



Environmental Studies Program 2010 Newsletter

Message from the Director

This year we are celebrating our 10th Anniversary – ten years ago the Environmental Studies program had its first graduates. We are planning a 10th Anniversary Celebration alumni dinner in May. In the mid 1990's a group of SF State faculty and students had the vision and persistence to create the Environmental Studies Program. The founding committee was chaired by Barbara Holzman (Geography), Jane Zeile (Chemistry) and Phil Klasky (Geography graduate student) and included faculty Glenn Fieldman (IR), Karen Grove (Geosciences), John Hafernik (Biology), Mark Cushey (Engineering), Jane De Witt (Chemistry), Patricia Foshi (Geography), Hans Meihoeffer (Geography), Raymond Miller (IR), Peter Palmer (Chemistry), Nancy Reist (BECA), Raquel Pinderhughes (Urban Studies), Francis Gretton (Humanities), Murray Silverman (Management) and Edwin Williams (Foreign Languages), graduate students Katie Bodie (Biology) and Peter Cohen (Geography), and Deans Joel Kassiola (BSS), John Kelley (COSE) and Nancy McDermid (Humanities). Since then the number of majors has grown, at first slowly, and lately by leaps and bounds. We would not be the thriving program we are today if it were not for the work of our founders many years ago – thank you!

The success of the ENVS Program was bittersweet this year as for the first time we have had to turn away interested students. The California budget crisis has

meant that we have not been able to hire additional faculty to keep up with the growth in students. We reached a point last year where continued growth in majors was undermining our ability to provide sufficient courses to allow majors to complete their degrees in a timely fashion. Therefore, for the first time we instituted requirements that students wishing to change their majors to ENVS had to first complete our Introduction to ENVS course. Effectively this has meant that we turned away over 30 students this fall semester who wished to become ENVS majors.

As always, an interdisciplinary program relies on the help of many. Barbara Holzman has chaired our Retention, Tenure and Promotion Committee and is organizing our 10th Anniversary celebration. Glenn Fieldman chaired the Awards Committee. Barbara and Glenn have been faculty advisors for the NRMC and ESSJ concentrations respectively. I would like to thank our other concentration advisors: Nancy (Sami) Reist (Broadcast & Electronic Communications Arts), Dean Joel Kassiola (BSS), Raquel Pinderhughes (Urban Studies and Planning), Karen Grove (Geosciences), and Tomoko Komada (Chemistry). And thanks to Sam Patterson who has been the student representative this year, helping give students a regular voice in our departmental meetings.

Thank you,
Carlos Davidson



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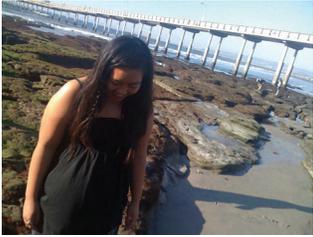
10th Anniversary Alumni Event for Environmental Studies Program

May 14th, 7:00-10:00pm at the Women's Building in the Mission District. All alumni and graduating seniors are invited. Contact the ENVS office for more info and tickets.

Awards & Honors

Yvette Michaud Student Leadership Award

This is the third year that the ENVIS Program has awarded the Yvette Michaud Leadership Award in Environmental Studies. This year's recipient is Christina Manalansan.



Christina writes: "Growing up in San Diego, California, I began my studies in the environmental

sciences focusing on marine biology, a focus that fueled my love for the ocean. I volunteered at the Stephen Birch Aquarium in La Jolla before moving to San Francisco and transferring to SF State University. A constant participant in community activities, I have cultivated a love for serving the student community, particularly kindergarten through 12th grade. Currently, I am an Environmental Studies major at State, hoping eventually to help sow grassroots environmental movements, a method which I believe is the only method to effectively raise awareness. Working with young students currently and in the future, in tandem with my innate desire to cultivate a more sustainable physical environment has helped me to formulate a belief in the absolute necessity of creating sustainable social environments of conservation and awareness in a society where both figurative and physical barriers are coming down every day."

The Yvette Michaud Student Leadership Award is given each fall to an Environmental Studies major who demonstrates leadership in environmental causes that actively engage the campus and/or the wider community. The Leadership Award was created by an anonymous donor to encourage student environmental activism and leadership and to honor ENVIS alum, Yvette Michaud. To read more about Yvette, please visit the ENVIS website's Scholarship page.

