

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to our Spring Newsletter

In experiential learning, context and engagement are important and should exist within real world applications. Essential elements of experiential learning are that the experience is driven by student interest, experiences are co-created and shared and experiences are defined by real world environments that enhance academic studies.

Another important element of experiential learning is assessment and demonstration of benefit. To achieve this, it is important that students see themselves as "Difference Makers" who know their actions have relevance and importance to how the world works or can work in their vision. It is important that they experience a "real world" authentic sense of agency and professional and civic responsibility in their activities and see a tangible benefit to others in their work.

In experiential learning, we recognize four aspects of sustainability: physical, social, emotional and spiritual. All these aspects have the most efficacy when they serve something greater than ourselves. In order for us to survive and thrive as individuals and as a society, we must be able to transcend our personal wants and accept disciplines and sacrifices for the benefit of the greater good. If we do not, we will consume ourselves to death socially, interpersonally and individually.

In this issue, I am proud to showcase the fine programs and accomplished individuals whose work has both fulfilled their lives and enhanced so many others. Here you will learn about a faculty member's journey to understand "sustainability," how JEP's "Young Scientists" program successfully pivoted to serve at-home students, how our Mock Trials illuminate the judicial process, how the Global Learning Initiative connects students with the world, how investing in our communities transforms lives, how the arts inspire us and carries our voice and vision, and how our Global Research program places students at "ground zero" of change.

We are more deeply connected by what we believe in than by what we do. Affirmative values, not transactions or products, are the heart of meaningful experiential learning. We all need life skills to learn in a rapidly evolving and challenged world and tools to "sustain, survive and thrive."

Our individual and professional challenge is to become "Difference Makers" who look at each of our daily choices and actions and their consequences as opportunities to move all of us closer to a shared place of balance and equity.

Best,



Tammy Anderson  
Associate Dean, Experiential and Applied Learning

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*To learn more, visit our website:  
<https://dornsife.usc.edu/exl/>*

## WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

**Professor Jill Sohm, Environmental Studies**

Last year, Jessica Dutton, John Heidelberg and I created a program to support the infusion of sustainability across the curriculum in the Dornsife College that was supported by the Provost's Office, the Presidential Working Group on Sustainability, and the Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies. In the lead up to and implementation of that program, I thought and learned a lot about the questions below and wanted to share what I've learned with others who may be interested in what it means to incorporate sustainability into our classes.

### What is sustainability?

I have struggled with this question often over the last three years or so; even as a professor in the Environmental Studies Program. Many of us can recognize environmental sustainability in practice as policies and actions that increase water conservation, reduce waste, support use of renewable energy, etc. However, this understanding is incomplete and does little to help educators understand how to *teach* sustainability as a discipline. In order for us to advance sustainability at USC, we must understand that it is both a critically important goal for our world and a field of study and practice.



Fortunately, there are some answers to these questions. While not concrete, engaging with them helped me find my own understanding of sustainability and influenced how I approach teaching in the classroom. Under President Carol Folt, USC has positioned sustainability as one of its four key priorities and many across campus are actively engaged in figuring out how to achieve sustainability in education, research, and operations. As part of this effort, I believe it is critical for USC to find a shared understanding of what sustainability is, and how we teach it to our students.

The many definitions of sustainability can help us reach this shared understanding. The contemporary use of the term began in the early 1970s. One of the earliest definitions comes from the 1987 UN publication, "Our Common Future," otherwise known as the Brundtland Report, where Sustainable Development was defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Around the same time, the concept of the three pillars of sustainability emerged. Many of us have seen a diagram like the one below that shows a sustainable world must include environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

The origins of this concept are a bit hazy; some would argue that this view was adopted as the norm without strong theoretical underpinnings, which explains some of the difficulty and confusion in defining sustainability today (Purvis et al. 2019). My own concept of sustainability emphasizes well-being for all people within the ecological limits of our planet. I am drawn to the idea of Just Sustainability put forth by Julian Agyeman and colleagues (2003): "The need to ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner, whilst living within the limits of supporting ecosystems."

## WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY? (continued)

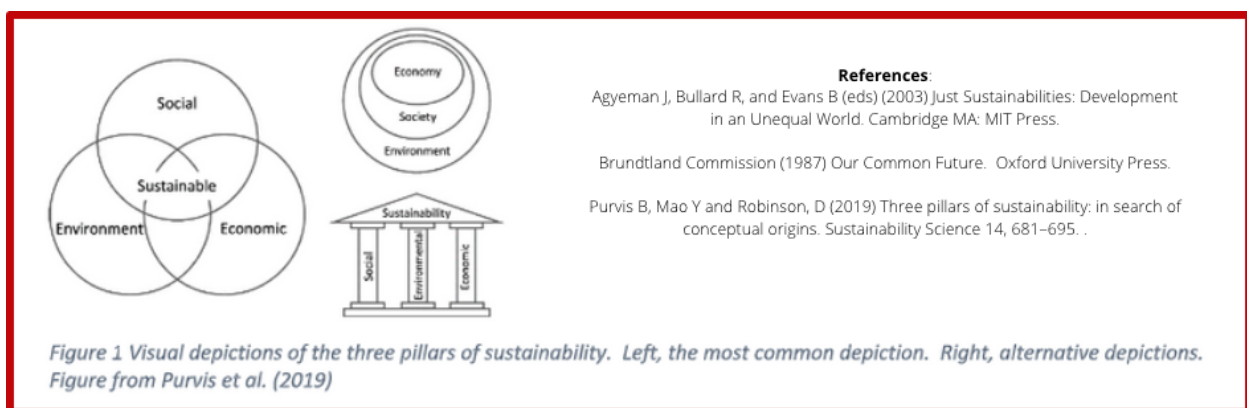
Essentially, we need to refocus the idea of sustainability *beyond* environmental issues to include how they intersect with and affect people and societies. We depend on healthy ecosystems for our survival and a sustainable world will not be achieved if the benefits do not extend to all. The search for a shared definition of sustainability is only important inasmuch as it can help us understand what sustainability is and most important, how we achieve it.

With this understanding of inclusive, just sustainability in mind, we now address the question of how we teach it to our students. Fortunately, there is also a rich and varied literature on sustainability education. Some focus on the idea of sustainability competencies – sets of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable students to think and act to solve sustainability challenges while others promote the use of the sustainable human and environmental systems framework to create sustainable societies. A central thread in all approaches is the recognition that sustainability, as both a practice and an academic discipline, is about creating and implementing solutions. We need to give our students the tools to identify and solve challenges and evaluate and activate solutions in a just and equitable way in real world situations.

Experiential learning - where students *learn by doing and reflecting* on the experience, is at the heart of effective and transformative sustainability education. This can take the form of a place-based assignment in which students determine the sources of the city of LA's water and create a plan for decreasing imported water; designing and implementing a study with students to determine the nature of food waste in USC dining halls; or taking students to the Bahamas to experience the sustainability challenges island nations are confronting in the face of climate change.

While these are all examples from my own Environmental Studies Program, these experiential learning based programs and activities are now being developed and implemented across Dornsife and USC. It's not easy to create these engaged learning experiences for our students, especially when they involve open-ended inquiry without clear cut answers and solutions. But with our dedicated and capable faculty who are supported by an administration that endorses this work, both in vision and financial support, the pieces are in place. Working together, we can advance experiential sustainability education forward so both our faculty and our students will achieve measurable impact.

I encourage my colleagues to engage in experiential learning practices so we can produce capable, empowered and involved graduates with the passion, motivation and tools to solve one of the great challenges of our time.



## **NEW PARTNERSHIP LEADS TO STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**Quentin Strobe**

**CEO, NEW Community Investments**

My name is Quentin Strobe and I am President and CEO of NEW Community Investments. Our work focuses on creating and implementing support for community based small businesses through lending, technical assistance, and mentorship. The organization has a mission of creating financial mobility for the companies, families, and women owned enterprises we engage, with a goal of creating entrepreneurs. NEW also has a 30-year history of developing affordable housing, and providing financial training and support in underserved and underutilized communities. In my prior history, I served as a banking executive who managed all aspects of the retail and small business banking processes for Bank of America and US Bank.

