

Welcome to the 19th Annual Chesapeake Watershed Forum!

We are so glad you've decided to join us for the weekend - I look forward to being in community with you all!

Our theme this year is "Making It Last: Proven Tactics for Building Enduring Projects, Partnerships, and Organizations." When identifying this year's theme, the planning team shared the desire that this year, even more so than before, we celebrate and elevate our lasting successes. Together, we all must navigate and adapt to the externalities that influence our collective conservation and restoration efforts. As we chart a new course beyond 2025 and rapidly approach this year's presidential election, the future in this moment may feel as uncertain as ever. That is why this year, we celebrate the individuals, organizations, partnerships, and initiatives that find a way to not only endure but thrive beyond the 2-5 year timelines that, by necessity, many of our efforts must operate.

This weekend, you have an opportunity to engage with this topic and learn more from those who are driving these partnerships and initiatives. Our incredible experts will elevate tools, examples, and ideas with applications ranging from diversified fundraising strategies, to current research in maintaining best management practices, to fostering personal wellness as a means of sustaining the health of our movement. You will also be reminded through this year's offerings that centering diversity, equity, inclusivity, and justice is fundamental to any effort's long-term success.

Whether it's your first time or you are a seasoned Forum attendee, we hope you enjoy yourself, make new connections, and walk away with new resources and tools for your toolbox. There is only one rule at Forum - that what happens at Forum does not stay at Forum. I encourage you to take what you've learned here and bring it back to share with your partners, communities, and stakeholders.

Enjoy this weekend's Forum magic, and thanks for all you do!



KATE FRITZ
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the Planning Committee Members and their organizations for donating staff time and resources over the past year to help plan and promote this Forum. Your efforts are invaluable and have made this year's Forum into an exceptional watershed event.

Forum Planning Committee Members

Alex DuBuclet | Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Brenna Goggin | River Network

Bryan Hofmann | Friends of the Rappahannock

Eddie Gonzalez | National Park Service

Emma Gregory | Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Erin O'Grady | Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Hope Cupit | SERCAP, Inc.

Jenny McGarvey | Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Jesse Iliff | Severn River Association

Joe Toolan | GreenLatinos

Kate Fritz | Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Lauren Sauder | Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Liz Feinberg | CalVan Environmental

Oleksandr Faryga | National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Patti Bohnsack | Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Pri Ekanayake | Institute for Conservation Leadership

Ron Ohrel | American Dairy Association North East

Sara Romatnik | Choose Clean Water Coalition

Tori Sullens | National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

A special thank you to Laura Creamer and the incredible team at the National Conservation Training Center, for handling the on-site logistics for our event. We are proud to be among the many conservation professionals who participate in workshops and training programs at NCTC annually.

CHESAPEAKE WATERSHED FORUM AT A GLANCE

Friday, October 18		
8:30 am to 6:00 pm	Registration	Confluence Center Lobby
10:30 am to 12:00 pm	Forum Welcome and Friday Plenary	Confluence Center Auditorium
12:00 pm to 12:30 pm	Forum Buddies Introduction	Confluence Center Auditorium
12:00 pm to 1:30 pm	Lunch	Headwaters Lodge: Dining Room
1:30 pm to 4:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions A and B	Lemon Building/Turner Building
4:45 pm to 6:00 pm	Meet-and-Greet with the NFWF Field Liaisons	Headwaters Lodge: Ground Level Foyer
5:30 pm to 7:00 pm	Dinner	Headwaters Lodge: Dining Room
6:30 pm to 7:30 pm	Chesapeake Collective Book Club	Headwaters Lodge: Social Center
7:30 pm to 8:30 pm	Oyster Happy Hour	Lemon Fire Pit (Behind Lemon Building)
Saturday, October 19		
6:30 am to 8:30 am	Breakfast	Headwaters Lodge: Dining Room
7:30 am to 2:00 pm	Registration	Confluence Center Lobby
7:30 am to 8:30 am	Bilingual Bird Walk	Headwaters Lodge: Ground Level Foyer
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Concurrent Sessions C	*See Schedule of Events*
9:00 am - 12:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions D and E	Lemon Building/Turner Building
12:00 pm to 1:30 pm	Lunch	Headwaters Lodge: Dining Room
12:15 pm to 1:15 pm	Meet-and-Greet with the NFWF Field Liaisons	Headwaters Lodge: Ground Level Foyer
1:30 pm to 5:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions F, G, and H	Lemon Building/Turner Building
5:30 pm to 7:00 pm	Dinner	Headwaters Lodge: Dining Room
7:30 pm to 9:00 pm	Poster Session and Evaluation Raffle	Headwaters Lodge: Roosevelt Room
8:00 pm	Saturday Night Social Activities	*See page 5*
Sunday, October 20		
6:30 am to 8:30 am	Breakfast	Headwaters Lodge: Dining Room

ONGOING THROUGHOUT THE FORUM

Friday, October 18

Forum Welcome and Plenary Presentation | Confluence Center Auditorium | 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Join us as Kate Fritz (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay), Martha Shimkin (US EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program), Jake Reilly (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation), and Steve Chase (National Conservation Training Center) officially open the 19th Annual Chesapeake Watershed Forum. The Forum welcome will be followed by our Plenary Speaker, Curtis Bennett with the National Aquarium. See page 6 for more information.

Forum Buddies Introductions | Confluence Center Auditorium | 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm

Break the ice with your Forum Buddies before heading to lunch (advance sign up required).

Meet-and-Greet with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Field Liaisons | Headwaters Lodge: Ground Level Foyer | 4:45 pm to 6:00 pm

Meet NFWF Field Liaison team members to learn more about NFWF grants, explore project ideas, discuss your program needs, and gain insights about program priorities and the application process.

Chesapeake Collective Book Club | Headwaters Lodge: Social Lounge | 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm

No advanced reading is required for this book club. Come ready to talk about a nature-themed (open for interpretation) book you love or listen in and learn about new ones to add to your reading list. We'll gather and respond to thoughtful prompts while making bookmarks.

Oysters Happy Hour | Lemon Fire Pit (Behind Lemon Building) | 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Join us for freshly shucked, mild but approachable oysters around the fire. Oysters generously donated by the Rappahannock River Oyster Restoration Partnership and the Severn River Association. Limited stock available, first come first serve.

ONGOING THROUGHOUT THE FORUM

Saturday, October 19

Bilingual Bird Walk | Headwaters Lodge: Ground Level Foyer | 7:30 am to 8:30 am

Join Renee Grebe and Gina Ghertner of Nature Forward for a casual bird walk along the trails behind the Commons at NCTC. Walk will be offered in English and Spanish. Bring your binoculars and dress warmly. Rain date for this walk will be Sunday morning.

Meet-and-Greet with the NFWF Field Liaisons | Headwaters Lodge: Ground Level Foyer | 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm

Please see description on page 4.

Poster Session and Evaluation Raffle | Headwaters Lodge: Roosevelt Room | 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm

Join us for informal networking with colleagues with a beverage of your choice in hand. View and interact with new and seasoned professionals at the Poster Session and learn about ongoing projects, programs, research, activities and other work from across the Chesapeake Bay watershed. We will raffle off several prizes, so bring your session evaluation tickets. For poster abstracts, locations, and additional information about the Poster Session, please see the abstract booklet. Physical copies of the booklet may be found at the Poster Session or the Forum registration desk (Confluence Center lobby).

Pick Up Pickleball | Gymnasium | 8:00 pm

Join other Forum attendees for a fun and casual evening of Pickleball. Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned Pickler, all are welcome to play and teams will be formed on-site. No equipment or experience is necessary - just come ready to move!

Moonlit Walk/Owl Prowl | Commons: Ground Level Foyer | 8:00 pm

Did you know that October 17 is a hunter's moon? Let's enjoy the moonlight and explore NCTC campus at night while listening for elusive night time predators: owls! Bring a headlamp or flashlight and dress warmly. Walk will be canceled if it rains.

FRIDAY PLENARY

CURTIS BENNETT

Prioritizing Wellness for a Sustainable Future

Friday, October 18 at 10:30 AM
Confluence Center Auditorium



The long-term success and future of the Chesapeake Bay restoration movement depends upon sustaining the wellness and well-being of our people. This plenary illustrates why centering your personal well-being builds better organizations, and what values, mindsets and behaviors you can adopt in order to bring joy and the best version of yourself to this space.

Curtis Bennett is a change agent, leading sustainable transformational change within the conservation sector. He does so by modeling a learning and growth mindset; being transparent, vulnerable and authentic; and creating and implementing inclusive and equitable strategies, grounded in systems thinking and principles of community engagement, to achieve just outcomes.

Curtis holds a Bachelor of Science in environmental science and policy with a concentration in wildlife ecology and management from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Master of Science in wildlife conservation from the University of Delaware. In 2014, he joined the National Aquarium, and is currently their Director of Equity & Community Engagement. In 2018, he was recognized as the Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education (MAEOE) Robert Finton Outdoor Educator of the Year. In 2021, he was selected as a Young, Gifted & Green 40 Under 40 Awardee as a Non-Profit/Environmental Justice Leader by Black Millennials 4 Flint. And in 2022, was recognized as a Top 50 Zoo & Aquarium Influencer internationally, by Bloloop.

Regularly ensuring self-care is of the utmost importance for Curtis and as such in his free time he enjoys spending times with friends and family, cooking, and continuing to build his relationship with nature through hiking, wildlife watching and kayaking.



Chesapeake Collective is a creative platform for diverse voices to express their vision for a healthy bay watershed. While the Collective certainly does not include all of the diverse voices that make our watershed whole, its projects provide a platform to elevate our many perspectives.

BayWord Puzzle

Can you crack these Bay themed puzzles? Try your hand at our own version of the NYT Connections and Threads puzzles!

Forum Book Club

Read a nature-themed book and then discuss it at the Forum! We'll gather at the bar on Friday at 6:30pm to discuss while making bookmarks.

Partner Mosaic

Add your organization's sticker to our tapestry of watershed partners. This collective mosaic will be added to for years to come!

Rising As One

Help our watershed partnerships soar by answering the prompt on a feather. Attach it to a wing and appreciate the beauty of our work.

Wall of Origins

Contribute to our wall of origins by adding one word or phrase that reminds you of where you are from.

Books We Love

Share a Chesapeake Bay or environmental related book you would recommend to your fellow Forum participants.

No Barriers

View Instagram images posted around NCTC grounds courtesy of the No Barriers inclusive outdoor community.

Reflection Zine

Pick up a template and make your own Forum zine! Reflect on your Forum experience daily with written and visual prompts.

SoundScapes

Rest in our soundscape alcove in Lemon Building as you immerse yourself in sounds from across the Watershed.

Whova Photo Contest

Post and vote for your favorite photos on the Whova app. The most votes (thumbs up) wins an Alliance swag bag!