Donate to the Environmental Studies Program Fund

We use this fund to support a variety of Environmental Studies related projects. In the last few years funds have been used to support a student organized Earth Day event, to provide partial scholarships for students to attend the California Higher Education Sustainability Conference, and to support the Focus the Nation, Climate Change Teach-in. In the future we will use the fund to help support the Yvette Michaud Leadership Award that we give annually to an ENVIS major who has shown outstanding environmental leadership.

All donations are welcome – small or large. To donate you can send a check made out to the Environmental Studies Program Fund, to Environmental Studies, SF State, 1600 Holloway Ave, SF CA 94132. Or you can donate online at: <http://bss.sfsu.edu/envstudies/donate.html>. To ensure your donation reaches us, please choose Environmental Studies Program from the 'I Would Like to Support' drop-down menu.

The ENVIS Program would like to take this opportunity to thank all the students who applied for our awards and also thank the scholarship selection committee: Logan Hennessy, Kathy McAfee, Tendai Chitewere, Barbara Holzman and Glenn Fieldman, committee chair.

Environmental Studies Program SFSU
1600 Holloway Avenue, HSS 336
San Francisco, California 94132
P 415-338-1149 F 415-338-2880
envs@sfsu.edu

George Feliz Memorial Scholarship

The George Feliz Memorial Scholarship was awarded this year to Virginie Corominas.

Virginie writes: "I am a returning student born in France living in the Bay Area since 2001. I decided to go to college at 25 after my experience volunteering for a fair trade organization. City College and SFSU have been my turf for learning about leadership, critical thinking and writing, and have also

been great institutions for me to get to know people of all backgrounds, to learn from dedicated teachers and to get an affordable education. I come from a working-class family but was very fortunate to travel the world since birth. These contrasting assets allowed me to witness and understand global injustices at an early age but also to see how fast globalization was damaging the earth. I decided to enroll in Environmental Studies because I thought that there is not much to gain from social advancement if this planet becomes inhabitable to our species. I am eager to graduate from SFSU and start community involvement again, from now on focusing on food issues. I have found that food is a big part of my cultural background and as a universal tool that brings families and communities together, food reminds us of our relationship with the earth and grounds us in our necessity for a clean and sustainable livelihood."



The George Feliz Memorial Scholarship in Environmental Studies is awarded each fall to an Environmental Studies major. George Feliz was SFSU's first dean of graduate studies, and was instrumental in helping San Francisco State evolve from a teacher's college to a university. Professor Feliz donated an endowment fund to support a scholarship for Environmental Studies majors with financial need.

Faculty Spotlight

An Interview with Sherry Keith, Associate Professor of History and Social Sciences

by Dominique Piccinino, ENVS Student Assistant

Sherry Keith is an associate professor of History and Social Sciences. She has been teaching at SFSU since 1989. She holds a B.A. in Sociology from UC Berkeley, a M.A. in Sociology from University of Essex England, and a Ph.D. in International Development Education from Stanford University. Besides teaching, she is an avid volunteer, writer, world traveler, and a mother of two. This year, she is becoming an associated faculty member for Environmental Studies.

You volunteer for various outdoor organizations. How did you start volunteering and get involved with environmental issues?

I have an interesting evolution going from my current work to environmentalism. I'm from California, and was "free-range" as a child. Since I was about six years old my parents let me loose to be outside hiking, swimming, horse back riding, etc. Ever since I have been an outdoors person, and loving the environment comes naturally with that. Fast forward to when the East Bay Regional Park District was having its 75th anniversary. I was a grad student at UC Berkeley, and started to volunteer in Tilden Park, which is the nucleus of the parks in this area. Then about four years ago I was swimming at Lake Anza, where I have been taking my kids for years, and noticed a poster saying that the park was looking for docents, volunteers who take people on guided tours. I thought it was time to give

back to this beautiful park that I have been going to for years, and have been doing so ever since. There is also a big movement right now in San Francisco to bring children back into the environment. I also volunteer at Angel Island, which focuses on community involvement with environmental issues, and with kids in particular.

Tell us how you came to create the new class Childhood, Nature and Society that you are teaching this spring.

