Association of Environmental Professionals | San Diego Chapter



ENVRONMENTOR **FALL 2020**

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD BY ERIN PHILLIPS, DUDEK

The San Diego Chapter's annual Awards and Scholarship Event was held virtually on October 22nd. More than 80 attendees gathered via Zoom to help us award six exceptional local students with \$8,000 in scholarship money across six scholarships that local firms generously sponsored this year! We were honored to have Omar Passons, Director of Integrative Services within the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, join us and speak about the intersectionality of race and environmental justice. This led up to the evening's main event, which celebrated and recognized the outstanding achievements of local students, agencies, firms, and professionals.

Since its establishment in 2004, the San Diego Chapter Scholarship Fund has awarded more than \$70,000 to deserving students in the environmental field. This year, we were able to expand our scholarship offerings by adding four Diversity in the Environmental Profession scholarships for local Black, Indigenous, and People of Color high school students, in addition to our two standard scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students. We received 14 applications from talented and very well qualified undergraduate and graduate students attending local universities and 20 applications from inspiring high schoolers. Mulika

Musyimi and Gabriella Whittaker were selected as the 2020 Student Scholarship recipients, each receiving \$2,000 and student memberships to AEP and Caren Aguirre, Abraham Alvarez, Allen Arreola, and Milana Rodriguez were selected as the 2020 Diversity in the Environmental Profession Scholarship recipients, each receiving \$1,000. Recipients joined the event virtually to say a few words and accept their awards. We were so impressed by these students - there is no doubt the future of the environmental profession is bright!

To help with the virtual nature of the event, we asked award winners to prepare brief acceptance videos that were played as winners were announced. We really enjoyed seeing some familiar faces through the videos. The Contribution to the Environmental Profession award was presented to Cathy Presmyk, complete with personal (video) commendations from former colleagues. To close we also raffled off a basket of goods from local BIPOC-owned businesses worth more than \$300!

The event would not have been possible without our Awards and Scholarship Event sponsors, Awards Chair and committee, jurors, all those who helped make this event a success. Thank you for your dedication to the chapter!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Legislative Update: AEP Webinar December 16, 2020 | 12 to 1 p.m.

Join AEP for a webinar installment of the annual Legislative Update. AEP lobbyist, Matt Klopfenstein of Cal Advisors LLC, will be providing an end-of-the-year legislative update with information the latest bills and legislature as we close out 2020! Click here for further event information and to register.

2021 AEP Virtual Institute Environmental Justice & CEQA January 29, 2021

Join AEP for a full day webinar featuring key environmental justice topics. Topics include environmental justice issues specific to California, legislative proposals and recent court findings, public outreach and tribal outreach processes, and environmental justice as it relates to projects subject to NEPA including those with CEQA decisions. Keynote speakers include Elsa Johnson (EPA) and Phoebe Seaton (Leadership Council for Justice & Accountability). Click here to view the agenda and to register.

UCSD EXTENSION COURSES

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (online) 1/4/2021 - 2/13/2021 2/8/2021 - 3/20/2021

> Advanced CEQA (online) 1/18/2021 - 3/20/2021

CEQA in Practice (online) 1/25/2021 - 3/6/2021

Writing Effective CEQA Documents (online) 1/25/2021 - 3/6/2021

> Introduction to NEPA (online) 1/11/2021 - 3/13/2021

Conservation Psychology (online) 1/11/2021 - 3/13/2021

Measuring Sustainable Impact (online) 1/18/2021 - 3/20/2021

Resource Management (online) 1/18/2021 - 3/20/2021

...and many more!



www.esassoc.com



CHAMBERS GROUP CONTROLLED THERMAL RESOURCES DUDEK HARRIS & ASSOCIATES ESA GRID LEGAL RECON ENVIRONMENTAL WOODARD & CURRAN HELIX ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING LSA Rick Engineering Aecom Ascent Environmental Asm Affiliates Katz & Associates Sophia Mitchell & Associates

THE ENVIRONMENTOR, FALL 2020 | 3

2020 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

MULIKA MUSYIMI



My name is Mulika Musyimi, and I was born in Kilifi; a town on Kenya's Coast province. Given that we moved a handful of times, I associate different places with salient moments in my life. For instance, Githunguri - rural years and untimely death of a parent, Nairobi - urban assimilation, Reno - flux and first steps into a new country, San Diego - legal presence and opportunity for higher education. I attained a B.A in Liberal Arts and Sciences - Sustainability and Geography from SDSU this summer, and I am a Coastal Ecosystems Intern at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory; one of seventeen (DOE) national laboratories. I work collaboratively on a team that does statistical analyses of greenhouse gas flux measurements in tree stems, and is developing a model for estimating flux rates in light of dynamic coastal - terrestrial interfaces, and anthropogenic climate factors. I aspire to practice in public health as a graduate student, and professional - with particular interest in the intersectionality of

Environment, Development and Health Disparities. I enjoy Soccer, Brazilian Portuguese, Surfing, Reading, and Podcasts.