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Friday, October 18 | 1:30 - 3:00 PM | Session A

FRI-A.1: Building Relationships and Engaging Stakeholders

Room: 151 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

As the consequences of environmental change are increasingly felt globally, engaging stakeholders is becoming more important. Including stakeholders in scientific discourse broadens scientific impact, creates a more holistic understanding of the natural world, fosters environmental stewardship, increases support of science and science-based management, and unites and empowers communities. The workshop will review principles and case studies of stakeholder engagement for environmental decision-making. Participants will learn to identify and engage with stakeholders and incorporate their commentary into research assessments and decision-making through interactive exercises. Ultimately, this will help participants better communicate with stakeholders rather than just to them.

Sidney Anderson (she/her) is a science communicator at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science Integration and Application Network (IAN). At IAN, she develops environmental health report cards, facilitates science communication workshops, and implements new stakeholder engagement techniques. She has presented on science communication at international conferences and facilitated workshops and engagement events in the Philippines, Japan, and India. She is passionate about making science accessible and interesting to the general public.

Annie Carew (she/her) is a science communicator at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science Integration and Application Network. In this role, she works on workshop facilitation, data visualization, document design, and data analysis. Annie has facilitated stakeholder workshops with scientists, practitioners, and civilians across the globe. As a scientist, she is interested in the nexus between humanity and the natural world.

Alexandra Fries is a Program Manager at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science Integration and Application Network. Alexandra's work in environmental management has been focused on the assessment, monitoring, and management of aquatic, marine, and terrestrial ecosystems. Within IAN, Alexandra conducts data analysis, synthesis, and communication by completing environmental report cards and conducting science communication courses. Alexandra also creates science communication materials such as diagrams, posters, presentations, newsletters, and reports. Alexandra has experience managing projects and staff on local and international projects, liaising directly with partners and colleagues, and providing insights on project direction and goals.

FRI-A.2: Empowering Communities through GIS and EJScreens

Room: G24 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Introductory | Maximum Capacity: 24

This workshop, led by Dr. Im from the Center for Community Mapping at Meharry Medical College, emphasizes the role of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in environmental health. Participants will learn to use EJScreens with their own data through Google My Maps, Mappler, ArcGIS Geo platform, and other GIS platforms. The workshop includes hands-on mapping activities, data integration at the census tract level, and analysis of environmental health data. Attendees will explore current research on climate justice, create community maps for advocacy and policy change, and leave empowered to use GIS tools for advancing health equity and climate justice initiatives.

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Dr. Wansoo Im specializes in participatory mapping using GIS and has pioneered interactive, web/mobile-based GIS to support community-based participation and research on social and environmental issues. He is a Professor at Meharry Medical College, managing the PublicHealth Exposure Database. As Director of the National Center for Community Mapping at Meharry, he teaches GIS applications to students in planning, public health, and engineering. Dr. Im utilizes big data and social networking solutions to uncover insights into social and health determinants. With 34 years of GIS research, he focuses on data collection from distressed environmental areas and inner-city communities. He has presented at the Chesapeake Watershed Forum several times with great responses. Notable projects include mapping public restrooms in NYC and leading a volunteer effort to map gas stations during Hurricane Sandy, which was utilized by the US Department of Energy, NYC, and FEMA, and covered by major news outlets.

FRI-A.3: Not Your Average HBCU Internship Experience

Room: 160 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

The Links, Incorporated National LINKS-STEMREADY WildSTEM program and the Masonville Cove Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership collaborated to address racial disparities by targeting HBCU students with internship and environmental career awareness opportunities. This workshop will explore collaborative efforts related to the Masonville Cove Links WildSTEM Internship Program, a model for innovative recruitment efforts and programs. With a membership of 17,000 Black women in 299 chapters, The Links, Incorporated leverages its network to assist the Masonville Cove Partnership in recruiting and expanding opportunities in various HBCU majors beyond science, including computer science, law enforcement, business, and communications. Unlike many other internship programs, the program involves local Links members recruitment connections, affinity groups, black role models, mentoring, soft skills training, mental health resilience, and cultural competence approaches in conservation. Participants will learn best practices and create their personal vision of an inclusive internship program, ultimately fostering WildSTEM career pathways for underrepresented communities.

Dr. Mamie Parker is a professional fish and wildlife biologist, success coach, and principal consultant at Ecologix Group, Inc. with clients at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Port Administration, Maryland Department of Labor, the William J. Clinton Presidential Center, Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, the Bureau of Land Management, and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Dr. Mamie Parker is the Former Head of Fisheries at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Links National STEMREADY Co-chair, served as the Masonville Cove Links Program Advisor. She will offer a pioneer Black female perspective on the program and discuss the professional development, cultural competence, and inclusive program components co-designed with local chapters of The Links, Incorporated.

Rachael Dickey Gilde, is an Environmental Program Manager with the Maryland Port Administration overseeing technical projects associated with dredged material and related outreach efforts. For over 10 years and with multiple employers, she has been participating in and conducting outreach about MPA dredging and restoration projects affiliated with Masonville Cove, Poplar Island, the Mid-Bay Islands, Hart Miller Island, and Cox Creek. She received her degree from McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland, and has conducted environmental research at several prestigious institutions including University of Maryland, College Park; Bodega Bay Marine Laboratory, University of California, Davis; National Marine Fisheries Service, Woods Hole, Massachusetts, University of Queensland in Townsville, Australia; and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Study subjects ranged from whale acoustics, to turtle populations and behavior, to seaweed physiology; to oyster settling. Through an affinity for

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science, she developed a passion for sharing rich stories of stewards studying and protecting the environment.

FRI-A.4: Navigating Dynamics of Working in Collaboration

Room: 161 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

As collaborative efforts and partnerships multiply, leaders need tools to navigate the power dynamics and tensions that show up when partners have different resources and capacities and in light of societal inequities. You'll learn to use frameworks that help to clarify and support group collaboration at different stages including what is needed to evolve. The frameworks will be applied to some real-life examples and to your work. Because meetings are a place where dynamics play out and a main vehicle for doing work, you'll also leave with some practices for cultivating effective participation and inclusion during meetings.

Sarah Clark, Senior Associate at the Institute for Conservation Leadership (ICL), has worked for over 20 years to support mission-driven leaders and organizations to create change. She specializes in designing and facilitating meetings and planning processes with coalitions, networks, and organizations. She enjoys supporting leaders and groups to untangle thorny collaboration issues. Sarah has extensive experience heading national leadership development initiatives with ICL, health, human rights, and housing organizations. An interest in how the world works resulted in her studying Sociology at Miami University and much later to better understand how to support leaders, groups, and organizations to create systems change she obtained a Masters in Organization Development from American University.

FRI-A.5: Thinking Outside of the (Salt) Box

Room: 105 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Introductory

Sources of pollution can unexpectedly be a perfect canvas for placing watershed art or a billboard for an awareness campaign. From taking groups on hikes to monitor water quality to painting snow plow blades and salt boxes, presenters will share how they have developed partnerships in their communities and how a little bit of creativity can promote environmental awareness in unlikely places. Bonus! Attendees during this session will get the opportunity to design a salt box panel. Of the designs created, one will be selected and painted by the saltbox art movement creator and artist in Baltimore!

Abby Hileman is the Salt Watch Coordinator at the Izaak Walton League of America. In her role, Abby leads the efforts of the Salt Watch program, expanding the project into new regions across the country, reaching new groups of volunteers, and providing resources to make lasting change—from data to action. Abby received her BS in Biology at Allegheny College in Meadville, PA. She has a passion for connecting people to their communities and to nature and believes that small-scale actions add up to make a big impact on conservation success.

Camryn Arnstein is a 2023-2024 Chesapeake Conservation and Climate Corps Member funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust and placed with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Through her work at MDE, she advocates for smart salting best management practices that maintain public safety while minimizing winter salt use. Her Capstone project focuses on winter salt outreach to residential communities. A component of her Capstone project involved collaborating with the Baltimore salt box art movement to spread awareness of smart salting practices. Camryn holds a B.S. in Marine Science and B.A. in Environmental Studies from the University of South Carolina.

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Renee Bourassa is the Director of Communications at the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin. When she is not touting the virtues of the Potomac River, you can find her chasing her two young boys around a park near her home in downtown Frederick, MD, or a local nature center. As everyone who works in winter salt messaging experiences, she is known as the “salt bae” to her friends and family for her constant comments about our overuse of winter salt. She graduated with a BA in Law and Society and an MS in Environmental Biology from Hood College.

FRI-A.6: Deploying the Delisting Strategy in Lancaster

Room: 114 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate

The Lancaster Clean Water Partners and Chesapeake Conservancy have been bringing nonprofits, agencies, municipalities, and landowners together within sub-watersheds, or delisting catchments, to focus people and projects. We will share unique progress in three delisting catchments in the Conestoga River watershed. Hear about the catchments’ varying land uses, partner organizations, types of practices, and stages of progress toward delisting. Hear diverse voices who have built momentum to improve ecosystem health, gathered lessons learned, and generated opportunities. Your voice is important here as the session is a chance for participants to share meaningful stakeholder engagement in watersheds around the Chesapeake Bay.

Megan Blackmon is the Director of Projects for the Lancaster Clean Water Partners, which brings together partners, resources, and funding to improve stream health in Lancaster County. She also strengthens and coordinates the tracking, management, and reporting aspects of multiple grants that support the Partners. Previously, she worked as the Grant Administrator for the City of Lancaster, Watershed Specialist for the Dauphin County Conservation District, and served two terms as an AmeriCorps VISTA with the Schuylkill Conservation District. She has a B.S. in Environmental Studies from UNC Asheville and a Masters in Environmental Pollution Control from Penn State Harrisburg.

Allyson Ladley Gibson serves as the Executive Director for the Lancaster Clean Water Partners, facilitating collaboration between a unique set of multi-sector partners who are working to improve local water quality. She attended the University of Richmond and then spent 13 years in Maryland with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in their education department. She returned to her Lancaster roots at Kitchen Kettle Village before bringing all of her worlds together with the Lancaster Clean Water Partners in 2018. Allyson participated in the Rural-Urban Leadership Program and serves as the co-director for the Lancaster Watershed Leadership Academy.

Shannon Thomas is a project coordinator with Chesapeake Conservancy. Shannon is assisting the Chesapeake Tributaries Initiative with rapid stream delisting and 30 by 30 initiatives. She graduated from Washington College with a degree in environmental science. She especially enjoys workdays when she can get outside to collect live stakes or plant trees. Shannon is a Pennsylvania native but loves spending weekends on the Chesapeake Bay.