I was on sabbatical in the fall of 2008, when a light bulb went off. I am trained as a sociologist, and spend some of my free time volunteering outdoors and with environmental issues. Sociology looks at what's wrong with society, and Environmental Studies does the same with the environment. We know the two are interlinked, but I wanted to create a class that addressed that link starting with children. There is a great book called *The Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv, (which is one of the key books for this class), who coined the term "nature deficit disorder." This is the idea that deals with the way children in the US are alienated from the natural world though urbanism, mass consumerism and fear. This class is geared towards addressing this issue, and solving the problem. School gardens are one of the ways to bring children back to nature. I will be teaching a new Community Service Learning class, SS 681, which has a component

of school gardens where we go on field trips to local schools.



Placed-Based Education by David Sobel is another wonderful book. Place-based education takes students outside of the classroom and puts them in direct contact with working on community issues. I wanted to do placed-based education with children in nature, and so these two classes were born. **You have spent a good deal of your career traveling to Brazil, Africa and Jamaica. What is a valuable about traveling, and why is it important?**

Traveling outside of your comfort zone opens new doors. If you can open your eyes, close your mouth, and open your ears, you can see through other cultures perspectives and gain an abundance of knowledge and understanding. I have traveled the world for two decades, and the same problems I see abroad I see are happening right here at home, in our very own backyards. Obesity and "nature deficit disorder" in children are two of these very sad issues. Through my new courses, I hope to education students about these issues and present solutions to them as well.

An Interview with Ellen Hines, Associate Professor of Geography

by Dominique Piccinino, ENVS Student Assistant



Ellen Hines has been a geography professor here at SFSU since 2001. She has a Masters degree from San Diego State in Geography with an emphasis in natural resource management and a

Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Victoria in Canada. Since 2003 she has been the principal investigator on population monitoring and conservation studies of fin-less porpoises, Irrawaddy and Humpback dolphins off the eastern coast of Thailand. She recently became an ENVS associated faculty member.

What courses do you teach here at SFSU?

I teach geography and environmental courses including Environmental Problems & Solutions, Marine Resources, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and a grad seminar in Environmental Management.

What got you into conservation issues?

I have always been interested in endangered species. When I went to Thailand to

work on my Ph.D. I came face to face with environmental issues with small scale fisheries. I saw similar problems in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Belize with their coastal areas. It was at these places that I did a lot of ocean conservation work. And now, I work more locally at Point Reyes to do the same thing.

What are the issues at Point Reyes that people should know about?

The sea level is rising due to climate change, the harbor seals are being disturbed by people, too much oyster farming, and there are always development of business/housing issues.

What is your most memorable moment in your line of work?

In 2005 I was on a sabbatical in Australia. There I taught aboriginal sea rangers how to use GPS and make maps with GIS. The experience of going out with indigenous people where no one was supposed to go, and going with them to these special places

was absolutely amazing. It was truly a wonderful experience, and one that I will never forget.

What is your advice to students who are interested in ocean conservation work?

Read, volunteer and do internships! A great book to read if your interested in ocean conservation is *Heal the Ocean* by Rod Fujita. Here, Fujita explains the state of the ocean, but then also goes over solutions to those problems. Locally for San Francisco, he says we should allow natural processes to restore the San Francisco Bay and Delta. Other great books include Rachael Carson's *The Sea Around Us*, and any book by Carl Safina, who is the president and co-founder of The Blue Ocean Institute. Some great local places to volunteer at or do internships with are Save the Bay, Bay Keeper, Gulf of the Farallones, and Environmental Defense Fund, just to name a few.

Copenhagen and Trinidad Blogs

This year we have been following ESSJ student Sara Camp who was in Copenhagen December of 2009 representing 350.org and ENVIS Lecturer Brent Plater who is on a Fulbright Scholarship in Trinidad this Spring. Both have written travel blogs detailing their experiences abroad. Below are excerpts from each blog, we encourage you to follow up and read the rest. Links can be found on the ENVIS home page at <http://bss.sfsu.edu/envstudies>.

Copenhagen COP15 Report from an SFSU ENVIS Student 12/5/2009, 12:33 pm PST

Greetings! My name is Sara Camp, and I am graduating this semester from SFSU with a degree in Environmental Studies, concentrating in Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice. Over the next two weeks, I will be reporting from Copenhagen, Denmark on both my own activities and on the progress of the U.N. Climate Change Conference (COP15, <http://en.cop15.dk/frontpage>), Dec. 7-18, 2009. My journey and subsequent reporting begins tomorrow, when I fly from San Francisco to Poland, and then on to Den-



Professor Plater's Blog Tales from Trinidad & Tobago Entry 1: Anticipation (1/22/2010)

I love teaching at San Francisco State. I love the Environmental Studies Program, I love the students in it, and I love helping students discover both what they need to know about environmental law and what they believe about it.

