts with ammonia and other barn conditions. Both projects are in advanced stages of dissemination so look out for final products.

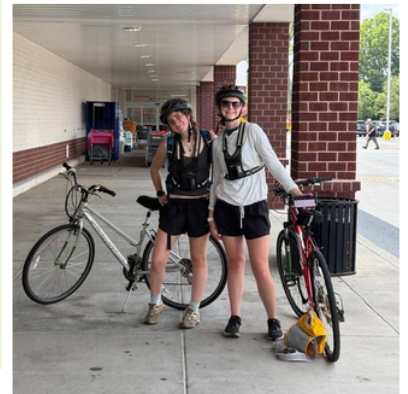
This summer, Sarah Pontillo '28 and Abigail Benham '28 spent weeks cycling routes in and around Carlisle, testing whether alternative routes meaningfully reduce cyclists' exposure to traffic-related air pollution, combining air quality monitoring, physiological measurements, and time-activity tracking along the way. Alongside them, Brooke Goldberg NRSC '27 and Ava Burgess '27 helped launch a new community-forward project examining odors from food processing residuals applied to agricultural fields, a growing environmental health issue with real community and regulatory attention. We are using low-cost sensor frameworks in two Carlisle neighborhoods to explore the relationship between measurable environmental conditions and how community members experience and perceive these odors. It is an exciting opportunity to bring together environmental monitoring, community experience, and environmental health in a very local setting.

For the upcoming semester, I'm looking forward to a research sabbatical, which will give me some much-needed time to catch up, reflect on the past few years, and reconnect with important projects. I'm hoping to return refreshed and ready to reengage with students in the spring!

Finally, my family is doing well. My daughter Ade just turned 9 and my son Remi turned 6. Remi is addicted to everything soccer (no idea where he gets that from 😊), Ade loves reading, dance, and soccer too. And, in what was definitely a highlight of the summer, we all got to see an amazing World Cup game together. Oh, the cats are also growing up, although they aren't nearly as fond of soccer. They much prefer the lazy life.

As always, I love hearing from you. Let me know what you've been up to and how you're out there rocking the world!

Wande Benka-Coker



» Sarah and Abby log the miles (and the micrograms) around Carlisle



» Remi and Ade conquer kindergarten and 3rd grade!

PROFESSOR ALLYSSA DECKER

Greetings alumni!

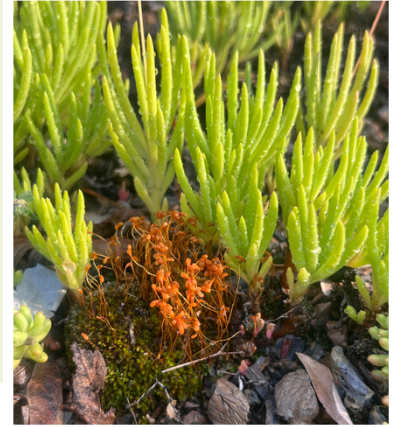
I hope this newsletter finds you well and thriving! This fall marks the start of my sixth year in Dickinson's Department of Environmental Studies, and it has been wonderful to reflect on where life has taken me since the last newsletter two years ago. During that time, I have experienced tremendous growth as both an educator and a researcher.

Since our last update, I have continued teaching Green Infrastructure (ENST 355), Urban Sustainability Senior Seminar (ENST 406), and Integrative Environmental Science (ENST 162), while also developing two new courses. The first was a First-Year Seminar titled *Humans & Nature: Fighting for Green in a Gray World*. I had a fantastic time exploring with students the many ways people connect with and benefit from nature, as well as the social and environmental barriers that prevent some communities from experiencing those benefits. I also introduced students to the ecology of cities through a new Urban Ecology course. Together, we examined how natural and built elements interact with the organisms that inhabit urban ecosystems and explored strategies for enhancing ecological processes within the built environment.

As always, my research continues to focus on the soil–plant–water relationships of green roof systems. Monitoring and caring for the research green roof remains one of my favorite parts of the spring and summer, and I have been fortunate to share that passion with many Dickinson students. Over the past two years, several students have led research projects investigating how different green roof components influence stormwater management. Conor Caneday '25 and Jillian Mann '26 both completed honors theses based on this work. Long-term monitoring has also revealed some unexpected ecological interactions, including the spontaneous colonization of cushion moss across the research roof. I am currently investigating the factors driving moss establishment and spread, along with the potential benefits of incorporating moss into green roof designs. This fall, I am excited to present our findings at the [CitiesAlive: Green Roof and Wall Conference](#) in New York City and share the Tome Hall Research Green Roof project with green roof researchers and professionals from around the world.

Outside of work, the past two years have been filled with memorable experiences. Some of my favorite moments include welcoming a new puppy into the family, traveling with Butter and Biscuit, delivering the keynote address at Dickinson College's Annual Women of Color Summit on how redlining and urban development continue to shape our communities, and learning about community engagement and urban gardening at the YMCA in Harrisburg.

I hope all is well with each of you, and I would love to hear what you've been up to. I look forward to learning about the many ways you are engaging with your communities and creating positive change. Wishing you all the very best until we connect again!



»» Funky Moss & Spores on Tome Green Roof



»» Learning from Ms. Rafiqqa at the YMCA in Harrisburg with Prof. Plumridge



»» Dickinson's Women of Color Summit

PROFESSOR MAGGIE DOUGLAS

Greetings alumni,

Wow – a lot has happened in the past couple of years. While events in the wider world have been discouraging to say the least, our work on campus has felt even more meaningful. On a personal note, last spring I was promoted to Associate Professor and awarded tenure, which means that Dickinson ENST is really stuck with me now! I'm grateful to the many wonderful students I've gotten to work with over the years, and extend a special thanks to those of you who provided feedback on my teaching and mentorship for tenure review.