FRI-A.7: Scientists and Lawyers: a Crucial Relationship

Room: 201 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate

The Clean Water Act relies on a unique, science-based approach to advancing water quality by combining the expertise of scientists with lawyers who rely on their work. This collaborative model lends itself to the formation of lasting partnerships between science and law. Chesapeake Legal Alliance (CLA) and Blue Water Baltimore (BWB) have demonstrated the effectiveness of this model

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over the last 5 years, most recently with a 1.3 million dollar settlement to mitigate water pollution. Join CLA and BWB for an exploration of their partnership, a deep dive into how science affects the law, and what this recent win means for the watershed.

Kennedi Fichtel is a Staff Attorney at CLA who conducts litigation for CLA’s Environmental Action Center. Kennedi has a J.D. with an environmental concentration from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. She has published research discussing the importance of blending the goals of environmental legislation with the goals of the scientific community and now dedicates her career to litigating issues under the Clean Water Act.

Patrick DeArmey is a Senior Attorney at CLA and manages litigation for the Environmental Action Center. His work focuses on environmental enforcement and matters involving water quality, water resource protection, and water permitting. He represents clients in litigation and conducts pollution investigations. Prior to joining CLA, Patrick served for three years as an attorney with the Environmental Action Center, a nonprofit organization that merged with CLA in 2020. In law school, Patrick interned at the EPA’s Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics and was a student attorney in the Delaware Law School’s Environmental Law Clinic.

Alice Volpitta serves as Blue Water Baltimore’s water quality scientist. Her areas of expertise include water quality monitoring, data management, and enforcement, and she has spent hundreds of hours patrolling and surveying Baltimore’s streams, rivers, and harbors. She directs Blue Water Baltimore’s water quality monitoring program, which tests water health at 49 locations across Baltimore City and Anne Arundel County. Because of her work, the program has received Tier III status from the EPA.



Our Commitment to a Clean Bay

Dairy farmers live on or near the land that they farm. They understand that practicing environmental stewardship is not only good for their farms, their communities and their bottom line—it’s the right thing to do.



**AMERICAN DAIRY
ASSOCIATION** NORTH
EAST

AmericanDairy.com

*Learn how dairy farms are
protecting the Chesapeake
Bay Watershed:*



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Friday, October 18 | 3:30 - 4:30 PM | Session B

FRI-B.1: Tracking Progress of Restoration Practices

Room: 151 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate

As restoration projects continue to be implemented across the Chesapeake Bay watershed, it is essential to explore the role that data collection can play in assessing project success. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative (CMC) team are rolling out a new monitoring program aimed at tracking changes in stream health conditions as a result of restoration projects implemented through NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund. This session will review the monitoring program goals, protocols, and ways that organizations receiving NFWF funds can partner with the CMC to monitor their BMP sites.

Liz Chudoba is the Water Quality Monitoring Initiative Director at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. Liz has been with the Alliance for 9 years and manages the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative, an initiative to integrate community science data into the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership, as well as other water quality monitoring projects across the Bay watershed.

FRI-B.3: The Green Future After Incarceration

Room: 160 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

In 2021, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay partnered with Ancient Greene and Clean Decisions on a grant to maintain public green infrastructure in DC. After three years of working on the grant, Earl Charles of Ancient Greene and William Ferrel of Clean Decisions will reflect on how the grant impacted their teams. They will be sharing the stories of four of their crew members, men who were previously incarcerated, and how this work has brought tranquility and stability to tumultuous lives.

Bill Ferrell served 35 years in prison. Afterward, "Uncle" Bill came out to a totally different world, but he didn't let that stop him. Bill trained to become one of only a handful of people certified by the DC Department of Energy and Environment as an environmentally-friendly RiverSmart contractor and continued to grow his landscaping and native plant knowledge across the ensuing years. Over the past six years, Bill has received certifications and training in best practices in building maintenance and green cleaning and has worked across multiple government and commercial sites. As an ordained minister and values-driven individual, Bill works with Clean Decisions' team members in a mentorship capacity to support personal growth.

Earl Charles is the founder and owner of Ancient Greene. He is an experienced Green Infrastructure professional with experience in both the installation and maintenance of GI practices in Washington DC. Earl strives to share his experience and enthusiasm with his community and prides himself on his record of hiring DC residents and returning citizens. In addition to providing his teams with on-the-job training, Earl has been helping some of his more experienced team members establish and build up their own businesses.

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FRI-B.4: Anacostia River Restoration and Environmental Justice

Room: 161 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

Hazardous releases to the Anacostia River have contributed to environmental injustice in Washington, DC by degrading the communities connection to the River. Communities most impacted are considered disadvantaged, overburdened, and underserved. Trustees for the Anacostia River's natural resources (The District, the Federal government, and NOAA) have begun the Natural Resources Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) process and are quantifying EJ injuries and damages, which is the first time NRDAR has been used this way. Participants will learn how EJ concerns can be quantified as injuries and damages and how community outreach is an essential part of the process.

Gretchen Mikeska, P.E. joined the District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) in 2016 as its Anacostia Coordinator. In this role, she acts as a one-stop shop for both internal customers (DOEE and interagency staff) and external customers (e.g., residents, environmental stakeholders, industry, associations, and federal agencies) regarding the remediation and restoration of the Anacostia River. She also serves as a policy advisor for Director Wells, providing him with technical and outreach updates for the Anacostia River Corridor that informs his environmental improvement strategy for the District. Ms. Mikeska is a strong supporter of the District's initiatives for a better, more equitable, and cleaner DC and Anacostia River.

Dennis Chestnut, a native Washingtonian, a master carpenter, and a vocational educator by profession, but his dedication to youth development, community improvement, and civic duty has led to his involvement with many conservation projects. He is a lover of the outdoors, has a passion for conservation, and has advised many community, business, and government leaders on civic ecology and engagement issues. Dennis has committed himself to restoring the Anacostia River, improving the natural resources located in this community, and connecting the residents, schools, businesses, and community organizations to the natural environment through tangible on-the-ground projects that change places and change lives.

FRI-B.5: Flood Resilience Planning Methodology

Room: 105 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

Successful municipal flood resilience plans require integrated strategies to incorporate knowledge of municipal staff, citizens, and past planning efforts. This is best exemplified by the recent planning effort of the City of Roanoke in creating its flood resilience plan. Multiple strategies were combined to create an analysis of current and future flood-resilient project recommendations. The plan utilized public outreach, and research of watersheds/sewershed plans to conduct a gap analysis for project recommendations. A customized ranking matrix was developed using agency-based criteria to prioritize projects to maximize grant funding. Ultimately, the highest-ranked flood resilience project was recently awarded grant funding.

Mary Simmons, CFM is an Environmental Scientist in the private sector providing project support for water resource programs for municipalities across Virginia. She has more than eight years of experience in the Environmental Services/Water Resources industry. This project work includes resiliency and sustainability plans, GIS analysis and research for various contracts, and compliance inspections and monitoring. Her recent projects involve Flood Resilience planning, regional FEMA program support, GIS support for localities; MS4 programmatic support for localities; nutrient management planning; and project management and inspections for erosion/sediment control and Stormwater BMPs. Ms. Simmons' background in environmental

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management and policy, along with her water resources-based marketing and proposal experience, gives her a well-tailored perspective on addressing the current state of urban environmental systems in Virginia.

FRI-B.6: Healthy Ecosystems and Agriculture Through Collaboration

Room: 114 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

The Delmarva Land and Litter Collaborative (DLLC) is a nine-year-long collaborative effort between environmental, management, and agricultural and poultry producers. DLLC convenes diverse interests together on Delmarva to move beyond conflict and toward shared learning, trusted relationship development, and problem-solving. The group tackles complex issues, including ammonia production and water quality protection, through dialogue and awareness of the need for collaboration. During this session, both an active member and one of our backbone staff will share successes, failures, and lessons learned from this collaborative effort that can be applied to similar topics.

Holly Porter has been a member of DLLC since 2018 and currently serves as the Chair. She is the first female Executive Director of the Delmarva Chicken Association and is responsible for the implementation of the strategic plan, including government affairs, education, and membership development. She is a graduate of Marymount University with a BA in communications, is an alumnus of LEAD Maryland Class VII, and currently sits on the Mid-Atlantic Regional Women in Ag committee and the Rural Maryland Council Board. Prior positions include being the Deputy Principal Assistant at the Delaware Department of Agriculture, where she coordinated the strategic and legislative policy initiative, and serving as a marketing specialist at Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit, where she was responsible for event planning, strategic planning, advertising, internal communications, market research, social media and more.

Michele Drostin has experience in watershed management, community engagement, science translation, land management, and environmental education. Michele has developed and managed collaborative processes throughout her career and has experience working with farmers, academic researchers, state and federal agencies, landowners, fishermen, municipalities, advocacy groups, and watershed organizations. Michele has provided backbone support for the Delmarva Land and Litter Collaborative since 2017. She has a BA in Environmental Science from Emory University and an MS in Resource Management and Administration from Antioch University, New England.

FRI-B.7: Community Engagement for Urban Forestry Projects

Room: 201 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

This year's groundbreaking Inflation Reduction Act funding for urban forestry emphasizes both community engagement and environment equity in disadvantaged communities. Each project funded has the power to create a lasting canopy by engaging communities at all stages of a tree's lifetime. Two partners in the Chesapeake Bay are great examples of this focus – Defensores de la Cuenca has launched a tree ambassador program with training offered entirely in Spanish; and Stillmeadow Community Fellowship, a church in West Baltimore, is transforming their forested land into a community Peace Park, engaging local young people in the process.

Abel Olivo is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Defensores de la Cuenca. An advocate and policy expert by training, Olivo is excited about his role in bringing more resources and opportunities to the Latin community in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. A board member of

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Nature Forward, an alumnus of The Ohio State University, and an advocate for a greener, healthier world, Olivo looks to bring more Latin@s into the environmental space as an education interest, personal experience, and career choice.

Yorell Tuck forged a career teaching and mentoring youth and young adults in Baltimore City. She went from working as a College Campus Minister with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship USA at Bucknell University to Director of Providence House Maternity Home for teens. She, later, had the honor of working as a Student Life Counselor for middle and high school students at The SEED School of Maryland for 12 years. She has, now, settled into serving communities in Southwest Baltimore with her lifelong church, Stillmeadow Community Fellowship, and its 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Stillmeadow Community Projects, Inc. As the Director of Partner and Community Relations, Yorell has had the opportunity to expand her reach in serving residents of her beloved hometown. She engages people of all ages and walks of life through facilitating Stillmeadow's array of programs offered through the Stillmeadow PeacePark, Resiliency Hub, Food Distribution, and the Stillmeadow PeacePark Learning Center.