So when I accepted a Fulbright Scholar award to teach abroad for a semester at the University of West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago, I didn't do so lightly.

But having visited the country in 2007, I knew that it was an opportunity I simply couldn't pass up. I'll be teaching a new course (for me) on environmental economics, learn new skills, and get an opportunity to help a new masters program in tropical biodiversity conservation and management succeed in empowering great stewards of some of the most biologically rich lands on Earth.

mark. In the meantime, allow me introduce myself, so that you will have a better understanding of who I am and how this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity presented itself to me.

When I first moved to San Francisco in 2002, I thought I wanted to be an interior designer. I got a job working at a high-end showroom in the San Francisco Design Center and after a few months I came to realize that I was absolutely miserable. Surrounded by exotic furniture and wealthy, unfriendly people, I found myself in a unique position where I could see what my life would be like if I continued on the same path: shallow and meaningless. That realization inspired me to quit my job at the showroom and begin taking courses in the ENVIS Department at SFSU, where I could begin studying what really mattered to me.

Since my transition into the ENVIS Department in 2006, I have been working diligently to gain experience in the non-profit sector. My career began as a Community Organizer and Field Manager for Clean Water Action, a citizen's lobby that advocates for the protection of water resources and for chemical policy reform. After working there for almost three years, I got a job with 350.org working as a part-time Office Assistant and Bookkeeper. That was last February, and about three months ago I was promoted to doing a bit of program work in addition to my

I've also been asked to help draft new regulations to protect nesting leatherback sea turtles in the country. On my last visit, I had the most intense sea turtle experience of my life on a small beach in Northeastern Trinidad called Grand Riviere.

Every sea turtle superlative you can think of applies to the leatherback: most ancient, largest, deepest diving, most imperiled . . . it is a spectacular species.

Grand Riviere is a crucible of all the hope and despair surrounding the leatherback: you can see hundreds of adults nesting & thousands of young emerging from the sand, but you can also see stray dogs and black vultures preying on the young as they race to the ocean, and the drift net vessels off shore that incidentally capture adults, often drowning them, are everywhere.

We'll try and draft new rules that will encourage local fishers to swap out gear for more efficient gear that is less

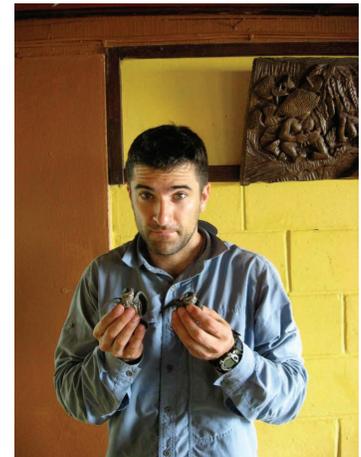
regular duties.

Working with 350.org has been incredibly valuable to me, both personally and professionally. During my time there, I have gained valuable work experience in the non-profit sector, I have been able to work alongside some exceptional and inspiring climate activists, and I was able to help organize the International Day of Climate Action that happened on October 24, 2009. I will be traveling to Copenhagen with the 350.org team (which includes dozens of organizers from around the world) in order to monitor the progress of COP15.

Now that October 24 has passed and the U.N. Climate Change Conference is fast approaching, I can only guess what the next two weeks will be like. However, instead of speculating, I am going to stick to reporting the facts to you, the students and faculty of SFSU, in order to provide a solid connection between our school and the U.N. Climate Summit. I will be sure to keep you updated as I find out more about the negotiations and about what I will be doing. I hope that you will find these reports to be both helpful and informative, but more importantly, I hope that in two weeks I will be able to bring you news of great success in Copenhagen this December. Arctic Circle, here I come!
Sara

likely to drown turtles. Over the next few months we'll meet with Fisheries officials and local conservationists to see if we can draft a solution that the government will adopt and enforce.