GABRIELLA WHITTAKER



My name is Gabriella Whittaker and I am in my fourth and final year of undergraduate study at the University of San Diego. I am originally from Sun Valley, Idaho where I grew up skiing, hiking, climbing, and living in the mountains. Since I've moved to Southern California, my hobbies include rocking climbing, roller blading, and weekend camping trips. At USD I am majoring in Environmental Studies and minoring in Business Administration. My goal is to be able to integrate these two fields of study and find a career in sustainable business consulting. I am also passionate about environmental justice and intersectionality in environmental activism.



RECON	
reconenvironmental.com	
CEQA/NEPA	Habitat Restoration
Biological Resources	Preserve Management
Cultural Resources	Mitigation/Monitoring
gricultural Resources	Visual Resources
Quality/GHG/Noise	GIS Services
SAN DIEGO BAY AREA TUCSON	

2020 DIVERSITY IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSION SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

CAREN AGUIRRE



My name is Caren Aguirre. I was born and raised in Imperial Beach. I have been in love with the ocean for as long as I can remember. The ocean, specifically Impeach Beach has given me some of my fondest memories. I continued my passion for the ocean through participating in the Marine Academy at Mar Vista High School. I was fully exposed to what investigating the environment looked like. During my freshman year, I collected water samples from Imperial Beach to test for E. Coli. I was fascinated by the research and knew I wanted to follow in a career of environmental science. I began looking for ways outside of the classroom to help the environment. I participated in climate justice protests and studied environmental science at a summer residential program in UCSD. I plan on working in the environmental workforce one day as an engineer or lawyer.

ABRAHAM ALVAREZ



My name is Abraham Antonio Alvarez and I am currently a junior at Calexico High School in the Imperial Valley. I really enjoy and understand the privilege of having easy access education and therefor, try to take the most advantage out of it. My favorite subjects are math and science and I plan on choosing a career path under these two fields. For now, I would like to have a career in water treatment and service the community that has shaped me into the young adult I am. Some of my favorite hobbies are learning to use technology more efficiently, cooking for my family and playing video games with my friends. I am also proud to be part of a voluntary worldwide organization that encourages healthy life styles and sharing with others what I learn. I am excited to be receiving the acknowledgment of the AEP Diversity in the Environmental Profession Scholarship and can't wait to use it for my future education.



Sophia Mitchell & Associates

CEQA Documentation | Project Management A California-based WBE, DBE and Small/Micro Business www.mitchellplanning.net (858) 243-0843



2020 DIVERSITY IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSION SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

ALLEN ARREOLA



My name is Allen Arreola, a high school student seeking to make a difference from the Imperial Valley. I am a beginner/learner of the concepts and skills of engineering as my passion for this subject sparked during freshman year. There is nothing more satisfying for me than to work and develop these skills as I want to contribute to exciting engineering advances that can better the life of communities. If all goes as planned, I am set to graduate top-3 from Calexico High School in the class of 2021, and I look forward to attending a 4-year university and studying Mechanical Engineering. While in school, I have taken part in STEM clubs such as M.E.S.A. and high school robotics where I practiced programming and designed/built different projects. Some activities I enjoy are playing and watching sports, working out, and spending time with my family on the weekends when we all get together.

MILANA RODRIGUEZ



Hello! My name is Milana Rodriguez and I am a senior at Olympian High School and my hometown is Chula Vista. I am so grateful to have been selected as one of the recipients of the 2020 AEP Diversity in the Environmental Profession Scholarship. In school I am the Vice-President of my class, president of the our schoo'ls CSF chapter, Vice President of the international affairs club as well as an athlete and honor student. Outside of school I'm the youngest intern at I Love A Clean San Diego, San Diego's largest environmental non-profit and part of the Chula Vista Youth Action Council. I plan on applying all my knowledge and experience about environmental protection, as well as the resources provided by the AEP, towards my future career inspirations. I plan on entering the world of politics and reforming legislation to better help and protect the environment we call home.