Our mission is to enrich individuals with knowledge of and involvement with our natural ecological systems, holistic community planning, and respect for local history and culture. We put our mission into practice at Leopold's Preserve, a 380-acre public park in Haymarket, VA that we own and manage. The White House Farm Foundation is supported by the Plein Family Foundation. Learn more at www.whfarmfoundation.org.



SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Saturday, October 19 | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Session C

SAT-C.1: Techniques in Tree Identification

Room: 161 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All | Maximum Capacity: 50

Participants will learn a variety of introductory and advanced methods to identify tree and shrub species from the mid-Atlantic region. Participants will then apply these techniques to identify the plethora of trees and shrubs growing at NCTC.

Craig Highfield is the Forests Program Director for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. The mission is to pursue innovative strategies and collaborations that improve the health of the region's forests, create new forests in places important to water quality, and promote the benefits of forests and resource management to private landowners, decision-makers, and the general population of the six-state bay watershed.

Ryan Davis was born less than a mile from the Susquehanna River in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He earned a B.S. in Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology with a minor in Forestry at North Carolina State University, and attended West Virginia University for an M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology. He has worked as a field biologist in North Carolina, Nevada, Missouri, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Ryan joined the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay in April 2017. He is the Senior Forests Projects Manager, where he focuses on reforestation, forest management, and education within the watershed.

SAT-C.2: Building Resilient Networks and Sustaining Collaboratives

Room: 105 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate | Maximum Capacity: 40

Led by the guiding principle that "the collective is more effective," the Upper & Middle James Riparian Consortium uses the power of collaboration to grow partnerships to create healthy streamside ecosystems in the James River watershed in Virginia. As the Consortium approaches their seventh year, the focus is on creating a Resilient Collaborative Model in order to sustain momentum, and keep an open door to innovation, while also staying focused on lasting change. This in-depth, interactive, and informative session will highlight the key components of a Resilient Network with the Consortium as a case study. Attendees will leave with practical take-home skills.

Amber Ellis is the Restoration Director for the James River Association. Growing and nurturing partnerships to restore riparian forest buffers is at the heart of her work. Amber serves as the convener for the Upper & Middle James Riparian Consortium and the James River Buffer Program. She earned a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Virginia Tech, is a Professional Landscape Architect in Virginia, a Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional, and has a certificate in Ecotherapy through the Earthbody Institute.

Christine Muehlman Gyovai is the Principal of Dialogue + Design Associates, is the granddaughter of a coal miner and firefly scientist, and has over twenty years of experience in creating community transformation and resilience. She is a professional facilitator and planner with certificates in charrettes, coaching, teaching yoga, and mediation, she hosts the Yes! We Rise podcast. Christine holds an M.U.E.P. in Urban and Environmental Planning from the University of Virginia, and a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Burlington College, and lives at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia with her husband and two children.

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SAT-C.3: Communicating Science Effectively

Room: 201 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All | Maximum Capacity: 60

The application of science is dependent upon effective communication. Even within the scientific community, the sharing of information is vital for collaboration and advanced understanding. Distilling complex concepts and datasets into engaging, understandable communications products requires skills in graphic design and storytelling. In this session, participants will learn the principles of science communication, tools for communication, and how best to use those tools. The session will include multiple activities and a discussion of science communication products that participants can apply to their own work.

Annie Carew (she/her) is a science communicator at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science Integration and Application Network. In this role, she works on workshop facilitation, data visualization, document design, and data analysis. Annie has facilitated stakeholder workshops with scientists, practitioners, and civilians across the globe. As a scientist, she is interested in the nexus between humanity and the natural world.

Sidney Anderson (she/her) is a science communicator at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science Integration and Application Network (IAN). At IAN, she develops environmental health report cards, facilitates science communication workshops, and implements new stakeholder engagement techniques. She has presented on science communication at international conferences and facilitated workshops and engagement events in the Philippines, Japan, and India. She is passionate about making science accessible and interesting to the general public.

Alexandra Fries is a Program Manager at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science Integration and Application Network. Alexandra's work in environmental management has been focused on the assessment, monitoring, and management of aquatic, marine, and terrestrial ecosystems. Within IAN, Alexandra conducts data analysis, synthesis, and communication by completing environmental report cards and conducting science communication courses. Alexandra also creates science communication materials such as diagrams, posters, presentations, newsletters, and reports. Alexandra has experience managing projects and staff on local and international projects, liaising directly with partners and colleagues, and providing insights on project direction and goals.

SAT-C.4: Target and Track Environmental Improvements Using CAST

Room: G30 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate | Maximum Capacity: 18

CAST enables planners in the watershed to develop a plan for meeting nitrogen, phosphorus, or sediment load allocation using the most cost-effective strategy. CAST can be used to answer questions about the effect of BMPs on loads, to identify where BMPs will reduce the most load, and assess the impact of implementation on communities and ecosystems. Come to this session to learn how to quantify load reductions from BMPs for grant applications, communicate with locally elected officials, and select/prioritize BMP implementation for restoration and conservation. CAST can also be used to track BMP implementation and effects over time and includes maps that are useful for engaging communities. CAST is free and online so is available for all.

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Helen C. Golimowski is a Watershed Data Analyst at Devereux Consulting. Helen is a 2018 BA graduate of the Environmental Studies Program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), and is currently pursuing an MS in Geographic Information Systems and Spatial Analysis from West Virginia University. While studying at UMBC, Helen was an intern with the Spa Creek Conservancy in Annapolis where she did ground-level data collection and supported GIS mapping projects. Helen also participated in water quality data collection in her undergraduate environmental science courses. She supports Devereux Consulting's projects related to decision-support tools for water quality improvements in major watersheds around the Mid-Atlantic region.

SAT-C.5: Local Dairy Farm Tour

Meeting Location: Headwaters Lodge Loop | Workshop Level: All | Maximum Capacity: 35

Dairy farmers use numerous practices to protect water quality and support climate resilience. There's more work to be done, but we share the same goal—a healthy Chesapeake Bay. On this tour of a family-owned dairy farm, you'll meet local farmers and learn first-hand about their farm operation, environmental practices, and some of the challenges—and opportunities—to improve local waterways and ensure a healthy Chesapeake Bay. Ask any questions you've ever had about dairy farming during your 90-minute, ¼-mile walking tour. The tour is rain or shine, so bring your inclement weather gear. Close-toed shoes are required.

Ron Ohrel is the Director of Environmental Outreach with the American Dairy Association North East. Having worked for environmental nonprofits, academia, consulting, the federal, and now the dairy industry, he has extensive experience with environmental issues affecting the Mid-Atlantic and the Northeast. Throughout his career, Ron has partnered with public and private organizations to raise greater awareness of topics related to agriculture, water quality, endangered species, land use, and environmental policy. Ron has a bachelor's degree in marine science from Coastal Carolina University and a master's degree in environmental management from Duke University.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Saturday, October 19 | 9:00 - 10:30 AM | Session D

SAT-D.1: Building Partnerships to Build Climate Equity

Room: 151 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

In this panel discussion, we will tell how we established a community-serving organization dedicated to building resilience through relationships with nonprofits, community leaders, the District government, and leveraging federal funding. Our Resilience Hub connects residents to essential resources and services, preparing them for both chronic stressors and acute emergencies. Operating in three modes—Normal/Steady State, Disruption, and Recovery—the hub enhances community resilience, fosters skill-building, and strengthens local relationships. We'll discuss the development of the first pilot hub and our plans to expand a network of Resilience Hub throughout Washington, DC.

Dennis Chestnut is a native Washingtonian, a master carpenter, and a vocational educator by profession, but his dedication to youth development, community improvement, and civic duty has led to his involvement with many conservation projects. He is a lover of the outdoors, has a passion for conservation, and has advised many community, business, and government leaders on civic ecology and engagement issues. Dennis has committed himself to restoring the Anacostia River, improving the natural resources located in this community, and connecting the residents, schools, businesses, and community organizations to the natural environment through tangible on-the-ground projects that change places and change lives.

Sherice A. Muhammad is a leader with the Resilience Hub Community Coalition (RHCC) in Ward 7 and addresses climate change and local economic development. She is part of the CERT Training Team and holds leadership roles in public education, including Chair of McKinley Technology High School's LSAT and involvement in DC Public Schools' advisory boards. As Co-Founder of HEADSUP Inc., she advocates for STEM education and received the 2022 Drug-Free Communities Support Program grant. A former ANC Commissioner and regulatory consultant, she serves as Second Vice President of the DC Consumer Utility Board. Sherice is a paralegal and media professional.

Zandra Chestnut has been a resident of Ward 7 in Washington, DC for fifty-three years. She retired from the federal government in 2017 after 40 years, having served as a U.S. Senate staff member. Zandra co-founded the Center for Green Urbanism, LLC, and Creekside, LLC. She is a longtime member of the Exposure Group, African American Photographers Inc., and serves on the boards of Friends of the National Arboretum and the Ward 7 Resilience Hub Community Coalition. Zandra volunteers with community organizations focused on environmental stewardship, including Anacostia Riverkeeper, performing weekly water monitoring as part of the Citizen Science project.

SAT-D.3: Flying into Action with Faith

Room: 160 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

The One Water Partnership, Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake's (IPC) signature program, engages a network of congregations in regionally-based hubs across the watershed by fostering connections between faith communities, their local waterways, technical providers, and municipalities. With 19,000 congregations across the watershed, faith communities control thousands of acres of land with the potential to play a crucial role in protecting and restoring our natural world. Learn how to connect with IPC to build partnerships with your faith communities to

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help them see that watershed stewardship and restoration are spiritual acts that bring us all closer to the blessings of clean water.

Mike Hudson grew up in Baltimore and some of Mike's earliest memories are of fishing on the Bay and exploring waterfront parks with his grandfather. From a young age, he understood the importance of respecting and caring for the natural world and he took this appreciation with him when he attended Washington College, on Maryland's Eastern Shore. In 2018 he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Biology. During college, he worked at Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory, a bird banding station, where he participated in ongoing ecological research. He also taught in the college's writing center and general biology labs, fostering a love for education. He has held positions as Editor of the journal *North American Birds*, educator at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore, field biologist with the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, and *Birds of Urban Baltimore*. He lives outside Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where he spends his free time birding, hiking, and photographing nature.

Mollie Rudow has spent her whole life on Chesapeake shores, growing up in Mayo, Maryland before attending St. Mary's College of Maryland. On the St. Mary's River, she studied Philosophy and English, graduating in 2022. Mollie joined IPC in July of 2022, taking on the role of Lower Eastern Shore Outreach Coordinator. She now coordinates outreach in Anne Arundel and Baltimore counties, as well as for IPC's Trees for Sacred Places program. In her free time, Mollie enjoys fishing and seine netting, gardening, and engaging in amateur ornithology.

