



ARIZONA
FORWARD

EMERGING LEADERS

Sustainability



*Class
of
2021*



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PROGRAM SPONSOR



BRETT MELENDEZ
City of Phoenix

Brett is a Chief Water Quality Inspector with the City of Phoenix Environmental Services Division, whose focus is protecting the drinking and wastewater infrastructure. Brett schedules sampling events that are a focal point to maintain compliance with NPDES, AZPDES, and APP Permits. Brett graduated from ASU with a degree in Sustainability with a minor in Urban Planning. The program solidified his passion for making a difference as a public servant. Serving four years as an Avionics Electronics Technician, Brett is also a veteran of the US Navy. Brett loves spending quality time with his wife and their two children. They are delighted to be helpful neighbors in their community. Through the Emerging Sustainability Leaders Program, Brett is eager to share insight in his field of work and broaden his understating of sustainable practices being used within our great state of Arizona.



DANAE PRESLER
City of Avondale

As the Sustainability Officer for the City of Avondale, Danae shapes programs and policies to create healthy, sustainable communities with a focus on equity and resilience. Danae is currently leading the city's efforts on transportation electrification, energy management, river revitalization, heat mitigation and stormwater management. Danae also serves as the Chair of the Equity Working Group for Arizona's Statewide Transportation Electrification Plan. She holds a Masters in Environmental Studies from The Evergreen State College in Washington. In her free time, Danae can be found hiking and backpacking with her husband, hanging out in their backyard food forest with their three dogs, or 'Zooming' with her friends and family. Through the Emerging Sustainability Leaders program, Danae hopes to partner with other change-makers to implement meaningful sustainability solutions for Arizona communities.



DAVID CALLOWAY
City of Mesa

David is a Transit Coordinator with the City of Mesa where he focuses on transit system operations and maintenance, transit planning, and transit-related capital improvement projects. He has worked with the city since 2015 and been part of the team working on both the Central Mesa and the Gilbert Rd. Light Rail Extensions. David is committed to incorporating sustainable methods, including extending the useful life of transit assets, managing a program to add more shade at bus stops, working with stakeholders on alternative transportation initiatives, and participating in the procurement process for alternatively fueled vehicles. David has a background in logistics and transportation operations management. He is a graduate of ASU with a MPA, BS in Geography and Justice Studies. Outside of work David is a forestry volunteer in recreation programs, fire prevention, and natural resource management. Needless to say, David likes to spend his free time outdoors in almost any capacity.



ERIC MACDONALD
City of Phoenix

As a Zero Waste Analyst for the City of Phoenix, Eric works to expand, enhance, and educate the public about the city's solid waste programs. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Communication from Arizona State University and is saving to return to college for a Master's in Environmental and Resource Management. Eric is particularly passionate about how efficiencies in energy and waste management can improve quality of life in Arizona. He enjoys spending time with his girlfriend and their dog (Angie) and two bunnies (Winston and Rosie). Through the Emerging Sustainability Leaders program, Eric hopes to learn and share strategies for developing circular economy and a sustainable Arizona.



ERIN RUGLAND
Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Erin is a Junior Fellow for the Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy, a center of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Erin analyzes the intersection of water, land, and governance in the Colorado River Basin. In particular, she focuses on integrating water into land use planning and land use into water resource planning to support community resilience in the face of drought and climate change, authoring guidance and leading workshops on these subjects. Erin is an ASU alumni who previously worked with ASU's Sustainable Cities Network. Erin is passionate about sustainability, social justice, and connecting with nature. She is looking forward to meeting folks in different sectors in the Emerging Sustainability Leaders Program and in learning to overcome barriers to sustainable solutions.



EVA ZAMBRANO
SmithGroup

Eva is a landscape designer at SmithGroup in downtown Phoenix, where she works on a variety of commercial projects. Her experience working on urban design projects, offices, municipal buildings, college campuses, and healthcare facilities has emphasized her ambition to elevate our community's well-being and interweave sustainable practices into her designs. Eva is passionate about beautifying our cities by preserving the landscape's natural qualities and is inspired daily by murals throughout Arizona. Eva grew up in Mesa, Arizona and graduated from ASU with a bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture and a Minor in Sustainability. In her spare time, Eva enjoys hiking, live music, and spending time with her pups (Sage and Ginger). Eva is enthusiastic to be involved in this year's class of Emerging Sustainability Leaders and is excited to see how, together, we can work towards a more beautiful and sustainable future.