In the past few years, insects have really come to the center of my work, even more than usual. I became a student again and attended the [Bee Course](#) – a legendary workshop led by some of the world's leading bee scientists at the Smithsonian's Southwestern Research Station in Arizona (did you know the southwest is the center of bee diversity in North America). We searched for bees in spectacular desert and mountain ecosystems, sharpened identification skills, and deepened our understanding of bee biogeography and evolution. It was a joy to share this knowledge with students in my first Applied Entomology class, who learned about insects by monitoring pollinators in the Kaufman Garden, assessing stream quality at Stone House Farm & Inn, and sorting samples from the College Farm for the [North American Insect Abundance Network](#). I've also enjoyed working with a handful of excellent entomophile students who have developed impressive independent research on campus and beyond. A surprising insect connection emerged in a faculty book club on War & Peace – did you know that Tolstoy was a devoted beekeeper? The book frequently and skillfully uses the beehive as a metaphor for human society.

In other teaching news, I spent last semester working with students in Environmental Data Analysis to explore Dickinson's electricity use and generate insights to reduce our carbon footprint. This was a new topic to me, so we were all learning together, with the help of partners at CSE and Facilities. The students leaned into the challenge and brought their enthusiasm – there may have even been a lab that involved the electric slide. If you want to see how your old residence hall stacks up in electricity efficiency, check out our developing web report (still in progress):

https://maggiedouglas.github.io/dickinson_power/

And of course, digging in the dirt continues to be a source of renewal. Last year's Agroecology class made an end-of-semester feast from our Three Sisters demonstration garden, including butternut squash gnocchi thanks to student know-how. At home, we've diversified our garden by branching out into popcorn and herbs. For the green thumbs out there, I highly recommend both as easy and gratifying to grow.

Take care and keep in touch!

Maggie Douglas



»» In Arizona, searching for cool bees (and I found one - the glorious protoxaea)



»» Professor Douglas enjoying a Three Sisters feast with Agroecology students

PROFESSOR AMINA NALIKA

Greetings alumni,

Over the past year, I have had the pleasure of joining the Environmental Studies Department at Dickinson College after moving to Carlisle from Carbondale, Illinois, where I pursued my Ph.D. Originally from the Rift Valley region of Kenya, my academic and personal journey has continually deepened my appreciation for the connections between people, place, and the environment. Transitioning to Dickinson and the Carlisle community has been both exciting and rewarding, and I have greatly enjoyed becoming part of a department and campus community that values interdisciplinary learning, sustainability, and engaged scholarship.

This past academic year, I taught Introduction to GIS and Advanced GIS, where I had the opportunity to work with an incredible group of students whose enthusiasm and creativity continually impressed me. Students embraced the versatility of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to explore and analyze a wide range of environmental and social issues, including air quality, environmental justice, transportation planning, species habitat management, urban planning, and urban heat islands. Watching students thoughtfully apply GIS to real-world challenges and develop confidence in their analytical and technical skills reminded me why I fell in love with teaching in the first place.

This summer, I'm spending some time exploring the beautiful lakes around Carlisle. I've always loved being near the water - don't get me wrong, I won't be swimming in them! There's just something peaceful and restorative about lakes that I really enjoy. Friends have already recommended places like Opossum Lake, Laurel Lake, and Fuller Lake, and I'm excited to continue checking them off my list. If you have a favorite lake or scenic spot in the area, I'd love to hear your recommendations!

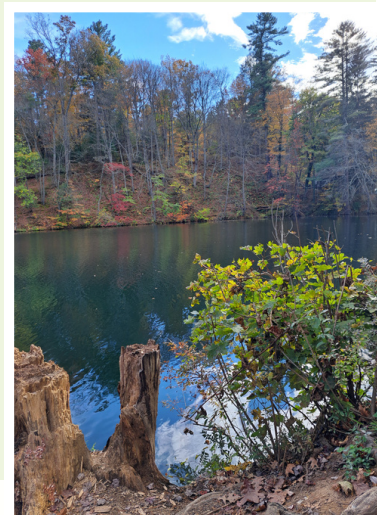
I'm already looking forward to welcoming students back for the new academic year. I can't wait to meet a new group of learners, continue exploring environmental questions through GIS, and see what exciting projects and discoveries the year ahead will bring.

I hope this offers a small glimpse into my first year at Dickinson. Wishing all of our alumni the very best, and I look forward to staying connected through future newsletters and department events.

Amina Naliaka



»» Hiking at the Garden of the Gods in Illinois



»» Visiting Laurel Lake, Pennsylvania

PROFESSOR HEATHER PLUMRIDGE

I hope this newsletter finds you and yours happy and healthy!

I continue to teach and work on issues related to environmental justice, climate change, and land. I have new research in Colorado and the Rust Belt. During my sabbatical, I was a Research Affiliate at the University of Colorado Boulder, [Environment & Society Program](#) and [Center for the Governance of Natural Resources](#). While affiliated with CU, I had the opportunity to investigate renewable electricity adoption in Colorado municipalities, assess renewable energy availability in environmental justice areas, and understand agricultural opposition.