Chris Eberly received a B.S. in Computer Science from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, working in the computer industry for a decade before attending graduate school, earning an M.S. in Natural Resources Management/Ornithology from the University of Georgia. He worked in bird conservation for 25 years, recently as Executive Director of the Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership; he was inducted into the National Military Fish and Wildlife Association Hall of Fame in 2021, and is a co-founder of *Frontiers in Ornithology: A Symposium for Youth*.

SAT-D.4: Volunteer Management Basics Boot Camp

Room: 114 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

Whether new to volunteer management or just sharpening those skills to become a better leader of volunteers, enlist in this Volunteer Management Basics Boot Camp! We will cover the basics of the volunteer management cycle: planning, recruitment, orientation, supervision, evaluation, and celebration! This also includes a special focus on building a volunteer recruitment elevator speech for you, your chapter leadership, AND your volunteers. Each workshop attendee will get an elevator speech builder template to adapt and use for your own chapter. This workshop is a great capacity-building opportunity for anyone leading, working with or even being a volunteer.

Susan Sanow, CVA, is the Senior Manager for Volunteer Management Education at Volunteer Fairfax (Fairfax, Virginia). She joined the Volunteer Fairfax Board of Directors in 2008 and joined the staff in 2011. Susan is an experienced meeting facilitator and trainer in challenges facing leaders of volunteers in nonprofits, government, education, and corporate settings. Susan currently leads the volunteer management educational programming including webinars, roundtables, and book clubs. She offers a portfolio of over 20 webinars and workshops related to volunteer management. She has presented educational programs in the local area, statewide conferences, and at national meetings. Susan holds a B.S. in Consumer-Community Services from Michigan State University. She became a Certified Volunteer Administrator in 2020 and joined the board of the Northern Virginia Association of Volunteer Administrators in 2021. In 2022,

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Susan was named an Exemplary Leader in Volunteer Engagement by the Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement (ALIVE).

SAT-D.5: Water Quality Status and Trends Resources

Room: Computer Lab G24 | Workshop Level: Intermediate | Maximum Capacity: 24

This session will teach participants how to leverage available monitoring data and tools to understand and communicate the status and trends in water quality. The session will begin with detailed presentations on the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Data Dashboard and key monitoring products it houses, such as baytrendsmap, the Tributary Summaries, and corresponding StoryMaps. The presentations will introduce attendees to free, science-based, partnership-developed resources available to their organizations. The second half will be focused on technical assistance and helping attendees practice how to utilize these tools. Organizers will solicit feedback on how to improve the tools and offer to partner with attendees.

Kaylyn Gootman received an undergraduate degree in Environmental Studies from UNC-Chapel Hill in 2010. She worked for the UNC Institute of Marine Sciences studying tidal freshwater rivers and estuarine environments. In 2011, Kaylyn was hired as a post-graduate fellow with EPA-ORD. She received her Ph.D. in Ecology from UNC in 2019 and completed a postdoctoral fellowship with West Virginia University. Kaylyn re-joined the EPA with the Chesapeake Bay Program Office in 2022 as an integrated Analysis Coordinator with the Science Branch where she coordinates and provides technical assistance to jurisdictions to explain short and long-term water quality monitoring trends.

Alex Gunnerson is a Geographer with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and supports the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) through geospatial decision support and visualization. Prior to joining USGS, Alex worked at the CBP as an environmental management staffer with Chesapeake Research Consortium. Alex has a bachelor's degree in Geography and International Affairs, with a concentration in Environmental Studies. In his free time, Alex enjoys exploring the watershed through hiking and bicycling.

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Saturday, October 19 | 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM | Session E

SAT-E.1: Empowering and Developing Community Champions

Room: 151 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate

The quote, "If you want to go far, go together" exemplifies the spirit of Potomac Conservancy's Volunteer Leadership Program. Our volunteer leadership team members lead water protection events across the Potomac watershed. As our volunteer base has grown, we've restructured our program to allow our volunteers to grow with us, with the establishment of a mentor leadership program, and geographically based volunteer hubs. This workshop will share the experiences and lessons learned from creating a leveled engagement model for volunteer programming, and how to unlock hidden potential within your volunteer base through trust-based leadership.

Weyessa McAlister is a DC area leader dedicated to environmental conservation and community empowerment. As the Director of Community Conservation at Potomac Conservancy, a leading nonprofit organization committed to safeguarding the lands and rivers of the Potomac, Weyessa plays a pivotal role in connecting people to this national treasure. With a passion for stewardship and advocacy, he oversees the recruitment and training of volunteer leadership team members at Potomac Conservancy, empowering them to lead impactful stewardship events throughout the DC Metro area. In addition to his role at Potomac Conservancy, Weyessa is the founder and Executive Director of Bridge 2 Hope, a nonprofit organization on a mission to provide clean drinking water to rural communities in Ethiopia.

SAT-E.2: Advancing Agroforestry: Strategies for Agricultural Transition

Room: 154 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate

Agroforestry practices have the potential to generate enduring benefits for climate resiliency, water quality, and regenerative and regional food production systems. However, as long-term practices, it can take several years for producers to realize their benefits. These practices may also require significant investments of time and resources for traditional agricultural producers to transition their systems to effectively incorporate agroforestry methods. This session will explore strategies for working with producers to overcome barriers to implementing agroforestry in the Chesapeake, with a particular focus on alley cropping and silvopasture systems.

Katie Brownson is the USFS Liaison to the Chesapeake Bay Program and coordinates the Bay Program's Forestry Workgroup. In 2019, she completed a PhD in Integrative Conservation and Ecology at the University of Georgia. Her dissertation research focused on the social and environmental impacts of Payments for Ecosystem Services programs. Before UGA, she worked for five years at Fungi Perfecti in Washington state, where she did research and development on ways to use fungi for removing contaminants from water and soil.

Austin Unruh is the founder and CEO of Trees For Graziers (TFG), a company helping farmers in Pennsylvania and beyond take their grazing to new heights using silvopasture. It's his goal to make silvopasture as easy and cost effective as possible for farmers, which is why TFG offers everything from planning and funding acquisition to planting and aftercare, while also growing silvo-specific nursery stock. TFG has installed silvopasture systems on over 45 working farms between 2020 and 2024, by far the largest concentration of silvopasture sites in the country.

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Lucas Bolno is The Nature Conservancy's Chesapeake Bay Agroforestry Specialist, working to advance the goals of the Expanding Agroforestry Project throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Lucas draws from his experience working as a forester, as well as practicing agroforestry on his own farm in Rock Hall, Maryland to help growers throughout PA, MD, and DE understand how agroforestry can help meet their needs. In addition to working directly with farmers, Lucas works to create a network of partners to help create the enabling conditions to help agroforestry thrive in the Chesapeake.

SAT-E.3: Building Sustainable Funding from the Start

Room: 160 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

From its inception with one part-time staff, the Potomac Riverkeeper Network (PRKN) aimed for sustainable funding centered on donations from individuals. Starting with a core of dedicated leaders, they built membership, established signature events, and cultivated major donations. Emily Franc, PRKN's Vice President of Development & Philanthropy, will lead us from PRKN's acquisition mailings to the creation of its months-long summer festival Riverpalooza. Baird Straughan will compare the PRKN experience with that of other organizations that did (or did not) follow similar fundraising trajectories.

Baird Straughan built some of the first member databases for nonprofits back in the 1980s when personal computers first became widely available. He was Program Director of the original Public Interested Computer Association, and later Associate Director at the Institute for Conservation Leadership, where he led workshops for executive directors, fundraisers, and organizers. In 2006 the database bug bit him again; he discovered the new tools offered by online client-relationship-management systems, and customized Salesforce to create the WaterGrass database for conservation organizations. Baird has worked extensively with river and watershed organizations and is based in Annapolis, MD on the Chesapeake Bay, where he paddles and sails.

Emily Franc worked on Capitol Hill and in international NGOs, where she honed her skills in transforming nonprofits into thriving financial entities. As Anacostia Riverkeeper she developed and implemented plans to reduce pollution in the Anacostia watershed and to build public awareness of the value of our water resources. She is now Vice President of Philanthropy and Development at Potomac Riverkeeper Network, where she has solidified existing fundraising and guided the organization to expand into new approaches.

SAT-E.4: The Most Practical Behavior Change Tools

Room: 114 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate

Behavior change is a growing priority in the Bay restoration effort. To make lasting changes in the health of the watershed, residents of all backgrounds must be meaningfully engaged and equipped to adopt and sustain new behaviors in their daily routines. How can practitioners bring about enduring behavior change? This interactive session will present the latest behavior change data collected by the Bay Program and give practical, hands-on guidance for using accessible, social-science-based tools, in keeping with best practices. Come and power up your outreach and engagement efforts to bring about meaningful and lasting behavior change.

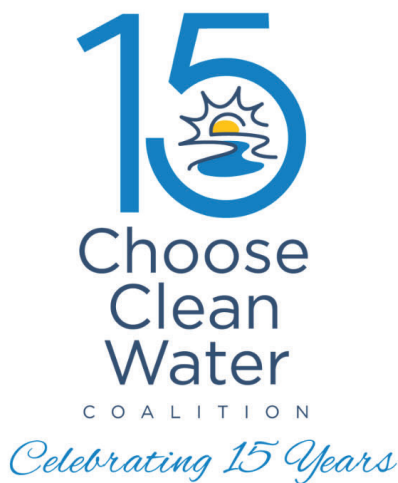
Steve Raabe is president of audience research firm OpinionWorks, founded in 2001 to apply social science-based research practices to foster behavior change and constituent engagement in environmental stewardship and public health. He measures the public's priorities and attitudes for state and local agencies from Oregon to Delaware. He also is the principal author of

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the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Index and a contributor to ChesapeakeBehaviorChange.org. Since 2007, he has been the public opinion pollster for The Baltimore Sun. He offers his social science expertise nationally to behavior change initiatives for The Recycling Partnership, the Gates Foundation, and others.

Suzanne Kilby Etgen is the founding Executive Director of the Anne Arundel County Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA). Suzanne holds a BS in Environmental Science and an MA in Religion and Ecology. Suzanne assists Stewards and organizations in the development of campaigns to change polluting behaviors. She has instructed restoration education programs, directed environmental summer camps, served as Arlington Echo's apiarist (beekeeper), and instructed the low ropes team building instructor certification course.

Julie Patton Lawson is an extremely strong practitioner of public outreach campaigns. Julie is well-known for her prior work on litter, dog waste, and other behavioral questions. As founding executive director of Trash Free Maryland, followed by an appointment to DC Mayor Muriel Bowser's cabinet, Julie has worked with partners across the region to implement campaigns to understand and address community concerns like litter and pet waste, often incorporating adjacent sectors like health and safety. Julie is extremely adept at listening to audience feedback and identifying the connections that will turn into effective action.