JANET HOWE

Perkins Coie

Janet Howe is an associate attorney. Her practice centers around complex environmental litigation and advising clients on state and federal environmental regulatory compliance. Prior to attending the College of Law at the UofA, Janet earned a Masters in Global Leadership and Sustainable Development. This interdisciplinary program involved a study of business administration, sustainability concepts, environmental policy, and organizational change. Through this program, Janet learned about the need to implement sustainable and resilient changes on a system-wide level. Janet is passionate about making these changes in Arizona and understands that changes will not happen without collaborative efforts. She is honored and excited to join the program, take the next steps towards learning about Arizona's sustainability journey, and create partnerships with like-minded individuals. In her free time, Janet enjoys being outside, playing with her kids, and watching cheesy TV shows.



JENNIFER LOVE

AECOM

Jennifer is a senior transportation planner. She has experience as a planner, engineer, and project manager for various transportation, urban design, and engineering projects. Her passion for sustainable design guides her efforts to integrate transportation with land use to create safe, equitable, and healthy communities at the regional, local, and neighborhood level. Jennifer holds a BS in Civil Engineering and a Master's Degree in Urban and Environmental Planning. She is a registered Professional Engineer, certified planner (AICP), LEED accredited professional and Envision Sustainability Professional. Jennifer has collaborated on sustainability, biophilic design and climate research initiatives with the cities of Phoenix, Peoria, and Chicago, the ASU School of Sustainability, and Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute. She currently participates on the Transportation Research Board Sustainability Indicators subcommittee and the USGBC Location and Places Technical Advisory Group. Jennifer is looking forward to growing her skillset to further advance sustainability in Arizona.

KARIS NELSON

Salt River Project

Karis is a Sr. Environmental Compliance Scientist for SRP. She attended the UofA where she earned two Bachelor of Science degrees and also holds a MS in Soil, Water, and Environmental Science. Upon graduating, Karis began her career at SRP and was awarded an opportunity to participate in a multi-year rotational program that provided experience in biological resources, air quality, water quality, and sustainability. Currently, she works for the Water Quality and Waste Management Services group and oversees compliance activities related to the Clean Water Act and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. For the past few years, Karis has been involved with the SRP Green Team and recently took on a co-lead role with the Projects & Initiatives Committee. Karis is excited to learn more about sustainability issues in her home state of Arizona and looks forward to collaborating with the cohort to develop solutions for a better tomorrow.



LANA HALL

ON Semiconductor

As the Senior Program Manager for the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) team, Lana oversees social investment and sustainable projects that are significant to the reputation of ON Semiconductor, such as the inclusion of the Dow Jones Sustainability Index for the second year in a row. Lana has been instrumental in receiving several sustainability awards. From presenting on CSR transparency at a conference in Seoul to introducing small-impact changes, Lana leads by example. She earned her Sustainable Master of Business Administration from Unity College and a BS in Conservation Biology from ASU. Lana is a long-time volunteer with an animal rescue. Native to Yuma, Lana is an avid explorer of our beautiful state with her two pitties, a lover of live music at local venues, and is the person who convinces all of her friends to start composting. Lana is excited to be surrounded by like-minded individuals that are passionate about sustainability and working towards leaving Arizona in the best state for future generations.



LAURA SICKING

Intel

Laura is a St. Louis native who graduated from Missouri University of Science & Technology with a BS in Environmental Engineering. She spent several years working in the mining and consulting industries before starting with Intel's Arizona team in 2015. She has a strong background in air quality, hazardous waste, wastewater, and greenhouse gas management programs. She is currently a part of Intel's Corporate EHS group and is working toward her LEED Green Associate certification. While her background is in engineering, she has always been interested in and passionate about the field of sustainability and enjoys meeting other Arizona locals who feel the same. Laura spends most of her free time reading, hiking, watching Cardinals baseball, and wishing she could go to crowded concerts again.



MACKENZIE MCGUFFIE

Valley Metro

As Sustainability Coordinator for Valley Metro, Mackenzie works to create more environmentally sound transit system for the Phoenix Metropolitan Area. She is passionate about the power of transit, active transportation, and vehicle electrification as a way to reduce emissions, improve air quality, and build a better city. Mackenzie graduated from ASU in just four years with both a Bachelor's degree in Sustainability and a Master's degree in Sustainability Solutions. Since finishing school, Mackenzie has gone on to be Valley Metro's first sustainability coordinator and the youngest Arizona Sustainability Alliance board member. Through the Emerging Sustainability Leaders Program, Mackenzie hopes to develop connections with others to foster future partnerships and deepen her connection to Arizona sustainability efforts.