2020 AWARD WINNERS

OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, MND OR EA

OCEAN BREEZE RANCH 15183 CHECKLIST (COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO)

INNOVATION IN GREEN PLANNING AND DESIGN Document

RECAP SNAPSHOTS AND CLIMATE ACTION DATA PORTAL (SANDAG)

<u>OUTSTANDING PLANNING DOCUMENT - PLAN,</u> <u>Policy, or ordinance</u>

THE ENVIRONMENTOR, FALL 2020

UC SAN DIEGO HILLCREST CAMPUS LONG RANGE Development plan (UC San Diego)

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

CEQA TRAINING PROGRAM (COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO)

<u>OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, EIR/EIS</u></u>

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY MISSION VALLEY CAMPUS MASTER PLAN EIR (DUDEK AND SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY)





2020 OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSION CATHY PRESMYK



Catherine Presmyk moved to San Diego from Chicago in 1986 after receiving a Bachelor's degree in Geography and Environmental Studies from Northeastern Illinois University, and a Master of Science degree from Southern Illinois University in Forest Ecology. She worked in private consulting, first as a CEQA analyst in Nasland Engineering's Environmental Division. In 1988 Cathy joined the full service consulting firm Westec Services (later known as ERCE and then Ogden) working in the Environmental Division, initially as a CEQA analyst, and later as a Project Manager. During this period, Cathy also volunteered on the planning committee for the Orchids & Onions Community Awareness Program, and served as an AEP Board Member from 1990 to 1992.

In 1995, after eight years in private consulting, Cathy moved to the public sector when she was offered a job at UC San Diego as the campus' Environment Planner in the Campus Planning Department. With the support of her Campus Planning colleagues, Cathy began the process of exploring beneficial structural changes to the campus' Long Range Development Plans/Program EIRs to improve tiering of subsequent projects, better manage mitigation

tracking, and develop related programs so that the campus could better manage its environmental resources. Educating other UC San Diego colleagues regarding CEQA and the planning process was an important part of the transformation.





- CEQA/NEPA Compliance
- Biological Resource Studies
- Cultural Resource Management
- Architectural History
- Community Impact Assessment
- Habitat Restoration
- Regulatory Permitting
- Compliance Monitoring
- Acoustics & Noise Control
- Air Quality & GHG Studies

SAN DIEGO | ORANGE | RIVERSIDE | SACRAMENTO | PLACER www.**helixepi.**com

2020 OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSION CATHY PRESMYK (CONTINUED)

In total UC San Diego prepared three LRDPs/new program EIRs between 2002 and 2019. Cathy was a key player on all of these multi-year LRDP efforts and lead the preparation of the associated award-winning program EIRs. Her projects ranged from a new hospital bed tower and medical research/office buildings, to bridges, the LRT and transportation facilities, student housing, marine facilities, laboratories, utility infrastructure, research facilities, national register restorations, new college development, and more.

Cathy's contributions to the environmental profession have been many. From serving on the AEP Board to developing and leading a variety of new environmental and resource management related programs for the UC San Diego campus that benefited both the campus and the region. During her tenure she led a transition from an informal approach to CEQA when she arrived 24 years ago, to a streamlined environmental review process that included biological and cultural resource management plans, as well as GHG strategies, transportation solutions, and other programs, which received the support of the community and regulatory agencies. Her approach could best be characterized as proactive instead of reactive. It set the stage for the next generation to carry forward this tradition providing the means to be good environmental stewards of campus resources which benefits the campus and the region.



Proud to support the 2019 Awards and Scholarship Banquet

portofsandiego.org

THE ENVIRONMENTOR, FALL 2020 | 10

2020 PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST WINNER: Sunset over point loma by Lisa Maier, Dudek



THE ENVIRONMENTOR, FALL 2020 | 11

BOOK CLUB RECAP BY MULIKA MUSYIM

Thank you to Mulika Musyimi (one of the winners of our 2020 SDAEP Student Scholarship) for writing this summary of our recent book club discussion!

Joining and engaging with SDAEP's book club community in the way that I have was wholly unexpected. Like many of you, I tried my hand at many things over quarantine when it dawned on me that the grand year I had envisioned; one brimming with hopes, milestones, and a series of firsts, had a different trajectory.

Collectively, we now have a shared experience in observing quarantine, social distancing protocols, mandated mask wearing, and a general sense that life as we knew it is forever changed. Who would've ascribed such tenacity and compulsion to equalize to a microscopic virus? While it is clear that the COVID pandemic is a perilous health crisis, its toll continues to reveal a crisis of even greater import. America's history is fraught with contradictions, institutional and systemic racism, police violence and a broken justice system. Such an indictment sounds harsh, I know, but black and brown bodies are the currency by which such acts continue to extract payment. Ta-Nahesi Coates'



words were first introduced to me through a statement of "solidarity with the Black Community" put out by the Geography department at my alma mater; SDSU. It was at the height of peaceful protests demanding for justice at the senseless murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and countless offerings of brown and black bodies that had come before them. "Racism is a visceral experience. "It dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones, and breaks teeth....." (Coates 2015). These words lingered. It was the first time in a long time that emotions felt..so raw. As an African migrant firmly aware of his multiple intersecting identities and experiences, I vacillated between disillusionment and anger most days. Therefore, when the opportunity presented itself to engage with Coates' accounts in Between the World and Me, spaces like the book club helped me to audibly process the range of emotions I was feeling. I felt seen, heard, supported and affirmed.