Check back here and I'll let you know how things go. And if you are thinking about an international masters program, [drop me a line!](#)



Student & Alumni News

Dani Lowther (TUE)

My name is Dani Lowther, this is my senior year in ENVS in the Urban Environment. This semester I am working with SF Environment at SFSU campus to promote Zero Waste. The city of San Francisco reached it's goal of 75% waste diversion from landfill by 2010 and now hopes to reach 100% waste diversion by 2020. SF Environment is tabling in Malcolm X Plaza to gather volunteers. Already students have been getting involved with Waste Monitoring in CCSC. Since there are now green bins, it's the student's job to educate each other, faculty and staff on how to reach Zero Waste. I have really been

enjoying Waste Monitoring, and everyone else involved has told me how much fun it is. I am happy to be working with students, not to get money for some green organization but rather to educate people about ways to make this a better planet. Yay! for compost!

If anyone would like to sign up to volunteer for Waste Monitoring, I will be tabling between 11-2 in Malcolm X plaza Tuesday-Thursday. We will also have in-class presentations on Compost and Recycle awareness. For further info about what we are doing or to volunteer, please email us at sfsu@sfenvironment.org

Candace Louie (TUE 2008)

This may I'll be completing my second semester as an Urban and Regional Planning graduate student at San Jose State. I love the program; it's full of like-minded people who want to make the world a better place to live. I also like that it gives me the opportunity to apply the principles of sustainability to the urban arena. Implementing environmentally sound infrastructure and transportation systems would go a long way in making cities cleaner and more energy efficient.

For the summer, I'll be interning with a local city's planning department to experience the government side of community development.



Want to keep up with fellow alums? Check out our official ENVS Alumni Facebook page! On Facebook, search SFSU Environmental Studies Alumni.

Faculty News

Carlos Davidson, ENVS

This fall I began a new collaboration with researchers at U.C. Davis on declines of the Cascades Frog in northern California. I recently submitted for publication a paper on global patterns of amphibian population declines in mountains. As a faculty representative on the University Sustainability Committee, I worked with a faculty group to try to get an "environmental literacy" or sustainability requirement into the new SF State general education requirements. We did a petition drive which received 228 signatures by SFSU faculty, staff and students, including 94 faculty from 40 different departments representing every college on campus. We did not succeed in getting a sustainability requirement for graduates, but in part due to our efforts an "environmental interconnections" option was added to the proposed new upper division GE. This spring, I am teaching for the second time my ENVS 570: Campus Sustainability course where we are focusing on student recommendations for an

SF State climate action plan. In February I was appointed to the Climate Action Plan Task Force for the City of Pacifica.

Glenn Fieldman, ENVS

In September I submitted a paper on neoliberalism and climate adaptation to the journal *Climate and Development*, where it is being reviewed. The paper is a revised version of a March 2009 presentation to the International Scientific Congress in Copenhagen. Presently I'm working on a paper on trade and the environment, which I hope to finish by the end of the semester. This year I have chaired the Open Space and Ecology Committee for the City of Brisbane, which advises and makes recommendations to the City Council, and co-authored a proposal on an energy strategy for the city which has been submitted to the council. Last September I was appointed by Rep. Jackie Speier to serve on her Citizen Environmental Committee. I've pushed for increased funding for residential and

commercial energy audits and retrofits, as well as "feed-in tariffs," which would pay small-scale renewable energy producers above-market rates for energy they sell back to the grid. Teaching a new course, Climate Policy and Politics (ENVS 470), which is being offered for the second time this spring, has been both enjoyable and a challenge because there's so much going on. I truly enjoyed chairing the ENVS Scholarship Committee--but choosing winners from a couple of dozen smart, hard-working and inspiring applicants wasn't easy!

Rich Campbell, ENVS

This spring, along with teaching, I continue to work as an attorney at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco. I also serve as Vice Chair of the City of Pacifica Planning Commission, and on the Pacifica School District's Wellness Committee that oversees the quality of the school lunch program.

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Sheldon Gen, Public Administration

In Fall 2009 I offered a new course on US environmental policy. PA/GEOG 776 Environmental Policy explored the American social contexts of environmental problems and surveyed major US policy solutions. It was well received in its first offering, with students from public administration, geography, and environmental studies participating. Although it is a graduate level course, upper division ENV5 students are most welcome. The next section of this course is expected in spring 2011. This spring, I presented a paper at the American Society for Public Administration, analyzing the modes through which the public participates in environmental planning. SF State graduate student Erika Luger was a co-author on that paper, and we are submitting it for publication in an academic journal.