Over the last 50 years, African American and Latino owned businesses have faced a number of structural issues related to access to traditional capital. These issues have plagued the opportunities for businesses of color to grow, create, and retain jobs for the community and generate prospects for wealth generation for these entrepreneurs.

The financial services industry has played a traditional role as funder of small businesses, but for a number of reasons been inconsistent in the delivery of capital to these small entities. The Small Business Administration has played a huge role in helping small companies generate the needed capital to grow their enterprises, but there is still a large number of companies that are

not part of the funding ecosystem and lack the sufficient funding to grow their firms.



CDC Small Business Finance, a Community Development Financial Institution based in San Diego, California, deployed an African American loan fund three years ago and engaged my firm to manage a process of analyzing a number of these loans made to businesses of color. Using 22 datasets, we have been able to discover where there are opportunities to improve on process, outcomes, and impacts with the goal of increasing loans to businesses of color. I have worked with 7 research assistants from the USC Dornsife Office of Experiential and Applied Learning on campus.

All of these students played an important role and should be recognized here: Molly Triana, Trinity Lee, Luis Gruson, Danielle Thibeadeaux, Carol Hu, Ishani Desai, and Sarah Hampton. Their student involvement was key to analyzing data, and their written contributions will lead to additional rounds of this work that will focus on opportunities to improve structural issues that exist across the small business lending and investment landscape in relation to people of color.



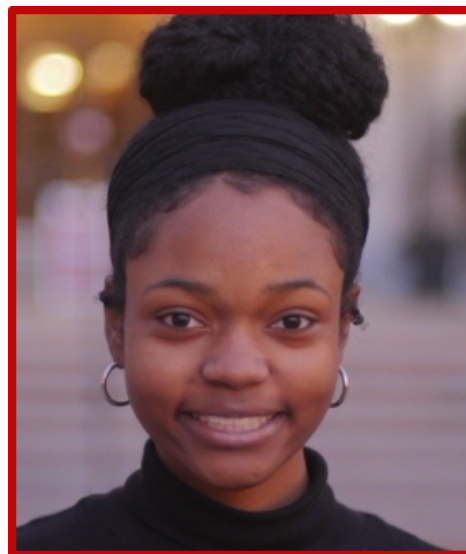
## NEW PARTNERSHIP LEADS TO STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES (continued)



**"After researching and analyzing these businesses over the past months, we all feel inspired to take the next steps to improving business opportunities for minority-owned businesses beyond this project. The next step is action,"** says Molly Triana, our lead research assistant and a senior in Dornsife.

This project has been part of an inaugural program to partner USC students with outside organizations for research opportunities. We hope to continue creating impact for the local community with the work of USC students.

**"The student team is composed of both graduate and undergraduate students at USC who come from a variety of academic, cultural, and geographic backgrounds. This kind of diverse investment and perspective has allowed the team to design new, meaningful methods of engagement and analysis,"** says Trinity Lee, research assistant on this project. The work done here has given them the opportunity to take a truly hands on approach in shifting the economic landscape for Black and Latinx people in Southern California and beyond.



This work will be the first step in financial institutions understanding the existing opportunities in the market and assist in the planning of socially motivated programming to close the existing gaps in lending and investment in small firm owned by people of color. I consider the contributions of the students on this project instrumental and look forward to working with the University on the next phase.

## USC ARTS AND CLIMATE COLLECTIVE

**William Warrener**

**Lead Producer, USC Arts in Action**

*We recently launched the pilot USC Arts and Climate Collective, an exciting initiative to support student-led projects that connect arts, culture and storytelling with sustainability and environmental justice issues. All USC students are eligible to apply and in our first round, the Collective made 13 awards of \$1,000 to students from across 9 schools for projects spanning podcasts, documentaries, new musical compositions and community-centered photography exhibitions.*

*In the words of awardee Cameron Audras, "now, more than ever, we need creative action to take a lead in our efforts to address the enormous and inequitable risks posed by climate change. The arts can not only show, but indeed make us feel the very problems we are facing. They have a significant role and responsibility to encourage the transformational thinking required to move us away from our current destructive practices, and towards a commitment to environmental sustainability."*

*Cameron and Irene Franco Rubio's projects both demonstrate a commitment to using creativity and the arts to expand dialogue and action on climate change amongst their peers, and we couldn't be more excited to watch their work grow. Read on for details of their projects and what's brought them to this point.*



**Cam Audras** is an L.A. native who studies Viola Performance and Environmental Studies at USC. As an undergraduate researcher studying attitudes towards solar energy in the desert, he became fascinated with the role that storytelling plays in engaging communities with environmentalism. He's performed in acclaimed venues across the United States, Europe, and Australia and hopes to combine his passion for environmental advocacy with his love for music to encourage tangible progress towards environmental sustainability and justice.