Working with elected officials in former coal country and colleagues at Bucknell University and Dickinson College (Dr. Tony Underwood), current community-action research examines economic futures in post fossil-fuel areas of Pennsylvania. The legacy of fossil fuel extraction in Pennsylvania follows boom-bust cycles with economic decline, social challenges, and environmental pollution for extraction-dependent communities. Our study examines the impacts of declining fossil fuel revenue, investigates the ramifications of the energy technology transition, and explores environmental justice considerations. Dr. Underwood, our two SFR students (2026), and I will present this research at an Earth Issues in September. My SFR student, Alicia MacMillian, and I have also been invited to present this research at the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

A current community-action research grant funded by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) focuses on increasing access to clean, affordable energy for low-income residents in environmental justice areas of Binghamton, NY. My collaborator for the work is the Network for a Sustainable Tomorrow (NeST), a Binghamton-based network of programs working towards social, environmental, and economic justice and equity. Our research questions are what barriers disadvantaged communities face in accessing affordable, clean energy in Binghamton, and how enhanced community building can generate new policy solutions that increase access to climate adaptation and mitigation programs. Dickinson funded two Student Faculty Research projects (summers of 2025 and 2026) in support of this work. Student Lindsey Hoffman, my community collaborator, and I will present this research at an Energy Geography conference. Environmental Studies is a small world, as ENST alum Claire Burnet is also working on a NYSERDA grant, and we were recently on a Zoom call with other grantees! Claire is a Climate Change and Public Engagement Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension, working on a grant titled Participatory Workshops for Local Climate Solutions. Claire participated (with a great group of students) in our last Germany Mosaic. I'm proud to share that Antje Pfannkuchen and I are taking another group of students to Germany in March 2027. If you are in Germany, please let me know. Please come say hello if you are in Carlisle!

Take care,

Heather Plumridge



» Climate Advocacy class visiting the Carlisle Borough with former Deputy Mayor Brenda Landis



» Reunion with former Germany Mosaic Students Kiara Ganther and Makayla McCloskey

PROFESSOR SARAH STERNER

Hello alums!

I'm super excited to be writing to you as I enter my fourth year teaching in the ENST department! Since I started as an adjunct professor in 2023 teaching Vegetation Monitoring, I have had the opportunity to teach multiple sections of ENST 162 as well as develop three new courses: Riparian Ecology, Land & Resource Management, and Forest Ecology & Management. In these classes, students gained hands-on experiences in wetland, natural resource, and forest management, vegetation monitoring, and botanical research through lectures, labs, and partnerships with local environmental professionals. As a snapshot, students in my classes have planted more than 800 riparian trees, canoed through algae blooms, conducted timber surveys, ran statistical analyses on environmental data, and created natural dyes and paints using plants they collected.

Outside of teaching, my research at Dickinson has focused on the ecological legacies of human land use. Through student-faculty-research grants during the summer of 2025, students Cara Kamoie, Rachel Hoffman, and Thea Duane, surveyed more than 2,120 trees on Dickinson's campus to update the interactive tree map originally created in 2012. The map has been fully updated and integrated to an online app that you can use to navigate with while on campus – use the QR code or link [HERE](#) to access it and check out their incredible work! Along with the herculean tree inventory survey, Cara, Rachal, and Thea also completed 52 vegetation surveys in the Michaux State Forest that examined the long-term effects of historic charcoal hearths on forest plant communities. We found that tree composition is statistically different inside the relict hearths compared to the surrounding forest community, even 150 years later! A manuscript from our research is in prep and I had the opportunity to meet with scientists at Catoctin Mountain Park and the University of Pennsylvania to discuss the legacy of the iron industry on plant communities as they prepare a Cultural Landscape Assessment for the National Park Service in similar ecosystems in Maryland. Finally, 2026 grad Cara Kamoie completed an independent research project mapping historic charcoal haul roads in the Michaux State Forest using LiDAR and GIS to support wildfire response for the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Cara's research as well as her outstanding accomplishments in the ENST department earned her the SP26 Environmental Studies Award for Environmental Scholarship and Research. I couldn't be more proud of my students and the research we've done these past two years!

On the homefront, my older daughter Ada just turned 6 and will start kindergarten this fall and my younger daughter Maya will turn 4 in September! Alongside my husband Eric, we have spent the summer going on camping trips, at the beach, learning to swim at the Boiling Springs Pool, attending ballet camp, and soaking in the last few rays before the semester starts. Thanks for reading, happy trails, and stay in touch, alums!



» Summer 2025 research students Cara Kamoie, Thea Duane, and Rachel Hoffman ready to survey plants in Michaux State Forest



» Summer 2026 beach trip: Maya, Eric, Ada, & Sarah

PROFESSOR KRISTIN STROCK

Hello Alums!

I hope this newsletter finds you happy and healthy. The Strock family spent the last two years living in Norwich in the United Kingdom, while I served as director of the Dickinson in England study abroad program. I loved exploring England and Scotland with students. We considered countless examples of innovative, environmental problem solving from past to present. Some highlights:

Sharing a homemade curry with the staff of Spitalfields City Farm, the largest urban farm and closest in proximity to the City of London's square mile, discussing how community organizing and a single grassroots farm organization can support development for the Bangladeshi migrant community in Spitalfields.

Exploring the greenhouses of Kew Gardens; we considered that Kew is the world's largest repository of wild plant genetic material with collections from 97 countries and territories, some of which originated from a colonialist past.

Mudlarking, a practice dating back to the 18th century, involves searching the exposed riverbanks during low tide for historical artifacts. The students were literally digging into London's rich history on the banks of the River Thames, spanning two millennia of human activity.

