

Commitment to DEIJ principles:

As individuals and institutions, we must remove barriers for scholars in under-represented groups.

Diverse viewpoints are important to foster within academia. For one, research shows that groups with diverse backgrounds produce high-quality work more consistently than groups where participants come from similar backgrounds. Furthermore, many areas of science have historically neglected and ignored communities of color and of low socioeconomic status, leading to the proliferation of unjust laws and policies that continue to perpetuate inequities among broader society. Increasing the diversity of researchers and educators is one way to help ensure that the needs and values of these communities are accounted for when using science to make managerial and policy-based decisions. **It is thus a moral imperative that we include people from all backgrounds in scientific research, and it is particularly urgent that we implement these changes now considering global climate change and the growing inequity it is predicted to cause. I do this in the following ways:**

Increasing diversity of students working in environmental science: I am committed to continuing to recruit diverse students in my lab and research program.

Throughout my doctorate studies at the University of Michigan, I served as a research mentor for the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars program. This entailed working with 1-2 undergraduate students each summer (five total) that came from backgrounds that are under-represented in environmental science. Students spend the first summer working on an independent research study that I helped design and implement before spending the second summer working a paid internship with a private company or NGO developing professional skills. I worked with students that were ethnically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse, including LGBTQ+ and BIPOC students and first generation college students from low SES backgrounds.

Increasing access to educational materials: As an NSF postdoctoral fellow, I participated in educational outreach projects that increase access to environmental science for groups that are historically marginalized and unable or unallowed to receive equal access to the same resources as their more privileged peers.

One such project is with the Pitt Kits team at the University of Pittsburgh where I helped develop educational modules and curricula that are made freely accessible to local K-12 educators. This includes loaning expensive equipment that is often unaffordable for many schools. I have also developed educational outreach for the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in both traditional (developing material for Anthropocene-themed exhibits) and nontraditional (writing educational blog posts) ways. These projects make climate science accessible to underprivileged groups of students and build off my strengths as an educator.

Leveling the playing field for undergraduates from diverse backgrounds: Students enter college with unique sets of experiences that often include a wide range in educational preparation. Studies have shown that students from underprivileged backgrounds perform better in classrooms that incorporate active learning techniques and, especially for introductory-level classes, classrooms that are designed to teach them good study techniques. These techniques also have been shown to benefit students with disabilities or those that are neurodivergent, further increasing inclusion within the classroom environment. I implement these approaches at all levels of my teaching and mentoring.

While these activities are initial steps towards increasing diversity within climate change science, the academy, and STEM, I recognize that I can still do more and can continue to learn how to better meet the needs of diverse students. Thus, I routinely participate in DEI trainings and workshops, including enrollment in a Diversity and Inclusion Certificate program at the University of Pittsburgh. I am committed to these goals and to making my discipline and my community more diverse, equitable, and just.