**Project Description:** The Resilience Project unites USC composers, musicians, dancers, and storytellers to demystify and engage audiences not only with the scope of sustainability challenges but also tangible solutions. In pondering critical facets of sustainability, the project breaks down the overwhelming climate crisis in a digestible and engaging way through spoken word poetry that informs choreographic interpretations, accompanied by a world premiere from composer Quenton Blache, performed by Cam Audras and Elise Haukenes. Audiences will be encouraged to craft their own climate action pledges to take tangible steps towards climate resilience, with the potential to engage students across USC and beyond.



**Irene Franco Rubio** is an activist, writer, and organizer based in Phoenix, Arizona. She is studying Sociology at USC and minoring in Race, Ethnicity and Politics. Irene is an Agent of Change within the Dornsife Civil Rights Advocacy Clinic and a Norman Topping First-Gen Scholar. A young Latinx woman of Guatemalan and Mexican descent, Irene is rooted in community and devoted to movements for social, racial, and environmental justice. She is committed to advocating for BIPOC communities through intersectional movement building and uplifting historically underrepresented voices. Irene is a Gen Z media professional centering her work at the intersection of activism, media, and journalism as a catalyst for change.

**Project Description:** "If You're Feelin' Civic" (IYFC) is a BIPOC community-led podcast and digital movement based in Phoenix, Arizona that centers environmental, social, and racial justice in its content. Through critical community conversations, it gives space to BIPOC individuals and communities to uplift their voices and share their perspectives on fighting systemic racism, inequality, and various forms of injustice while educating BIPOC communities on the increasing importance of civic engagement, community advocacy, and activism. Far more than a podcast, IYFC is a movement that seeks to engage and mobilize communities of color to become civically engaged, to make "civic" a feeling that inspires action and ultimately creates long-term sustainable change for historically oppressed communities.

# STUDENTS TACKLE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABILITY GOALS ON INTERNATIONAL TEAMS

**Peter Hilton**

**Director, Overseas Studies**

With students unable to study abroad due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of Overseas Studies sought out virtual international opportunities. In addition to sponsoring 40 students to participate in individual virtual internships in five global cities last fall and this spring, Overseas Studies sponsored 15 students this spring for a 5-week, team-based internship focused on United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This virtual Global Internship Program is organized by the Global Learning Collective (GLC), a consortium of experiential education organizations on four continents. The goal is to connect talented students to solve real-world organizational challenges related to UN SDGs, giving students a platform to professionally and personally develop their intercultural competencies and prepare to become global leaders with the know-how to successfully navigate in a multicultural environment.

What sets these internships apart from traditional internships is not only the focus on sustainability, but the team approach to sustainability projects. Each team of 4-6 people is comprised of US college students, host country students, and staff supervisors from the organizations in charge of the project. The 15 USC interns worked on projects for five different organizations.



Raízs, a small Brazilian enterprise, connects small organic producers to the tables of large urban centers in a farm-to-consumer model that cuts out middlemen. Demeter Europe leads the digital transformation of Europe's agri-food sector through the rapid adoption of advanced IoT technologies, data science and smart farming. Eaton, based in Singapore, provides energy-efficient solutions that help customers effectively manage electrical, hydraulic and mechanical power. Habitat for Humanity Shanghai works with families in China to build strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter. The Sustainability Institute, near Cape Town, focuses on sustainable African futures through student, faculty and consulting research.



## **STUDENTS TACKLE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABILITY GOALS ON INTERNATIONAL TEAMS (continued)**

Below we highlight two Dornsife students who interned with the Sustainability Institute.