Touring the Highlands of Scotland; students discussed efforts to reintroduce the Scottish wild cat and the beaver with the communities living on, managing, and conserving these lands.

My time in the UK led to exciting collaborations with the University of East Anglia faculty, including those in American Studies and Environmental Science. While abroad, I also was able to collaborate with Dickinson's own Prof. Nicky Tynan and Prof. Amy Wlodarski! Creating new connections and new opportunities for students was a highlight these past two years. I look forward to bringing those insights into new course development back in Carlisle.

While I've loved the new adventure these past two years, it feels good to be back in Carlisle. I've missed Dickinson, including my inspiring colleagues and the energy of our fabulous ENST students!

The research hasn't slowed down at all these past two years. I'm incredibly proud of two recent publications authored by ENST alums, Olive Stern and Rachel Krewson:

- » Stern, O.B., Strock, K.E.D., Norman, B.C. Relating Cyanotoxin Occurrence to Environmental Cues to In-form Algal Toxin Monitoring and Management in Pennsylvania Lakes. Water In Press.
- » Strock, K.E., Krewson, R., Hayes, N.M. et al. Oxidation is a potentially significant methane sink in land-terminating glacial runoff. Sci Rep 14, 23389 (2024).

Ori and Ira loved their time abroad and are now seasoned travelers, horseback riders, musical theatre enthusiasts, tennis players, and huge football fans. On the ball, City! Please keep in touch and reach out any time.



Wishing you all the best,

Kristin Strock

PROFESSOR KIM VAN FLEET

Hi Everyone,

Many of you know me, but it's just as likely that others don't unless you've taken Ornithology, Mammalogy, or the ever popular Wildlife Monitoring course that has been offered at Dickinson over the past 15 years. After 28 rewarding years of teaching in various capacities across the state, whether for students at academic institutions, citizen scientists at bird identification workshops, giving presentations on the Birds of Pennsylvania or working with numerous interns during my 11 years with Audubon Pennsylvania as a field Ornithologist and Important Bird Area Coordinator, I've decided it's time to step down from full-time employment and enjoy the 4th quarter of life. Even though Ornithology and Mammalogy won't be offered again there's still one more opportunity to take my Wildlife Monitoring course in Spring 2027 when I return as adjunct faculty for a final semester.

Now that I'm semi-retired, that by no means implies that I'm sitting around doing nothing. Instead, I'm taking the opportunity to go back to what first interested me in going to school for advanced degrees in the biological/ecological sciences; my 1st degree in Fine Arts with a focus on wildlife art. That along with continuing my research on Spencer Fullerton Baird's Birds of Cumberland County: past, present, and future will keep me busy in the months and years to come. I've already replenished my art supplies including gouache, oil paints, and pastels and planning a visit to the National Archives in Washington D.C. later this year to research S. F. Baird's correspondences with his brother William (an Ornithologist) and John James Audubon during the time Baird resided and collected bird specimens in and around the area surrounding Carlisle.

In the meantime, I've been spending more quality time with my husband Glen and our four-legged kids Buddy, Vagas, and Sadie Mae along with planting native plants for endemic pollinators around our two acre property, visiting friends and family, birding for Pennsylvania's 3rd Breeding Bird Atlas, and catching up on reading my stack of "to read" books including two by my favorite mystery authors; "Lost Birds" by Anne Hillerman and "The Grey Wolf" by Louise Penny. Three additional books in that stack include "The Sounds of Life" by Karen Bakker (about the use of digital technology in recording nature sounds beyond our range of hearing), "Bitch: On the Female of the Species" by Lucy Cooke (which takes a refreshing look at evolutionary biology) and "Attack from Within" by Barbara McQuade (about the dangers of disinformation in America).

Finally, I'll be continuing as site Coordinator and lead bander this fall at King's Gap for The Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art's Northern Saw-whet Owl Project (which began in 1997). This will be my 25th year of banding and collecting data on Pennsylvania's smallest and cutest owl. If you're interested in stopping by to see and learn more about the project, contact me, and we'll gladly arrange a site visit. Until then, take care and stay in touch.

Kim Van Fleet

EMERITI FACULTY

Greetings alumni,

The big news at the Heiman Household is the arrival of Malakai Samuel Heiman, our first grandchild, in June of this year. Our younger son Eric, mom Dakota, and little Kai are doing fine with Eric now learning how to wash and diaper an infant, far removed from his day gig working at the other end of life's spectrum in a skilled nursing home near Pittsburgh. Paula and I enjoy our annual trip to Ithaca and the Grassroots Music festival. As for longer excursions, I finally made it back to the Left Coast in January, visiting friends and family up and down the coast from the Bay Area to LA. Winter is a great time to visit, an uncrowded coastline and cool weather. The No Kings Rallies here in Harrisburg (and from what I heard-Carlisle as well) were very well attended and our spirits lifted, at least for a day or two. In the meantime, stay well, stay cool, and as suggested in the Bible, may we be blessed with "knowledge, understanding, and discernment."

Michael Heiman

Hello there dear Alums!

I hope you are well and are finding your path through this challenging world we are living in. My husband has had some serious health problems in the last two years and most of my time has been involved in trying to navigate the health system and find answers. Currently, things have settled down, and we are managing quite well -- adjusting to a new normal, and taking it day by day. We have learned so much -- made some new friends and identified some wonderful support resources. Our family has been super supportive, and we are forever grateful for that.