The Choose Clean Water Coalition harnesses the collective power of more than 300 nonprofit organizations to advocate for clean rivers and streams in all communities in the Chesapeake Bay region. Join us!

- **Join the Coalition** and add your organization to the Coalition's ranks!
- **Apply to participate** in our Young Professionals of Color Mentorship Program by November 8.
- **Vote for Clean Water!** Use the Coalition's Civic Engagement Toolkit to encourage everyone in your network to vote!
- **Save the date!** The 2024 Choose Clean Water Conference is gathering in Harrisonburg, Virginia *May 19-21, 2025*.



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Saturday, October 19 | 1:30 - 2:30 PM | Session F

SAT-F.1: Grant Funders Panel: Sharing, Learning, Evolving

Room: 151 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

This panel will feature bay-wide funders in a facilitated discussion about how their grant programs are making progress and seeking to advance lasting conservation and restoration across the 64,000-square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed. Panelists will provide a program snapshot and discuss ways programs are supporting diverse and deeply engaged partners and funding scaled conservation and restoration for both immediate results and sustained impact. Attendees will hear from funders about ways their grants programs have matured in recent years and are responding to evolving priorities and needs.

Jake Reilly is the Director of Chesapeake Bay Programs for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Jake has experience in policy and management of federal, state, and local environmental and agricultural conservation programs with a focus on watershed management and ecosystem services. Prior roles include Program Examiner with the White House Office of Management, Budget; Environmental Management Fellow with the Chesapeake Research Consortium; and Forest Policy Associate with American Forests. He holds a B.S. in Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics from the University of Maryland College Park and an M.S. in Environmental Science and Policy from Johns Hopkins University.

Kacey Wetzel is the Vice President of Programs focused on the human dimensions of the Chesapeake Bay Trust's work. Kacey joined the Trust in 2007 and now leads a dynamic team focused on Community Engagement, Environmental Justice, Environmental Education, Capacity Building, and Workforce Development work. Kacey works with public and private funding partners, non-profit organizations, and community leaders to identify and develop projects that improve both community health and environmental well-being. Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, Kacey graduated from Rollins College with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and holds an M.S. in Environmental Science and Policy from Johns Hopkins University, and a CPH in Behavioral Science from the University of South Florida. Kacey is passionate about applying social science for systems change and building stewardship through equitable program design. Prior to her work with the Chesapeake Bay Trust, she worked as an environmental scientist with SAV Engineers.

Megan Milliken McPherson is the Executive Director, Chesapeake Bay Funders Network (CBFN), has over a decade of experience working in, and with, philanthropy to address complex environmental and public health issues at the local, state, and federal level. Prior to this role, Megan held positions with the Institute for Public Health Innovation, YMCA of the Chesapeake, and the Town Creek Foundation. In addition to the aforementioned roles, she spent six years with CBFN supporting the Network's day-to-day operations and learning programs. Originally from Baltimore, MD, Megan graduated with honors from Washington College with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and concentration in Chesapeake Regional Studies. Megan is a Senior Fellow of the Environmental Leadership Program and has served in leadership roles for the D.C. Chapter of the Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy, Washington Regional Food Funders, and the Maryland Philanthropy Network.

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SAT-F.2: Empower GSI Professionals in Your Community

Room: 154 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

The increased implementation of Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) encourages significant economic, social, and environmental benefits through stormwater management. In 2018, the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) established an accredited workforce development training program introducing industry-specific skills and knowledge to under-served communities. This training program provides an engaging curriculum that empowers participants to obtain entry-level employment in the construction and maintenance of GSI while partnering with workforce development organizations that provide job-readiness skills training for participants to secure and maintain their positions. This session will discuss the establishment of critical partnerships and showcase an interactive curriculum that builds confidence in our participants.

Alexandria Wilkins joined the Center for Watershed Protection in 2021 as a Watershed Planner. With a Master's degree in Environmental Science and Management (MESM) – specializing in water resource management – and a background in environmental stewardship and education, Alexandria contributes her knowledge and experience to support the CWP's Clean Water Certificate training program.

Carol Wong is a Senior Water Resources Engineer at the Center for Watershed Protection. She is a Maryland native and has been with the Center since 2014. She graduated with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland and a M.S. in Environmental Engineering from Stanford University. Prior to joining CWP, Carol worked for the private sector as a consultant, managing environmental research and development projects and was a Chesapeake Conservation Corps member at the South River Federation. Carol has experience in program management, bioretention research, BMP design and permitting, construction inspection, and data analysis.

SAT-F.3: Student Research Showcase

Room: 160 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

Students gain valuable experience at conferences by developing and delivering oral or poster presentations. However, for many students, the first opportunity they have to present their research in a formal setting is at large conferences where they may feel overwhelmed or unwelcome in the professional community. This session is designed to provide students with the opportunity to present their methods-based research orally in a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment and receive constructive feedback from their peers and field professionals. In addition, Forum attendees will have the opportunity to engage with cutting-edge research by providing this feedback for student presentations.

Dr. Amanda Knobloch is the Environmental Education Coordinator and Biogeochemistry Researcher at the Morgan State University Patuxent Environmental and Aquatic Research Laboratory (PEARL). At Morgan State, she has focused primarily on science education while starting a new coastal biogeochemistry research program, with a special emphasis on diversifying the geosciences through marine and coastal science educational and research experiences.

Dr. Tom Ihde is a research scientist at the Morgan State University PEARL. He is a fisheries biologist specializing in the ecology of the Chesapeake Bay, which he has studied for the past 25 years. His students and staff focus on environmental and fisheries monitoring, as well as

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modeling the ecological effects of human impacts on the system in the context of a changing climate.

SAT-F.4: Cultivating an Urban Oasis for All

Room: 161 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Introductory

Nature Forward's headquarters, Woodend Sanctuary, is an urban forest patch that was extremely degraded. Restoration efforts are implemented to improve habitat quality while also creating a demonstration and education site for our service area's diverse population, including people with disabilities. Installation of an accessible, permeable nature trail as well as bilingual interpretation of Woodend's land use history allows us to connect with all of Woodend's visitors. Initial projects have been completed but each aspect requires maintenance and evaluation (deer drives, invasive plant management, forest surveying) to create meaningful experiences with our communities, such as veterans and Montgomery Housing Partnership programs.

Bradley Simpson is the Habitat Manager at Nature Forward. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD) where he earned a B.S. in Environmental Science and Policy concentrating in Wildlife Ecology and Management. His work in urban forest management has included research and active management of urban forest patches. He has conducted research in New York City and at Woodend Nature Sanctuary, categorizing thousands of plants in the process. Currently, he manages the restoration of Woodend's natural habitats, specifically the 29 acres of forest. He also shares his knowledge of plants and forest ecosystems through education programs provided by Nature Forward. Bradley has returned to UMD pursuing a master's degree to further his understanding of urban forest ecology.

SAT-F.5: The Pennsylvania Partnership-Funding Continuum

Room: 105 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate

Pennsylvania's newest CAST results and Integrated Water Report indicate that the work put into Countywide Action Plan (CAP) data gathering, funding deployment, and partnership development is yielding healthier streams and higher quality water discharging to the Chesapeake Bay. The path to success for Pennsylvania's Phase 3 WIP started locally and is all about partners, projects, and progress! The locally-led development and implementation of CAPs created a mutually accountable system between local and state partners that has increased action and funding for the entire partnership continuum. This presentation examines local engagement lessons learned, success stories, and results from these relationships.

Kathryn (Kate) Beats serves as the Environmental Group Manager for the Watershed Accountability and Administration Section in the Chesapeake Watershed Restoration Division in the Bureau of Watershed Restoration and Nonpoint Source Management in the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), where she has worked since 2020. She has played a key role in building the countywide action planning process and works with local partners to ensure that it continues to grow and evolve. Kate's roles include coordinating countywide action planning and implementation efforts with local partners in Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Watershed counties and participation with the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership efforts. Before coming to DEP, Kate worked as an Environmental Planner with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for five years. She studied Environmental Studies and Economics at Washington College and earned her Master's in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

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Erin G. Letavic, PE is the consulting CAP Coordinator for 13 counties in Pennsylvania. She is a professional civil engineer and senior project manager at Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc., where her responsibilities include agricultural engineering client management and regional municipal stormwater program advising. She has 20 years of consulting experience. In 2021, she started a four-year term serving as a Gubernatorial Appointee to the Chesapeake Bay Program Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee, representing Pennsylvania's interest in the partnership. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Geology from Allegheny College and a Master of Environmental Engineering from Penn State University.

SAT-F.6: Maintaining Practices & Partnerships in the Anacostia Watershed

Room: 114 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Introductory

Throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed, jurisdictions are seeing the failure of residential green stormwater practices installed through local government programs which results in a reduction of MS4 credits. The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay is working with partners in the Anacostia watershed to support residential property owners in the maintenance and long-term functionality of existing practices through four strategies: (1) a virtual maintenance resource center, (2) free inspections, (3) cost-share maintenance services, and (4) a community volunteer group. The successful outcomes of this project model may be replicated throughout the watershed.

Kristen (KP) Parsons was raised in a military family and therefore moved around the U.S. during the first decade of her life. She visited various state and national parks with her father which sparked Kristen's connection to nature and began her lifelong relationship with the environment. KP graduated from George Mason University with a B.A. in Integrative Studies and Conservation Concentration. During undergrad, Kristen lived in a Sustainability Living Learning Community, studied conservation issues abroad in Kenya, and attended the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation. As a member of the Alliance's Green Infrastructure team, KP's days are focused on the installation and maintenance of green infrastructure in DC and coordination of the RiverSmart Homes Ambassador program. In her spare time, KP enjoys listening to audiobooks; cooking with her partner in their tiny kitchen; and getting outdoors whenever possible to hike, bike, or participate in environmental service projects – her favorite being invasive species removal!

Michael Lynn, owner of Eastern Ecosystems, is an ecological designer based in the United States. He has worked on numerous projects around the world including large-scale watershed restoration, community based agricultural and agroforestry production systems, and ecological restoration. He has integrated his graduate level academic studies with practical training and certifications to design, implement, and manage healthy ecological systems. Michael also has a passion for education and provides training focused on nature-based solutions for many of our challenges.

SAT-F.7: Riparian Forest Buffer Maintenance, The Real Story

Room: 201 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

With over 25 years of experience planting and maintaining riparian buffers, Bobby will show techniques for making sure you and your clients have successful, vigorous, riparian forest buffers. Why do buffers fail? How do we get tree canopy closure in seven years? Fescue suppression and vole resistance. Tree flopping. All this and more from first-hand experience.