Another group of Dornsife students will participate in 8-week GLC virtual international team internships this summer. GLC will have some exciting new organizations and projects for the students in addition to the spring offerings.

### **Samuel Jump**

*Major: Human Biology*

*Minor: Health Care Studies*

*Placement: Sustainability Institute*

My team and I proposed a model to the Sustainability Institute on how to both mitigate undernourishment and increase the biodiversity of indigenous ingredients in the Western Cape province in South Africa. I strengthened my ability to empathize with the unfamiliarity of different cultures and perspectives, but also the patience required to work with an international team on different time zones, with different cultural work practices and habits. It provided me with the soft skills that I will certainly take moving forward as an aspiring physician but also contentment for the work my peers and I did. Additionally, I found a few friends for life!



### **Murad Jah**

*Major: Environmental Studies*

*Minor: Marine Biology*

*Placement: Sustainability Institute*

Our team looked at the economic viability of small enterprises that were trying to sell natural products in South Africa, namely local herbs and salts, then wrote the storyline for marketing them.

We also advised on the environmental sustainability of the endeavor. I really enjoyed working with students from different parts of the world on this project. Beyond the work, a highlight of this experience was the cultural activities GLC organized, which were a nice break from our hard work. We got to virtually learn local dances, learn about and see local foods, and have a virtual tour of graffiti in Cape Town led by an expert on the social and political background. The program also had chat sessions where we could talk with our teammates and people on other GLC teams about where we all came from. That was another highlight for me.



## AGENTS OF CHANGE STUDENT WORK

**Kath Rogers**

***Program Manager, Agents of Change***

USC Dornsife's new Agents of Change: Civil Rights Advocacy Initiative is the country's first civil rights clinic at the undergraduate level. Launched at the start of 2021 by civil rights attorney and director, Olu Orange and USC Dornsife's Associate Dean of Experiential and Applied Learning Tammara Seabrook-Anderson, Agents of Change is a two-year program that provides students with an opportunity to work with nearly 40 civil rights organizations in the areas of community activism, governmental policy, and the legal system.

An important goal of Agents of Change is to further link USC's classrooms to the Los Angeles community. Students have an opportunity to work alongside Angelenos who are fighting for their own rights -- in the streets, in courtrooms, and through public policy efforts. The Agents of Change pedagogy is twofold: students "learn by doing" through their work with community organizations and while learning about theories of change in the classroom based on real world, civil rights advocacy experiences. The program aims to provide equitable access to this unique opportunity by paying competitive stipends to ensure that students can afford to pay their bills while participating in important activist work. By the end of the two-year program, students will graduate with not only a passion for justice, but also with a deep understanding of how to effectively create change in their communities.

After the first semester of the Agents of Change initiative, students are already making an impact. Below are several summaries of the accomplishments of participating students.

For more information on Agents of Change, visit <https://uscagentsofchange.org/>



### **Katherine Owojori**

Katherine is doing her field work with Black Lives Matter of Los Angeles (BLM-LA). Katherine is helping to pass two important bills to combat police violence against Black and Brown communities in California. [Senate Bill 2](#) (the "Police Decertification Act") would create a process by which California police could be decommissioned for misconduct.

[Assembly Bill 118](#) (the "CRISES Act") would allocate funds to community-based, non-police alternatives for mental health and other emergencies. Katherine has helped to create fact sheets, logos, and other coalition materials to educate the public and lobby the California legislature on these bills.

### **Donald Ward**

Donald is doing his field work with Black Lives Matter of Los Angeles (BLM-LA). Donald is researching and analyzing public records from police shootings throughout California. A major aspect of Donald's analysis is highlighting disparities between police reports and eye-witness statements about the facts underlying these shootings. His research is being used to support state and local policy efforts to curb police violence and excessive use of force. His research is also being used to inform public information tools that allow access to information on police shootings throughout the state -- here is one such website where Donald's research will be published:

<https://prosecutekillercops.org/>





## **AGENTS OF CHANGE STUDENT WORK (continued)**



### **Irene Franco Rubio**

Irene is doing her field work with Color of Change, a national racial justice advocacy organization. Irene helped to pass a first-of-its-kind reparations resolution in Oakland Unified School District. The resolution will set a precedent for school districts around the country -- especially the Los Angeles Unified School District. The resolution will create an emergency fund for Black students and their families who are hardest hit by the COVID pandemic, create a plan to address the Black "digital divide," and create a Black Students and Families Thriving Task Force to set goals and measure progress for success outcomes for Black students.