Since we don't go out as much now, we have learned the joys of digging into our home life. Found some new recipes, enjoying big breakfasts and stress-free mornings -- caring for our koi pond and yard, reading an actual paper newspaper, and keeping up with the grandchildren. Our kids are visiting a bit more often now and our son and family spent 5 weeks this summer in the US -- a real treat for us. We did manage a trip to the Gulf of Maine with our whole family to stay at our sister-in-law's cottage that has been in her family for many generations. We had great weather, beautiful beach time, and great food. The tidal pools were disappointing which is not surprising considering the development along the coast.



» Candie, David, and their five grandchildren in Maine this summer



» Pitstop at Ithaca Falls

The light in our lives of course continues to be our grandchildren. All of them are well and each presents us with both joys and challenges. I've often said it's much more fun being a grandparent than a parent. So you have a lot to look forward to if you are so blessed!

I miss teaching. I confess I still occasionally have that nighttime dream of it being halfway through the semester and I haven't shown up yet for class ... and then that great relief when I realize I needn't worry about such things anymore. I feel despair about the state of our country and can't help feeling discouraged when I see so many of the things we fought so hard for being destroyed. I do still have faith that the tide will turn soon.

Stay well and stay in touch. It's always a treat to hear from alums, hear about the wonderful things you are doing, and to see your children and even now, a few grandchildren! With affection,

Candie Wilderman

BISCUIT'S CORNER:

A DAY WITH THE DOGS OF ENST

Hi everyone!

My name is Biscuit, and I'm the newest member of the Dogs of ENST Faculty Support Team. My official job is helping students de-stress at the end of the semester, and I have to say...I think I'm pretty good at it. This spring I got to attend my very first Dogs of ENST event with my brother, Butter. At this fun event, students got to take a break from studying to enjoy snacks, spend time outside, and, most importantly, give us dogs lots of love and attention.

I made so many new friends! First, I met Professor Van Fleet's dogs, Vegas, Sadie Mae, and Buddy. They were all so cool and even let me play with them. Then I got to catch up with my best buddy, Apollo, and say hello to Professor Plumridge. It was nice to see a familiar face in the middle of all the excitement. Next, Butter and I chased Professor Beever's dog, Daisy, around the lawn with a bunch of students cheering us on. At least...that's what I thought was happening. Later, Mom gently explained that Daisy might actually have been running away from me instead of with me. Apparently, I still have a little work to do on my "reading the room" skills.

After countless belly rubs, head scratches, treats, and only a few accidental collisions with my new student friends, I was completely worn out. Being a Dogs of ENST team member is hard work! I can't wait until the next event so I can see all my two-legged and four-legged friends again. Until then, I'll be practicing my social skills...and taking lots of naps.



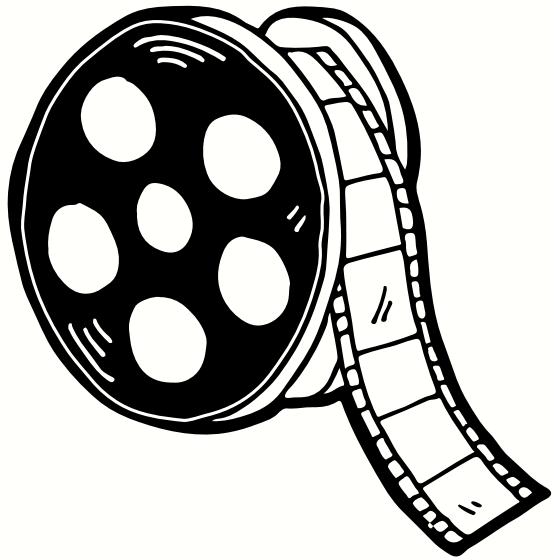
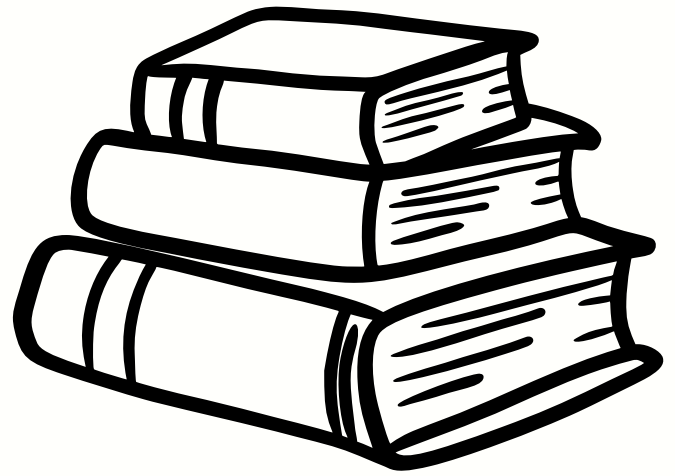
BISCUIT



FACULTY RECOMMENDATIONS

Books:

- Parable of the Sower (Octavia Butler)
- On Looking (Alexandra Horowitz)
- The Mind of a Bee (Lars Chittka)
- War and Peace (Leo Tolstoy)
- Medicinal Herbs: A Beginner's Guide (Rosemary Gladstar)



Shows:

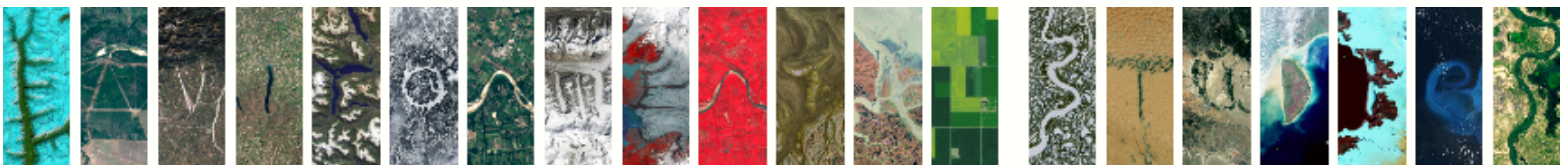
- American Primeval (Netflix)
- The Lowdown (TV Series by Sterlin Harjo)

Films:

- My Garden of a Thousand Bees (PBS Nature Documentary)

NASA's Your Name in Landsat:

<https://science.nasa.gov/specials/your-name-in-landsat/>



E n v i r o n m e n t a l S t u d i e s

PHOTOS



» Celebrating 2026 Environmental Studies Graduates!