NICK COOKSON
Arizona State University

Nick Cookson is a Program Manager within the University Sustainability Practices office at ASU. Nick's main function is to design, coordinate and implement sustainability related engagement initiatives including organizing efforts for employee volunteer networks, leading internal green certification programs, and policy analysis for sustainable procurement. Previously, Nick managed the sustainability program at The University of the South. In addition, Nick served on the Board for a regional non-profit, green|spaces, whose mission is to advance the sustainability of living, working and building in the greater Chattanooga, TN area. Other sustainability work includes his time as Unum Group's Corporate Sustainability Manager, as a Technical Environmental Specialist at Tarkett, as a Water Quality Specialist for green infrastructure within the City of Chattanooga and as a Peace Corps environmental education volunteer in Paraguay. Nick earned a BS from Purdue University and a Master of Science from the University of Tennessee.



NICK MCDONALD
Arizona Public Service

As the Sr. Supply Chain Data Management Analyst at Arizona Public Service, Nick is working to provide the tools and information to make data driven decisions that will help create a sustainable energy future for Arizona. He recently graduated with an MBA from W. P. Carey School of Business at ASU. During this program, he worked on multiple sustainability projects for the City of Mesa, City of Phoenix, Association of Arizona Food Banks, Walton Sustainability Solutions Initiatives, and Junior Achievement of Arizona. Nick's passion for sustainability is what brought him to APS and drove him to become a member of the APS Supply Chain Sustainability Council. In his free time, Nick enjoys doing DIY home projects, hiking, and traveling with his wife and two daughters.



SEAN WILSON
Freeport-McMoRan

Sean is a Senior Environmental Engineer at Freeport-McMoRan – a Phoenix-based copper mining company. As a part of Freeport's Environmental Services and Sustainable Development organization, Sean helps guarantee responsible waste management and sustainable recycling practices. Sean attended ASU as a National Merit Scholar, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and a Master's degree in Hydrosystems Engineering. As a native Arizonan, Sean inherited a passion for our state's natural resources. His love for the outdoors is only exceeded by his love for family, and Sean is dedicated to sharing hunting, fishing and boating adventures with his wife and daughters. Sean is excited to participate as a member of the Emerging Sustainability Leaders Program and most of all eager to learn from his cohort of peers.



SHAWN SWISHER

Jones Studio Architects

Shawn is an architect and designer at Jones Studio in Tempe and a Phoenix native. He received his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Southern California and Master of Architecture from the University of California, Berkeley, before returning home to practice architecture and start a family. Raised in the Sonoran Desert, Shawn is inspired by the beauty of Arizona's landscape and the history of human adaptation to the arid climate. He strives to create meaningful architecture connected to its place, engaged with its community, and focused on sustainable, equitable solutions. Shawn is active in the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a member of the local collaborative for the Living Building Challenge, and co-host/co-producer of the podcast Tracing Architecture.



TRIKA GRAHAM

Freeport-McMoRan

As the Water Quality Senior for the Freeport-McMoRan Bagdad Mine, Trika works to produce the responsibly sourced copper needed to electrify the global transportation sector. She holds a BS in Geology from University of North Dakota. She recently applied to the University of Arizona Law School where her focus will be Environmental Policy. Trika spent 14 years in various roles at Arcadis primarily serving as a Hydrogeologist and Project Manager on a variety of remediation projects. Trika enjoys traveling, hiking, camping and rockhounding with her husband. Trika is very excited to be apart of the Emerging Sustainability Leaders Program, looks forward to learning from her cohort and developing new skills to make the world more sustainable.



VANESSA DAVIS

Octo Consulting Group

An Arizona native, Vanessa leads Employee Engagement and Corporate Social Responsibility at Octo Consulting, a leading-edge technology solutions firm. Prior to joining Octo, Vanessa was a sustainability professional for over a decade at ASU where she was Program Manager for the Global Consortium for Sustainability Outcomes, Executive Assistant to leadership of the Global Institute of Sustainability, and oversaw multiple sustainability grant programs. Vanessa studied sustainability and sociology and has a Bachelors degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. She interned with the Environmental Protection Agency and has traveled to Hong Kong to study urban sustainability as a Walton Global Studies Scholar. She enjoys road trips, podcasts, movies, yoga and hiking, and is happily married with two boys. As a lifelong sustainability advocate and connector-of-dots, Vanessa is eager to learn from and collaborate with this cohort of emerging sustainability leaders to discover, design and deploy sustainability solutions that ultimately move Arizona, and our country, forward.