### **Annaleigh Nguyen**

Annaleigh is doing her field work for CARECEN, a national immigrants' rights organization focused on the Central American Community. Annaleigh has created a Pre-Law Pathway presentation aimed at underserved immigrant high school students. Annaleigh has worked with high school teachers throughout the region to develop an immigrant youth audience for her presentation, which encourages students considering a "pre-law" college path. She gives practical tips on mastering the SAT, college admissions, and how to plan for law school. A first-generation daughter of Vietnamese immigrants, Annaleigh encourages immigrant youth to join the practice of law, which is currently one of the country's least diverse professions. Here is a link to one of Annaleigh's presentations:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/u/5/d/1kIIVeks5M1WULyiQ4yIM04tMglu4JYN-qggTOVIHDSY/edit?usp=sharing>



### **Alyssa Matias**

Alyssa is doing field work for the ACLU of Southern California working to oppose expansion of jails in Orange County, as well as working to address civil rights violations against incarcerated individuals. Alyssa has taken initiative to resolve a number of rights and safety violations occurring inside of local jails. Her work has resulted in an exterminator being sent to an OCSD facility to improve living conditions for incarcerated women. She has helped incarcerated individuals file grievances, obtain medical care and mental health treatment, and report civil rights violations to jail command staff.

Currently, she is working on a demand letter to reinstate hot meals in Orange County jails that have been denied for a year now, as well as a letter to the Office of Independent Review regarding the inadequacy of mental health care in OC jails.

## GREEN STEM KITS ENGAGE AND EXCITE STUDENTS AT HOME!

**DJ Kast**

**Director, STEM Education Programs, JEP**

The fight for a more sustainable world requires difference makers and advocates at all levels of society. The Joint Educational Project's Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) Programs - specifically the Young Scientists Program (YSP) - aim to empower local Los Angeles based students and teachers by educating them about sustainability and the environment by providing tools for thinking about how they as individuals impact the world and how they can become change makers. The Young Scientists Program (YSP) achieves this by bringing inquiry-based, hands-on scientific laboratory experiences directly to students and their teachers.

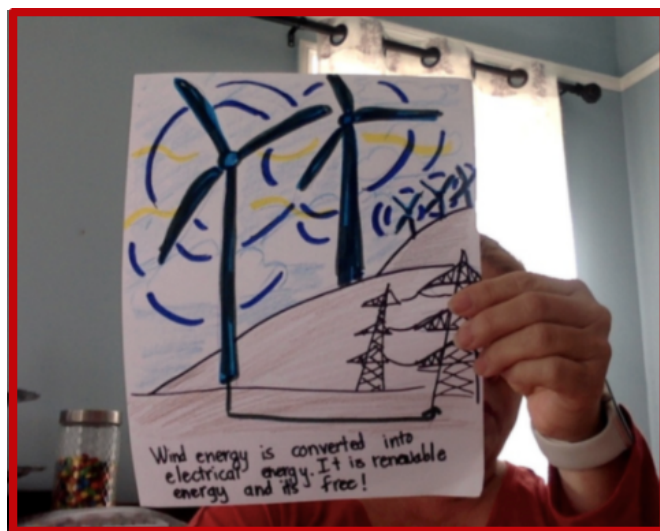
In 2020, USC's Joint Educational Project (JEP) was awarded a grant from the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) to bring "Green STEM" education to students and teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The Green STEM team developed upper elementary grade-level lesson plans with exciting hands-on activities to teach students about fossil fuel emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>), the greenhouse effect, and reducing their carbon footprints. Equipped with knowledge of how individuals can reduce their carbon footprints, students were going to design "greenification projects" to implement in their schools (e.g., composting, hydro/aquaponics systems, community gardens, etc.).