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Robert "Bobby" Whitescarver has been involved with riparian forest buffers for over 25 years as a District Conservationist with NRCS and as Virginia's Technical Coordinator for its CREP program when it started over 20 years ago. He and his wife own two cattle farms in the Shenandoah Valley with successful buffers, one planted in 2004 and another in 2021. Bobby is a watershed restoration consultant, award-winning author, and teaches environmental courses at James Madison University.



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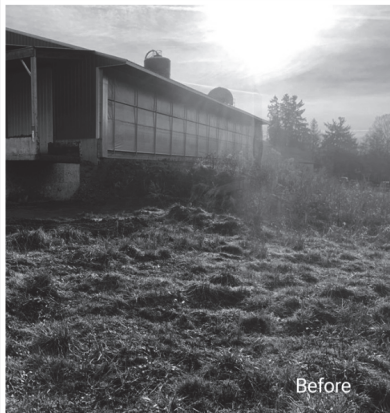
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SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Saturday, October 19 | 3:00 - 4:00 PM | Session G

SAT-G.1: Project Management for Enduring Success

Room: 151 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

This session will cover the fundamental skills and tactics related to professional project management and how those skills can improve the success of conservation projects across a wide variety of programs. Specific topics will include the foundations of project management regarding budgets, timelines, quality, and stakeholder satisfaction, and how these fundamentals relate to successful project delivery in the conservation field. This session will also discuss real-world project outcomes (both in success and failure) and how the audience can apply the skills learned in this session to avoid risks and leverage opportunities for their own projects.

Sarah Xenophon is a Project Manager for TeamAg, Inc. Sarah's responsibilities include farm evaluations, stakeholder coordination, funding application and development, construction management, and riparian corridor planning. Sarah promotes relationship-building with many nonprofit and governmental stakeholders throughout Pennsylvania and works to build strong partnerships with new and existing clients regularly. Her work also involves organizational strategic planning and project delivery across TeamAg's services. Sarah received her B.S. in Environmental Resource Management-Water Science, with a minor in English from Pennsylvania State University in 2017. She also earned her Master's in Project Management from Penn State in 2021. Outside of TeamAg, Sarah serves on the board of Donegal Trout Unlimited, in Lancaster County, and as an Officer on the board of the Butler Cave Conservation Society in Virginia. She has also served on the steering committee for the PA Soil Health Coalition as well as on the PA Riparian Forest Buffer Advisory Committee.

SAT-G.2: Environmental Partners Support Richmond Public Schools

Room: 154 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Introductory

Would you rather work together than in a silo? If you enjoy teamwork, then come to this session to learn about the ongoing partnership between Richmond Public Schools and the City of Richmond, Blue Sky Fund, and Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. Hear about how the partners dove into a community engagement process to develop Richmond's first Environmental Literacy Plan. In addition, the team will present about the partners it took to build the plan and how the plan will be a framework for bringing additional partners to the school district.

Meredeth Dash has worked as the Virginia Environmental Education Specialist since 2017. She grew up in Baltimore, Maryland and always had a curiosity for the outdoors. Her senior year of high school, her Biology class took a field trip to Smith Island and her love of the Bay was born. Prior to coming on board with Alliance, Meredith has been a third grade teacher and an active citizen volunteer. In her role at the Alliance, she manages the RiverWise Schools Project, bringing watershed education to a variety of school districts and after school programs around the Richmond region. Meredith works alongside partners such as [Maymont Foundation](#), [James River Park System](#), [Blue Sky Fund](#), and [NextUp RVA](#). She is an active member of the Virginia Association of Environmental Education and currently serves on their Certification Advisory Board. She holds a Biology degree from James Madison University and a Masters of Education from George Mason University. Her husband is an open-water swimmer and they both spend as much of the summer as possible with their boys and dog, Daisy, exploring the James River. Meredith enjoys camping, cooking, laughing and live music, especially from the Avett Brothers.

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Penelope Gorman has served as the Outdoor Education Supervisor at James River Park System since 2015. She brings a background in community engagement and whitewater paddling to this role, and her passion for water-based adventure drives her commitment to watershed education. At James River Park System, Penelope oversees K-12 field experiences, summer day camps, and adult engagement with the Park system.

Aimee Sobon is a veteran science educator and former High School administrator. Aimee is currently the secondary science specialist for Richmond Public Schools. Passionate about all things related to the natural world, Aimee lives with her wife, four kids, and a menagerie of animals on an urban tiny farm. Aimee has spent her career addressing inequity in public schools and growing leaders to continue this work in the future.

SAT-G.3: Enhancing Outreach: Statewide Community Forestry Initiatives

Room: 160 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Introductory

The Maryland Forest Service (MFS) is in its third year of implementation of the 5 Million Trees (5MT) for Maryland Initiative and first year administering the School Yard Forest Program in partnership with the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education. These programs aim to accelerate the number of trees planted in critical/underserved areas to increase tree equity by cultivating partnerships with schools, environmental organizations, and private landowners. This presentation breaks down the successes and setbacks of the programs thus far and illustrates how these factors push the organization to develop better connections to foster long-lasting forest health benefits.

Jordan Brown is a Community Forestry Coordinator with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) - Forest Service. After earning a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Sustainability, Jordan began his career at Baltimore Tree Trust where he gained experience planting and maintaining trees in an urban environment. Jordan is an ISA Certified Arborist, as well as ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualified. At the Maryland Forest Service, Jordan uses his urban tree planting and volunteer management experience to bolster the organization's conservation efforts throughout the state.

Isaac Whitmore is a 5MT Tree Planting Program Supervisor with Maryland DNR – Forest Service. After earning a degree in Forest Technology from Allegany College of Maryland, Isaac began his career as a utility forester where he managed the vegetation in Right of Ways by monitoring, planning, and inspecting. Isaac served on the Boonsboro Park Board and Tree Committee for eight years. During that time, Boonsboro became a Tree City USA and obtained a Growth Award for eight consecutive years. At the Maryland Forest Service, Isaac uses his urban and traditional forestry skills to promote tree planting throughout the state.

SAT-G.4: Impact of Climate Change on Mental Health

Room: 161 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Advanced

There is no denying that climate change has a significant worldwide impact on mental health, with poor people being disproportionately impacted. Rising temperatures, extreme weather, and environmental degradation are all contributing causes. Climate-related calamities, such as heatwaves, floods, hurricanes, and wildfires, have been linked to an increase in mental health issues, such as drug addiction, depression, anxiety, and PTSD. In addition, there is an increased risk of violent crimes, suicide, and gender-based violence during severe weather. The session emphasizes

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the significance of mitigation initiatives and equitable access to mental health care to address these issues. It also promotes advocacy efforts.

Gabriel Achemu has over a decade of global experience from Africa, Asia, and America. He is a dynamic professional counselor and educator, cyber security analyst, and contemporary management expert. Currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision at Bowie State University, Gabriel holds a Master's in Human Services Administration, an MBA, and a Bachelor's in Philosophy. His diverse background includes roles such as Graduate Assistant/Teaching Assistant at Bowie State University, Senior Special Program Coordinator at the Association for Safe International Travel, and Proctor/Math Coach at the University of Baltimore. International experience as a human resource coordinator and instructor in the Middle East and Asia has enhanced his ability to navigate cross-cultural contexts and foster inclusive environments. Gabriel has volunteered, shared expertise in different spaces, and served in different capacities.

SAT-G.5: Beyond Expectations: Innovations in Cover Cropping

Room: 105 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Introductory

Cover crops have long been recognized as an effective strategy for reducing nutrient and sediment loss in food production. Due to early research and cost-share incentives, Chesapeake Bay farmers lead the nation (and likely the world) in cover crop adoption. Recent findings reveal that cover crops are even more critical for farm profitability and environmental sustainability than previously thought. This session will delve into the latest scientific research and farmer perspectives on the benefits of investing in cover cropping programs. Additionally, it will explore innovative strategies for expanding cover crop implementation.

Kristen Hughes Evans is the Executive Director and founder of Sustainable Chesapeake, a non-profit environmental organization that cultivates prosperity through innovative solutions that benefit farms, communities, and the Chesapeake Bay. Kristen leads Sustainable Chesapeake's efforts to foster effective collaborations that accelerate the adoption of agricultural conservation practices and works with farmers throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed to demonstrate innovative approaches that improve both water quality and farm profits.

SAT-G.6: Transformative Reentry: Empowering Lives, Restoring the Bay

Room: 114 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

This presentation explores the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Workforce Initiative, focusing on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) efforts. Attendees will learn practical lessons in recruiting diverse participants, designing inclusive training programs, and providing essential support services. The session highlights the importance of community engagement and partnership building, showcasing success stories of returning citizens and disenfranchised individuals. These insights are relevant and transferable across sectors, providing attendees with actionable strategies to enhance inclusivity and effectiveness in their own programs and workplaces.

Vanessa Bright is a mom, educator, leader, author, and entrepreneur. In 2019, Vanessa started Maryland Reentry Resource Center with a desire to use her experience, resources, and expertise to empower formerly incarcerated individuals to become thriving and productive citizens in the communities to which they return. Her inspiration is focused on upholding human dignity and creating opportunities that help individuals and organizations remove the social and financial barriers to success. Vanessa is the author of the following, *Dollars and Cents for Parents and*

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Children and Create Your Life Plan Now: Your Roadmap to Reentry and a self-guided journal, “*Greatest Story Ever Told*”. Vanessa holds a Bachelor of Business Management from the University of Georgia, an MBA from Howard University, and a Master of Social Work from Catholic University. She is also a Licensed Master Social Worker.

Jamil Mott Sr. is the Founder and Executive Director of Yieldcamp, Ltd., promoting mental and holistic health through environmental stewardship. Creator of Wellness Informed Environmental Conservation (WIEC), he is certified as a Maryland Master Naturalist, Nature Informed Therapy practitioner, environmental conservation professional, Youth Mental Health First Aid responder, and Chesapeake Bay Storyteller. Jamil also guides nature wellness for Nature Worx, Inc. His mission is to challenge the narrative about black individuals in green spaces and remove the stigma around mental health. Jamil values nature as a teacher and feels honored to share its insights.

SAT-G.7: Success Stories: WV DEP/Chesapeake Bay Trust

Room: 201 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

The Chesapeake Bay Trust and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) have formed a powerful partnership to enhance conservation efforts within West Virginia’s portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Overcoming initial capacity challenges, this collaboration optimized project funding and implementation. By integrating WVDEP into programs like Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3), Community Engagement and Restoration Mini-Grant, and the Watershed Assistance Grant Program (WAGP), diverse initiatives flourished. Gain practical insights into collaborative conservation through a panel discussion, exploring how this partnership evolved to address the specific needs of the State.