» Fall 2025 Vegetation Monitoring students Aiden Driver & Jess Hartley-Lowe collecting canopy cover estimates along a plant survey transect!



» Valerie Larsen and crew working on the Stonehouse Inn Wetland Restoration Project!



» Environmental Majors Committee selling plants at the Sustainability Expo!



» Making friends in Entomology class!



» Turning over compost!



» 2026 End of Year Celebration!

Hello Environmental Science and Studies community,

Over the past two years, ALLARM has found itself in a moment of both reflection and momentum. In many ways, it feels like we are standing at a crossroads—honoring over four decades of community science while also stepping into a new chapter shaped by new leadership, evolving partnerships, and a growing network of volunteers.

One of the most noticeable shifts has been internal. Since we last updated you in 2024, we have said goodbye to several of our colleagues and welcomed many new faces. Pheobe Galione, Lindsay VanFossen, and Isabel Ruff have moved on from ALLARM to further their careers in water quality and conservation. Their departure gave us the opportunity to welcome three new team members in 2025 and 2026: Communications Manager Kacie Wood, Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator Joey Knouse, and Water Quality Technician Anna Horn. We also welcomed Dr. Jill Arriola as our full-time Staff Scientist in late 2024, and, most notably, Lane Whigham joined our staff as Director of ALLARM in spring 2025.

With a change in directorship, ALLARM has been reimagining the next phase of the program. Transitions like this bring both gratitude and uncertainty, but they also create space to revisit our goals, ask new questions, and think creatively about how we support communities. What remains constant is the dedication of our staff and student watershed coordinators, who continue to anchor the program in its mission and values.

Across the state and the Susquehanna watershed, that mission feels more alive than ever. Our work with the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative has increasingly focused not just on collecting data, but on who needs access to it and how it is used. This shift has led us into new spaces—reconnecting with partners in New York, expanding into new communities, and thinking more intentionally about how monitoring programs can be inclusive and accessible. The conversation has grown from “How do we collect good data?” to “How can we communicate and apply it effectively?”

At the same time, programs like Stream Team continue to ground us. While sustaining volunteer engagement remains a challenge, we are focusing less on growth in numbers and more on building a stronger, more connected network—one where volunteers feel supported, confident, and invested over time. This has meant greater attention to recruitment, communication, and relationship-building, while also creating space for volunteers to connect their monitoring work to issues that matter in their own communities.

Students remain at the heart of ALLARM. Whether working in the field, supporting volunteers, or analyzing data, their contributions shape nearly every aspect of the program. Just as importantly, their experiences are helping bridge professional pathways across environmental science, communications, and data fields. Many leave ALLARM with not only technical skills, but a clearer sense of how they want to apply them beyond Dickinson.

As we look ahead, ALLARM feels like it is not just growing, but deepening—strengthening relationships, refining its purpose, and becoming more intentional about its impact. The challenges facing our waterways are not getting simpler, but neither is the community working to protect them.

We are grateful to be part of that community, and to all of you who continue to support, collaborate, and stay connected with this work.



Lane Whigham

Director for the Alliance for
Aquatic Resource Monitoring at
Dickinson College



CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

[The Center for Sustainability Education \(CSE\)](#). The Center for Sustainability Education (CSE) has celebrated an exciting year of growth and transition. We welcomed Shane Kaplan as our new Assistant Director, congratulated Lindsey Lyons on her promotion to Executive Director, and remain grateful for Sumaiya Quayum's ongoing contributions. Together, CSE staff continue to create opportunities for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members to engage in sustainability initiatives on and off campus. Below are some of the recent highlights made possible through the work of CSE staff and student interns. Contact sustainability@dickinson.edu for more information or to learn how you can help.



Free xChange

The [Free xChange](#) aims to reduce waste and promote reuse through providing a safe, equitable, and accessible space to do so. Through the reuse of clothing, accessories, textbooks, housewares, and food, the Free xChange creates an awareness of the social, economic and environmental impacts of consumerism and provides a positive alternative. This inclusive space is open 24/7 and can be found in the lower level of the HUB. The program relies on donations, which are accepted from anyone! The waste minimization intern organizes events, manages volunteers, and promotes donations/drives. Stop by to exchange/donate or email sustainability@dickinson.edu to connect.