*"As a researcher who studies climate change, I am passionate about living sustainably," remarked Kelly.*

*"I am excited by the potential that green education for students could lead to a more green-minded generation interested in protecting our planet."*



*Krystal Kim, Teacher, 32nd Street School*



## **GREEN STEM KITS ENGAGE AND EXCITE STUDENTS AT HOME!** **(continued)**

As the global pandemic began and in-person school shut down, we, along with the rest of the world, scrambled to find ways to adapt. We revised our plan by hosting a professional development program to familiarize teachers with climate change and green education to build confidence in teaching these concepts to their students. Because we were unable to implement greenification projects, we sent teachers Green STEM Kits -- fun gadgets powered by alternative energy that teachers used to demonstrate different types of alternative energy and how they can be used.

The grow-a-maze kit demonstrated how sunlight fuels plant growth, which in turn absorbs atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> via photosynthesis. The windmill kit showed students that wind can be used to capture energy, as indicated by the windmill's ability to power a small lightbulb. Lastly, the solar robot kit, equipped with a solar panel to capture energy from the sun, walked around when placed outside on a bright day!

Emma Case, a junior at USC and YSP Coordinator, developed additional lesson plans to supplement the use of these green STEM kits in virtual classrooms. As an Environmental Studies major, she enjoyed using her expertise to contribute to the project: "It was such a joy to be able to combine my passions to create these lesson plans. Ever since I was a kid, I've been super interested in and passionate about our planet and finding ways to protect it. When I got to college, this translated into pursuing a degree in Environmental Studies. To be able to share this passion with kids while also teaching them about issues that are so important to the future of our planet was very fulfilling, and I'm so glad I got to participate in this project."



When teachers were surveyed prior to using these green STEM kits and lesson plans in their classrooms, 98% agreed that they felt concerned about the environment and that their students should also care about the environment, yet only 65% believed that their students were knowledgeable about environmental issues.

Despite the knowledge gap teachers believed their student's had, only 45% had done any environmental curriculum in their classrooms this school year. After using the kits, teachers reported that they felt these lessons helped increase their students' knowledge about environmental issues: "My kids love growing plants and can't wait until Earth day to celebrate the planet! Thank you for the fun learning growing experiments with GROW-A-Maze. It really teaches the power of nature and all we need to protect." We hope that continued use of these kits and lessons for green STEM education will inspire the next generation of environmentally conscious students!



## MOCK TRIAL ALUMNA GETS REAL JUSTICE

***Olu Orange***

***Director, USC Trial Advocacy***

Yasmin Fardghassemi is a current LA County Deputy District Attorney and an alumna of the Dornsife Trial Advocacy Program (Mock Trial). As Director of the Program, I had a front row seat to Yasmin's brilliance. From the beginning, her absolute dedication to our program was apparent. She was a serious student, always organized and prepared. Yasmin was one of my best students and went on to win a national trial competition while in law school at UCLA. I knew she was going to be an excellent lawyer.

Just prior to starting as a prosecutor, Yasmin co-counseled with me on the trial of a knee-on-neck police brutality death case. We represented one of five young children who were left fatherless when LA County Sheriff's Deputies killed Darren Burley using the same asphyxiation technique used to kill George Floyd. Our work together on this case started with a phone call. One morning, I rang Yasmin to ask her to assist with the upcoming trial while she awaited her start date at the D.A.'s office. She was surprised but enthusiastically agreed.

Yasmin wrote motions and provided meaningful analysis for the duration of the trial. But, toward the latter half of it, an opportunity came for her to show off the cross examination skills she learned in our program. The defense intended to put a positional asphyxiation expert on the stand and we needed him neutralized.



I recalled Yasmin's many demonstrations of questioning prowess and I knew she would be extraordinary – and she was. She executed the cross examination of the witness flawlessly. She first established that it was truly the officers' weight that cut off Mr. Burley's airflow. She then impaired the expert's credibility by exposing contradictions in his testimony throughout the many trials in which he testified. Our work together as co-counsel successfully secured an \$8 million dollar jury verdict for Mr. Burley's five children and estranged wife.

Later, I successfully argued the case on appeal before the Supreme Court of California. The case established the precedent that a police officer cannot reduce his liability for intentional misconduct by looking to mistakes his victim makes during an incident.