Kathy McAfee, International Relations

I'm working on international policies to manage nature as a tradable commodity. Markets in 'environmental services', such as biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration, involve trade in credits or 'offsets' to compensate for greenhouse gas emissions or other destructive activities caused by those who buy the credits. They are controversial because they can enable wealthy countries and companies to 'buy their way out' of environmental responsibilities. While they create the impression that global warming and species extinction can be solved by market means, they often don't yield actual environmental gains. Some indigenous peoples and farmers movements reject these programs; others are trying to transform them. My newest article explores these issues with a case study of the Mexico/World Bank Payment for Environmental Services scheme.

A related theme is the tension between cooling the planet and ending hunger. I gave the MacKay endowed lecture on this at Dalhousie University in Canada in November. I'm preparing talks on food sovereignty, agroecology, and climate change for the Western Political Science Association and the Association of American Geographers conferences this April.

Peter Palmer, Chemistry

Our research group in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry has played a vital role in the development of handheld X-ray fluorescence (XRF) methods for determination of toxic elements and the application of these methods to a variety of environmentally relevant applications. Master student *Peter Baker* (now an FDA Consumer Safety Officer) and undergrad student *Rene Johnson* (now in a Ph.D. program at UC Davis) developed what may be the world's first field method for determination of arsenic in drinking water. Undergrad *Heather Gregory* (planning to enter MS program in forensic sciences) demonstrated a method to differentiate between authentic and fake supplements via handheld XRF measurement and statistical analysis in timeframes of less than one minute. Undergrad students *David Luong* and *Anthony Trinh* validated a handheld XRF method to determine leachable lead from tableware. Some of this work is described in a feature article (P.T. Palmer et al., *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, vol. 57, 2009, pp. 2605-2613). I have also been active giving 21 presentations in 2009, integrating the use of XRF into an undergraduate chem course, and having great fun pursuing the development of new instrumental methods for rapid determination of toxic substances.

Raquel Pinderhughes, USP

I am nearing completion of an environmental literacy curriculum that I have been working on for the past two years. It is produced by the Environmental Literacy Curriculum Project, a non-profit project I created in 2008.

Our first curriculum, Roots of Success, was developed for low-income youth and adults with limited proficiency in English, math, science, and computer skills who are enrolling in green job training programs throughout the United States.

Roots of Success provides students with an understanding of natural systems and environmental decision making from the multi-disciplinary perspectives of environmental science, land use planning, public health, and social jus-

tice. Upon completion of the course students are able to understand and think critically about environmental problems and solutions related to water, waste, transportation, energy, building, and food and, are informed about a wide range of green jobs and careers that emerge as solutions to environmental problems are put into place. The curriculum was piloted and field tested in green jobs training programs across the United States and, reviewed by a panel of subject area experts, one of whom was Professor Nancy Wilkinson, SF State Department of Geography

To teach the curriculum and course, instructors must be trained and certified. To date, the Project has trained 23 teachers across the United States, several of whom are currently teaching the course in the Bay Area. For more information about the Roots of Success curriculum [contact me](#). Starting in April, they can go to the curriculum's website at rootsofsuccess.org.

Several SF State students are working with the project, including ENV5 majors Shamar Theus and Jeanette Sasek, Urban Studies major Maggie Kuo, and Political Science alumni Drew Valentine. Their individual and collective skills, talents and dedication are essential to the project's success.

Nina Roberts, Rec, Parks & Tourism

I continue to enjoy being Director of SF State's [Pacific Leadership Institute](#) and encourage everyone to check it out. Beyond the university, I'm on the board of the Yosemite Institute, doing a great deal of work with the National Park Service around their diversity initiatives, and was a consultant to the producer of Ken Burns' America's Best Idea mini-documentary on "City Kids and National Parks." I recently gave a talk on demographic trends and changes at the Partner's Outdoors conference and am an invited speaker to the 2010 National Wildlife Federation symposium on children and nature. I am currently teaching RPT/ENV5 640: Recreational Use of Nat'l Parks and Protected Areas and a RPT class on Collaborative Leadership. I'm thrilled about my recent book chapter on multiculturalism in a new publication revolving around social justice in recreation and parks.