The Hive

[The Hive](#), Dickinson's beekeeping cooperative houses several working groups which include students, faculty, staff, alumni, families, and community members to facilitate the work of the Hive. This includes beekeeping, promoting and managing pollinator gardens, harvesting honey, and creating value-added products such as lip balms, lotions, soaps, and candles. CSE has maintained 1-3 active beehives on campus behind Rector since 2017 with the goals of learning from each other, advocating for pollinator-friendly policies, building and improving native bee habitats on and off campus, and participating in educational programs on the significance of pollinators and the challenges facing them. Dickinson College is an affiliate of [Bee Campus USA](#), a program that must be reapplied for every year. Anyone is welcome to get involved with The Hive and participate in workshops; reach out join the mailing list thehive@dickinson.edu



The Handlebar

[The Handlebar](#), Dickinson's on-campus teaching bicycle cooperative since 2011, just celebrated 15 years of serving the campus community! CSE's biking intern leads a team of student and staff volunteers with the hopes of increasing bicycle use, repair services, and bike-related knowledge on campus. The Handlebar promotes equitable access, affordability, and a strong sense of community while advancing life skills and promoting sustainable transportation. Our reuse mindset and Green Bikes Program support Dickinson's sustainability initiatives by improving sustainable transportation options and infrastructure on campus. Reach out to biking@dickinson.edu to join the mailing list, donate, or to get involved as a volunteer! For bike repairs, you can stop by anytime during open hours without making an appointment. The Handlebar is always looking for donations of bikes, parts, or accessories as it aims to keep our expenses low while providing as much value as possible to the campus and community. This year, The Handlebar got a new mural, gave out 100 bikes and helmets to youth in the community, and continues to be a positive space for learning and skill building.



The Eco-Reps

Through the [Eco-Reps](#) program, CSE is working to create a network of leaders who work to empower others to make sustainable changes in their lives and in their communities through peer education, programming, and outreach. Open to students, faculty, and staff, Eco-Reps serve as peer educators for sustainability in a community of their choice (residential space, team, club, office, department organization etc.). Providing all campus communities access to the Eco-Reps program strengthens the sustainability knowledge on campus and creates a forum for students, faculty, and staff to work together to create action for social justice, economic opportunity, and environmental sustainability. The Eco-Reps help coordinate the Campus Sustainability Expo, an interactive event celebrating our campus and community partnerships in the progress and future of sustainability, and we are always looking to network and learn from alumni. Get involved by reaching out to sustainability@dickinson.edu. Also, keep your eyes peeled on social media for our next exciting student-led sustainability venture! Follow CSE on Instagram [@cse_dickinson](https://www.instagram.com/cse_dickinson).



**CENTER FOR SUSTAINABILITY
EDUCATION**

Hey everyone! As we reflect on the many accomplishments, changes, and new experiences of the College Farm throughout the 2025 and 2026 seasons, we are filled with gratitude. None of what we do would be possible without the dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work of our farm staff, students, apprentices, and volunteers. Their commitment to sustainable agriculture, education, and community engagement continues to make the College Farm an inspiring place to learn and grow.

Powering the Farm with Biogas

One of the most exciting milestones in the farm's history came in October 2025, when after navigating many technical and administrative hurdles with the power company, our biodigester became fully operational! Since then, the system has been converting food waste and cow manure into biogas, which is transformed into renewable electricity. Under the management of Matt Steiman, the College Farm Assistant Director and Energy Project Manager, that electricity now powers the entire College Farm, with excess energy being returned to the utility grid. Students and apprentices play a crucial role in the success of this project by helping manage food waste collection from a variety of Carlisle establishments, including Dickinson College Dining Services! These students and apprentices also support daily energy system operations. Their involvement and assistance provide valuable hands-on experience while contributing directly to the farm's sustainability goals.

The biodigester also serves as a cornerstone of the farm's educational outreach efforts. Throughout the year, we welcome students, alumni, farmers, school groups, and agricultural organizations for tours and demonstrations that showcase the role of renewable energy in sustainable food systems.



»» Matt Steiman with diverted food waste!



»» Summer 2026 Farm Crew

Vegetable Production

The Vegetable Production Team continues to demonstrate what can be achieved through dedication, expertise, and teamwork. Led by Dickinson College and College Farm alumni Alex Smith ('10), Vegetable Production Manager, and Kelsey Horowitz ('18), Crew Leader, the team manages ten acres of our certified organic produce operation. Supporting their efforts are six Dickinson summer students, four apprentices, and ten to twelve Dickinson students who work on the farm during the spring and fall semesters. Together, they grew an impressive 78 different crops in 2025, with 13 crops exceeding the farm's three-year average production efficiency based on yield per planting unit. Congratulations to the entire team for this outstanding achievement! We're hoping to have an equally successful vegetable production season this year. The impact of their work extends far beyond our farm fields. Our certified organic produce can be found at the on-site Farm Stand, Farm Works, and in meals prepared by Dickinson Dining Services.

Our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program continues to thrive as well. Between 2025 and 2026, we've had a combined 260 members receive shares of fresh, certified organic produce through the CSA. We are especially proud that many of these members come from the Dickinson community, demonstrating the strong connection between the farm and the people it serves.

Farm Works

Farm Works, the College Farm's campus-based farm store and café, remains a vibrant hub where students, faculty, staff, and community members can enjoy farm-fresh meals made with College Farm vegetables. In addition to prepared meals, Farm Works offers canned goods, fermented products, frozen foods, body care items, our humanely raised grass-fed beef, and our certified organic produce. During the 2025 calendar year alone, Farm Works sold more than 13,000 meals, creating meaningful connections between local food and the campus community. Dickinson students can also use their meal plan points to purchase meals and many of the products available in the store.

A particularly exciting development came in this summer, when Farm Works remained open throughout the summer months for the first time. Farm Works Kitchen Manager, Joe Rosas, along with our first ever Farm Works Intern, Isabella Heckert ('27), worked hard to create new recipes and offer some exciting menu options that we hope to continue featuring throughout the academic year.