This year, Yasmin received a California Lawyer Attorney of the Year (CLAY) Award in the Civil Rights category. She is the first of my former students to receive this honor as well as the youngest CLAY recipient I have seen. Her work is a credit to our profession, program and university.

## A TRIBUTE TO A VISIONARY EDUCATOR AND VALUED FRIEND

### Tammy Anderson

Steve was one of the first faculty members I met when I first came to JEP 40 years ago. He had a charismatic passion for active and experiential learning and was totally supportive and engaged with my vision of service-learning and community service. He and my former boss, Dick Cone were not only great colleagues, but good friends and neighbors.

Steve's vision for "real world experiential learning" was rooted in "Problem Based Learning" (PBL) and he created the landmark USC program, "Problems Without Passports" grounded in this philosophy. Here's how Steve describes it:



*"... Students in a PBL program like our Problems without Passports decide what needs to be known to manage or solve a global problem that belongs to no single country, group or individual. Each student researches their part of the problem and then shares what they have discovered with the rest of their team. A deep and extensive discussion follows. All students have a chance to weigh in on the information presented by their peers and share strategies for responding to the problem.*

*"When the class comes together to share their findings and possible solutions, the professor serves as a facilitator, clarifying points, adding views from current research and providing valuable background information. In PBL courses, there is an emphasis on face-to-face interaction among students and each student is accountable to their peers and the class. Also, students develop a wide range of both interpersonal and small group skills and practice analysis and evaluation of research in a given area. Much of this work is done in small groups with no free riding allowed. PBL is a cooperative learning process that emphasizes asking great questions and doing careful research that goes beyond Google inquiries."*

I remember Steve giving us tons of materials to use for our international relations mini teams. At one point, JEP was not working with enough high school students so he decided to start his own program working with high schools. That was the genesis to Steve creating another iconic program - the "Teaching International Relations Program" (TIRP). He also created the Washington DC program, the Center for Active Learning in International Studies (CALIS) program, and also worked with former student Sam Fisher to establish Fisher Fellows.

When Steve was a vice dean here in Dornsife, I briefly reported to him. He was always the same supportive, kind person I've known and respected. Steve was one of those faculty members who knew the name of all of his students no matter how long ago he taught them. He was passionate about teaching and cared so deeply for his students.

When I became Associate Dean of Experiential Learning, I was so pleased because it allowed me the opportunity to continue to support the many successful and popular programs that Steve created during his tenure at the university like his Arctic trip where students study climate change.

I continue to be inspired by his passion, vision, commitment, and most of all his love for students. Although he is moving on to new opportunities, Steve says he will come back to teach PWP knowing that experience is at the heart of all meaningful learning.

I wish him all the best in this new chapter in his life and look forward to working with him in the future.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING STAFF MARIAH AND ALEX!

Thank you both for all you have done to support the team at ExL.  
We will miss you. Please stay in touch!



### **Mariah Breit**

ExL has provided me the most amazing mentors through this work and taught me so much through a variety of projects. From creating the new Terra Dotta brochure pages, helping to form the Agents of Change civil right advocacy initiative, and constructing newsletters like this one, I am so grateful for my time with ExL!

After graduating from Marshall with a degree in Business Administration, I will be interning at a law firm in DC. Next fall, I will be attending Georgetown Law as a Blume Public Interest Scholar. I intend to use the legal system to advocate for education rights for underserved children.



### **Alex Leon**

I have been working with EXL (Wendy) since my first semester of freshman year! The last four years have been extremely challenging, but one consistent breath of fresh air was coming into the ExL office and being welcomed by the brilliant people working behind the scenes.

After graduating with an ISE degree from Viterbi, I will be working as a Solutions Engineering Analyst in Deloitte's downtown LA office. I am excited to start my new job, but I will never forget my first job! Thank you ExL!

## WELCOME TO ExL AMBER!



### **Amber Harris**

I am excited to join the Office of Experiential and Applied Learning as the Innovation and Implementation Manager. In this capacity, I will be able to play an integral role in facilitating programming rooted in active learning for students and equity building for the community. I am looking forward to partnering with such a vibrant group of Difference Makers eager to explore the endless opportunities for change.