Coates writes **"If we believe in American exceptionalism, then we must subject our country to an exceptional moral standard."** The reality is that for indigenous, brown and black folks to feel fully seen, then America, which has often been unwilling to claim them completely, needs to actively do better by them: For this is our country too, this is our world also, these are our bodies, and we must find a find a way to live within the all of it (Coates 2015).





STUDENT CEQA PRACTICUM RECAP By Cassie Weinberg

As a graduating undergraduate senior mid-pandemic, it has been increasingly stressful contemplating my entry into the workforce. I am double majoring in Business Management and Sustainability at San Diego State University, and I have been searching for more opportunities to find interconnections between the two subjects to solidify a fulfilling career path. I became a member of AEP last year to curb some of this post-grad anxiety, and the benefits have proven abundant – most notably due to attending the annual 2020 CEQA Practicum. Though this event was virtual rather than at the fictitious project location, it proved valuable as we are all learning to navigate more projects through an online setting.

This practicum featured close examinations on the following CEQA categories: Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources, Biological Resources, Air Quality, and Hazards and Hazardous Materials. Thanks to the intimate 16-student group, we were able to facilitate stimulating discussions with the presenting environmental professionals. My most pertinent takeaway was learning the vast analysis necessary for even the most unassuming small project. In my first three years of university education, I learned the history of CEQA, the categories on the checklist, and the fundamentals that would suffice at surface-level trivia. Through this four hour practicum, I learned how to perform an initial study, conduct a field investigation, and collect data to make an informed decision on a project. This action-based format shed a new perspective on CEQA that no class has had the ability to cover effectively, and I feel much more prepared to analyze environmental impacts in future projects. As I enter my final semester of my undergraduate education, I am excited to begin exploring different avenues for my future in the environmental field. Thanks to Katie Laybourn, Kelsey Hawkins, and all the environmental professionals in the AEP San Diego chapter, I have gained significant skills and experience that will guide my professional endeavors.



NATIVE FLOWERING PLANTS CROSSWORD ANSWERS **CREATED BY AECOM**

Down:

- Stem 1.
- 2. Tractor
- **California Poppy** 3.
- Popcorn Flower 4.
- Sprinkler 5.
- Farmers' Almanac 6.
- 8. Hoe
- 9. Hummingbird
- Wheelbarrow 10.
- Johnny Jump Up 12.
- 13. Gardening
- 16. Planter
- Bolt 18.
- Weed 21.
- 23. Herb
- Leaf 24.
- 25. Soil

Across:

- Tilth 2.
- Prune 4.
- 7. Compost
- 11. Root
- Sticky Monkeyflower 14.
- 15. Bee
- 17. **Baby Blue Eyes**
- 19. Bulb
- 20. Seed
- 21. Worm
- Mulch 22.
- 25. Spade



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING + **COMPLIANCE SERVICES**

- CEQA + NEPA Compliance
- Community + Master Planning
- CEQA Training

- Air Quality + Climate Change
- **Biological Resources**
- Noise

- Climate Adaptation + Resiliency Planning
- Permitting + Regulatory Compliance
- Municipal + District Financing

Diane.Sandman@WeAreHarris.com | Ryan.Binns@WeAreHarris.com | Kristin.Blackson@WeAreHarris.com

WeAreHarris.com

Ore.

San Diego AEP, Thank you for another great year! We hope you have a happy holiday season.

- San Diego Chapter Board Katie, Corinne, Janelle, Libby, Lisa, Emily, Kelsey, Matt, and Erin

Association of Environmental Professionals San Diego Chapter CHAPTER CONTACTS

2020 CHAPTER BOARD

SDAEPBoard@califaep.org

President Katie Laybourn Harris & Associates katie.laybourn@weareharris.com

Co-Vice Presidents of Programs Janelle Firoozi ESA jfiroozi@esassoc.com

Libby Fortin Chambers Group efortin@chambersgroupinc.com

Vice President of Membership Lisa Maier Dudek lmaier@dudek.com

Treasurer Emily Pacholski ICF emily.pacholski@icf.com

Communications Director Matt Stewart ICF matt.stewart@icf.com

Student Membership and Outreach Director Kelsey Hawkins Harris & Associates kelsey.hawkins@weareharris.com

Chapter Director Corinne Lytle Bonine Chambers Group clytle-bonine@chambersgroupinc.com

> Newsletter Editor Erin Phillips Dudek ephillips@dudek.com



Contact the Newsletter Editor at: sdaepnews@gmail.com