The support we've received from both the Dickinson and Carlisle communities has been incredible, and we are deeply grateful to everyone who has helped make Farm Works such a success. Looking ahead to the Fall 2026 semester, we're excited to announce expanded operating hours. Farm Works will now be open daily from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and we will be introducing a new breakfast menu on Saturdays and Sundays. We can't wait to welcome you in!

Preserving the Harvest

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» Farm Apprentices on Transplanter

The Farm is Turning 20!

Next year marks an exciting milestone: the College Farm's 20th anniversary! While Dickinson College has owned the farmland since 1967, when it was generously donated by the Otto family, the land was leased to local farmers for many years and primarily used for traditional corn and soybean production. In 2007, the College Farm was officially established with a mission to promote sustainable land stewardship through certified organic agriculture, education, and community engagement.

Under the leadership of the College Farm Director, Jenn Halpin, and with the support of countless staff members, students, apprentices, volunteers, alumni, and community partners over the past two decades, the College Farm has grown into a recognized model of sustainable agriculture and education. As we prepare to celebrate this milestone anniversary, we want to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has supported the farm over the years. We look forward to continuing this journey together and building an even brighter future for the next 20 years!

**Thank you for being part of
the College Farm community.
We couldn't do it without you!**

Dickinson
COLLEGE FARM



»» COWS!

ALUMNI UPDATES

2007

Cris Cardona

I have been selected multiple times to mentor/lead STEMSEAS expeditions on research vessels. I am also applying for the rank of full professor next year. In addition, I have participated in School of Rock (IODP) and School of Ice (IDP) NSF funded programs

2009

Kate (Consroe) Ceste

I am living in Herndon, VA, with my husband Mario and our two kids, Jack (6) and Emily (4). Last year, we were very excited to add solar panels and batteries to our house and also purchase an electric car. I left the working world in 2021 but I feed my love for environmental work by adding native plants to our home garden. I also volunteer with our kids' preschool, and I am currently finishing a sensory garden for the preschool's backyard.

2010

Atandi Anyona



Just clocked 4 years at an amazing organization called Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) where I support digital communication and impact documentation. We are a national membership organization representing over 200 conservancies in Kenya so as to secure habitat for wildlife outside state protected areas. Our work involves convening, connecting, informing, and representing conservancies at the national level in a shared effort to make wildlife conservancies thrive in Kenya. We have adopted the conservancy model as a strategy for communities and landowners to address biodiversity declines, climate change impacts, and governance challenges to achieve social, environmental, and economic development goals.

A conservancy as an area of land set aside by an individual land owner, corporate, group of owners, or a community for the purpose of wildlife conservation.

On a personal level, I am gradually getting back to writing fiction. I still have that aspiration of publishing a book sometime soon.

Here is a glimpse of my last fiction piece titled 'The Woman with Beads Around Her Ankle.'

Read, review, and reshare:

https://open.substack.com/pub/nanditadinesh/p/lights-up-on-atandi-anyona?r=rb586&utm_campaign=post-expanded-share&utm_medium=web

2013

Anna Ramthun

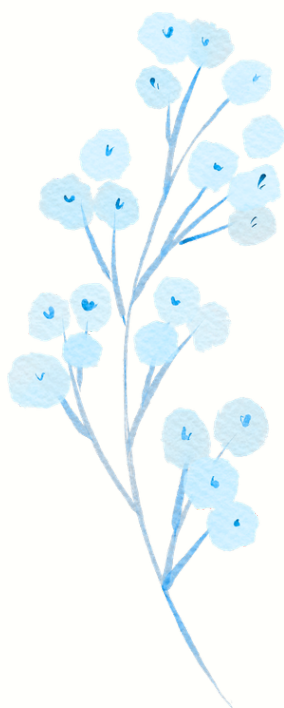
I have been in Corvallis, OR since 2016 and have been working for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde since 2019. Much of my work focuses on restoration of native plant communities, particularly integrated pest management and reintroduction of prescribed fire. In my free time, I'm coordinating a trail running club, learning pottery, and traveling with my Partner.

ALUMNI UPDATES

2015

Amber McGarvey

I am a planner based in the Portland, OR office of Parametrix, an employee-owned environmental services consulting firm. I continue to work primarily on the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program, which is the largest public infrastructure project in the Pacific Northwest's history. I serve as the Resilience and Sustainability Lead for the Program. My team has been working on items like drafting a Climate Action Plan for the Program, integrating sustainability objectives into the procurement process, and researching emerging technologies and opportunities to reduce construction emissions.



2017

Claire Jordy



Since finishing grad school in Fall 2024, I have been working as a Stormwater Project Manager for the City of Santa Fe. I help manage our federal stormwater permit and act as a voice of the river and arroyos. My partner Connor and I eloped on New Year's Day in my hometown of Taos, NM. We like to combine our love of water and trees on our daily walks with our dog Susie.

Mason Hepner

Working on land protection and preservation projects centered around Fort Indiantown Gap and environmental oversight on military construction projects. Developing partnerships and programs within the Kitatinny Ridge Sentinel Landscape.

Olivia Boggiano-Peterson

This year marked my third year working at the National Recreation and Park Association where I serve as a program manager and get to work with local park and rec agencies as they implement programs in their communities. I live in Washington D.C. with my rescue pup, Riggs, and we take full advantage of all the amazing parks around us going on many walks together. I also got engaged this year and am excited to be planning a wedding for next spring!