Megan Diehl joined the Chesapeake Bay Trust team in August 2023 as a Program Officer for restoration programs. Megan brings a wealth of expertise to her role and a background in Geo-Environmental Studies (including both bachelor’s and master’s degrees). She brings expertise as a Certified Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional, Certified Stormwater Inspector, and Qualified MS4 Stormwater Compliance Professional. During her tenure at the Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council, Megan showcased her commitment to effective stormwater management and watershed planning, serving Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties in West Virginia. Her prior role as the Environmental Planner and Stormwater Program Manager in Pennsylvania’s Upper Allen Township further underscores her dedication to regulatory compliance and community engagement. Megan’s comprehensive background continues to drive her significant impact on restoration programs at the Chesapeake Bay Trust.

Kayleigh Katzenberger, Program Coordinator at Chesapeake Bay Trust.

Samuel Canfield grew up in Webster County, WV, and he thanks the Lord Jesus Christ that he was able to attend Glenville State College where he received Bachelor’s degrees in biology and chemistry. In 2019, he graduated with a Master’s degree in biology from West Liberty University, while studying the habitat conditions of the riverine, macrophyte hornleaf riverweed (*Podostemum ceratophyllum*). Upon graduation, Samuel moved to Gainesville, Florida to work in the University of Florida’s Spatial Epidemiology and Ecological Research Laboratory as a GIS Technician and Spatial Modeler and also in the Quantitative Disease Ecology and Conservation Lab as a Research Technician. Going on three years now, Samuel has held the position of Urban Best Management Practice (BMP) Specialist in the Watershed Improvement Branch at the WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP). His position is centered around representing WV in technical work groups at the Chesapeake Bay Program, and the verification and

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reverification of urban BMP practices for inclusion in the Chesapeake Assessment Scenario Tool (CAST) model. Coinciding with that work, Samuel has contributed to the WVDEP and Chesapeake Bay Trust partnership through reviewing CBTrust Request for Proposals and projects submitted, and meeting with potential and selected applicants.



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Saturday, October 19 | 4:30 - 5:30 PM | Session H

SAT-H.1: Resiliency Through Partnerships: Building Community Trust

Room: 151 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Introductory

Norfolk-based nonprofit known for successful collaborations, Elizabeth River Project, recently introduced the Knitting Mill Creek Ecodistrict and opened the Ryan Resilience Lab. This presentation will cover the development of the Ecodistrict and address challenges such as managing diverse motivations and long-term strategies while highlighting community engagement and best management practices with secured funding. Key presentation highlights include the Ryan Resilience Lab, which models urban coastal resilience against rising sea levels with sustainable design and a dynamic rolling easement for proactive deconstruction, and the Watershed Action Plan, emphasizing equitable restoration and community engagement, including our partnership with Norfolk State University for restoration.

Jamie Melvin is passionate about the importance of community relations and community action. She has a bachelor's degree in Environmental and Sustainability Studies and a master's degree in Environmental Science and Advocacy for Social Justice and Sustainability. She has over 9 years of community engagement and education experience with the Fairfax County Park Authority and Virginia Beach Friends School, where she taught First Grade and was their Co-Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Jamie has been with the Elizabeth River Project since 2023 as their Engagement Coordinator. She has led the coordination of the Knitting Mill Creek Ecodistrict and works closely with the North Colley Business Association. She is also a member of the Colley Community Center board. When not working, you will most likely find Jamie at a local farmers market or thrift shop, sitting on the beach, or reading a good book.

SAT-H.2: Educating Diverse Audiences Utilizing Horseshoe Crabs

Room: 154 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Introductory

Learn how Under the Sea and Glen Echo Park Aquarium (GEPA) feature the unique evolution, biology, and conservation concerns of the Atlantic/American Horseshoe Crab to engage diverse audiences in Chesapeake Bay conservation and to train our varied workforce, including differently-abled volunteer students from the LAB School of DC. Since 1995, Under the Sea has featured horseshoe crabs and their medicinal importance to humans in school assemblies, community events, and private parties. Through our Touch Tank experience with horseshoe crabs, GEPA provides visitors a gateway to discover the importance of species diversity, water quality, habitat restoration, and Chesapeake Bay conservation.

Andrew Wilson is the founder and Director of Under the Sea (1995), an education outreach company that travels to schools in the Delmarva area to teach about the Bay and the ocean. In 2015, he opened Glen Echo Park Aquarium (GEPA), with the goal of introducing guests to the life of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Since 1992, Andrew has taught countless children and adults about the conservation of the aquatic environment. He served in the US Navy, is a former SCUBA instructor, and volunteered on the Stranding Team in VA Beach. He is also a proud husband and the father of two young adults.

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SAT-H.3: Pathogens & POCs in Local Waterways

Room: 160 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: All

Community outreach, water quality monitoring, and establishing a design for the future all contribute to Lower Allen Township's approach to appendices added to the NPDES PAG-13 Phase 2 MS4 Permit by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Impairments were cited in two local waterways, both flowing to the Susquehanna River. To find a source for the impairments, Lower Allen Township embarked on a water quality investigation enlisting property owners, volunteers, and organizations to complete the task and submit a final report with the annual MS4 report.

Barbara Arnold is the Environmental Coordinator at Lower Allen Township. As the Environmental Coordinator, she handles all outreach and education for stormwater and solid waste. Barbara has an Environmental Education degree from Clarion University and has been in the environmental field for the last 25+ years with the last 8 years in municipal government. Barbara is a board member of the Cumberland County Solid Waste Authority, a member of Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania, CBLP level 1 certified, and an NPDES stormwater inspector. Barbara is also a Master Watershed Steward and ALLARM volunteer sampling monthly in Trindle Spring Run. Barbara is currently enrolled in the MNR program at Virginia Tech and resides in Mechanicsburg, PA with her two daughters. Lower Allen Township was a 2023 Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence and a Water Environment Federation Innovation Award Recipient in the 2023 MS4 Phase II Innovation Award Winner for this project.

SAT-H.4: Non-Traditional Funding Streams for Organizational Sustainability

Room: 161 Lemon Building | Workshop Level: Advanced

Developing non-profit funding mechanisms is a key factor in the successful implementation and maintenance of long-term programs and collaborations. Grant funding often favors new and innovative projects, but rarely funds ongoing efforts that will sustain a non-profit organization or program, year after year. Over time, the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional (CBLP) program has cultivated a multi-faceted approach to funding through a mix of program and service fees and partner contributions, greatly reducing dependency on grant-based financial support.

Stacie McGraw is the Green Infrastructure Programs Director for Wetlands Watch and the Virginia Co-Coordinator of the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional (CBLP) Program. Stacie's focus areas include living shorelines, CBLP, native plants, invasive plant species, and Wetlands Watch's small grants program. She is a level 1 Certified CBLP, a Certified Urban Stormwater Professional, a Southeast Virginia Regional Co-Coordinator for the Plant Virginia Natives Initiative, and a Member of the Living Shoreline Collaborative Steering. Stacie is a graduate of the Horticulture program at Tidewater Community College and a Level 1 certified CBLP.

Katie Pinkham is Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council's (CCLC) Program Coordinator and directs the operations of the CBLP program, as well as other CCLC initiatives. Ms. Pinkham leads project accounting, logistics, communications, graphic design, and outreach efforts, as well as managing CBLP's recertification program. Using her nearly two decades of experience in customer service, Ms. Pinkham takes pride in providing friendly support to partners and the community of certified CBLP professionals. Ms. Pinkham holds a BA from Marymount University.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

SAT-H.5: RiverSmart Communities: Designing for Lasting Stewardship

Room: 105 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

The RiverSmart Communities program helps DC meet its stormwater reduction requirements. Its goal is to install long-lasting green infrastructure practices at houses of worship. The practices (BMPs) must be designed to be durable and resilient to increasingly large storm events. As important, the BMPs must be designed to be maintained and cared for. Their long-term success depends on long-term stewardship. We will explore the design of long-lasting BMPs and the outreach and engagement strategies used to build lasting ownership of their required maintenance. Finally, we will discuss the funding and tactics behind RiverSmart that ensure program sustainability between grant cycles.

Bryan McKnight is a landscape architect and project manager at Timmons Group. He formerly managed the RiverSmart Communities program for the Anacostia Watershed Society. He is passionate about watershed issues and making green infrastructure more accessible and widely adopted in the public realm. His work focuses on the intersection of stormwater management and urban design.

Ariel Trahan is an Environmental Protection Specialist with DC's Department of Energy and Environment. Previously, she was the Director of River Restoration Programs at the Anacostia Watershed Society. Ariel's past and current work focuses on the restoration of DC's waterways. It includes projects that impact DC rivers directly like the Kingman Lake 2.0 restoration project and indirectly like the RiverSmart program. Her goal is to make DC's waterways swimmable and fishable.

SAT-H.6: Connecting Communities to Accessible Water Monitoring

Room: 114 Turner Building | Workshop Level: Intermediate

The Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative (CMC) is working to make volunteer water monitoring more inclusive and accessible. This session will delve into the principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and how they are integral to effective community science initiatives. By highlighting case studies and utilizing a community connection chart, we will explore how the CMC has successfully linked community concerns to specific monitoring parameters, fostering deeper understanding and engagement. Participants will learn about the challenges and successes in making water monitoring accessible to all, and discover practical strategies for empowering their communities to take an active role in water conservation.

Matthew Kierce is the Chesapeake Monitoring Outreach Coordinator for the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative (CMC), working with the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA) at their national headquarters in Gaithersburg, MD. Growing up in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, Matthew developed a deep passion for the conservation of the Bay. He is dedicated to ensuring that communities have access to vital water quality data right in their backyards, empowering them to participate in the stewardship of their local environments. His work focuses on making volunteer water monitoring more inclusive and accessible, fostering a stronger connection between people and their natural resources.

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SAT-H.7: This is the WAY: Watershed Forestry

Room: 201 Turner Building | Workshop Level: All

Riparian Forest Buffers (RFB) are recognized in York, PA as a key component of past, present, and future restoration goals. The Watershed Alliance of York (WAY) is a volunteer-based non-profit organization that was able to implement 70 acres of RFB in two growing seasons. Learn how this was possible with an array of unique and diverse partners and private landowners, about our trials and failures, and hear successes with five mini case studies.

Rachel Stahlman is the volunteer President of the Watershed Alliance of York (WAY). She has served York County, PA, since 2020 at the Planning Commission as the Countywide Action Plan Coordinator in partnership with the Pennsylvania Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan. Rachel is a graduate of Millersville University with a Geography degree. She lives in the Lower Susquehanna River Basin of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Emily Neideigh is the volunteer Secretary of the Watershed Alliance of York (WAY). She has served York County, PA, since 2018 at the Conservation District as the Watershed Specialist. Emily is a graduate of Millersville University with a degree in Biology. She lives in the Lower Susquehanna River Basin of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

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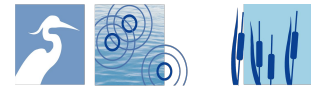


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