

Annual Newsletter

2016-2017

What's Inside?

- Letter from the Director
- [Alumni Updates](#)
- [ENTS Off-Campus Studies](#)
- [ENTS Events](#)
- [Student Internships](#)
- [COMPS Symposium](#)
- [Faculty Interview](#)
- [Looking to Next Year](#)

Letter from the Director

This has been a turbulent year for the planet, the nation, and the Environmental Studies Program! The 2016 election brought with it a surge in activism on campus. We were deluged with panels, demonstrations, and discussions in and out of class about what the Trump presidency means for the country. Environmental issues were a major focus of concern, and Climate Action Week and Earth Day had record participation levels.

Environmental Studies faculty and students have been right in the middle of the storm, answering all sorts of new and urgent questions like, "Why do we have an EPA?" and "What exactly is the Paris Agreement?" Always quick to spot a teaching opportunity, we've been busy giving public talks and interviews (look for the story in an upcoming edition of The Voice). Our majors have been contributing to campus-community initiatives like the Food Recovery Network, organizing trips to Washington DC, and helping the campus achieve its climate action goals.

But we haven't abandoned our core mission of running an exciting, innovative environmental studies program. Professor Tsegaye Nega's cookstove project in Addis Ababa grows more complex and collaborative every year. A Fullbright grant will allow him to devote his entire attention to it next year. We rolled out new off-campus programs and graduated a stellar crop of majors this year. And of course we've maintained our usual roster of visiting speakers, including Dale Jamieson, James Scott, Dave and Amy Freeman, and Dr. M.V. Ramana, in addition to our Wurtele visitor Kathleen Dean Moore.

Like the nation, the ENTS Program is transitioning to a new administration. At the end of this year, I'll hand the Directorship over to Professor George Vrtis. He will doubtless bring with him a fresh perspective and new priorities, but this at least will not change: Environmental Studies at Carleton will remain committed to our signature combination of fearless critical inquiry and passionate civic engagement in support of a more sustainable society.

Casper Award

Sarah Goldmans' superior academic achievement and energy and leadership in support of understanding and protecting the environment led her to win this year's Casper. Click her photo to see past recipients.

Stewsie Award

Through her outstanding dedication to sustainability at Carleton, Morgan Vought won this year's Stewsie Award. Click her photo to see past recipients.

Alumni Updates

[Read the Alumni Profiles!](#)

Off Campus Studies

Visions of California

This winter, eighteen students travelled around California with ENTS and English Professor Mike Kowalewski in an intensive, "total immersion" experience. Exploring California's literature, art, history, society, and environment, the program focused on placed-based learning and featured many opportunities to talk with an array of guest speakers from writers and artists to wine-makers and surfers.

"It was one of the best experiences of my life. I got to travel around with people I came to know and truly value as friends, while exploring the cities and natural landscape of a place I had never been." --Will Loner (ENTS 2019), program participant

Students hiking on the Visions of California trip.

Studio Art in the South Pacific

This winter, twenty-five students travelled to the South Pacific for the annual Studio Art in the South Pacific off-campus program. Led by Studio Art professor Fred Hagstrom, they spent one week in the Cook Islands, four and a half weeks in New Zealand, and four and a half weeks in Australia, studying art and culture in these areas. Aiming to examine social and environmental issues through art, students took classes on mixed media drawing, printmaking, and art history. These courses focused on drawing nature in a new environment, studying social issues in context, and producing narrative work in response to travel.

Students exploring the natural world on the South Pacific Studio Art trip.

Sustainable Energy Principles and Practices in India

During December break, Physics professor Arjendu Pattanayak took sixteen students on an off-campus study program to India to study sustainable energy. Through hands-on experiences in India, the program aimed to give students students an introduction to global energy issues, policies, and best practices.

"For me, the coolest thing was talking to Indian college students about the issues of climate change and renewable energy and their societal impacts. It was interesting to see the ways in which our perspectives aligned and the ways in which they were very different. The trip has definitely given me extra motivation to find a way in which I can contribute meaningfully to long term solutions." --Erik Lagerquist (PHYS 2019), program participant

Archie Fraser (ENTS 2018) working on his prints.

ENTS EvENTS

Kathleen Dean Moore: Distinguished Wurtele Visitor

The ENTS department was excited to welcome our 2016 Distinguished Wurtele Visitor Kathleen Dean Moore to campus this fall. Moore is an acclaimed author, naturalist and environmental philosopher known both for her award-winning books of nature writing and for her call to moral action against climate change and habitat destruction. While on campus, she delivered two public presentations--How to do Conservation Science that Matters and Great Tide Rising--met with student groups over lunch and dinner in CANOE House and Farm House, and ran a creative writing workshop on nature writing for interested students.

To learn more about Kathleen Dean Moore, click her picture!

Spotlight on Climate Action: The No Impact Challenge

Environmental Studies majors often moonlight as sustainability assistants, putting their communication and creative problem-solving to work on making Carleton a more sustainable system. This year, several of our majors helped the Sustainability Office organize Climate Action Week, a two week-long series of environmentally-focused events ranging from discussions, panels, and workshops hosted by various student groups, academic departments, and Northfield community partners. This year's Climate Action Week events attracted record numbers of attendees.

Amy Roach (ENTS 2018) and Bex Klafter (ENTS 2018) signing students up to join the No Impact Challenge.

Ironically, one of the high-impact events is the No Impact Challenge, led by SOPE (Students Organized for the Protection of the Environment). Teams of students, faculty, and staff carried around all their waste for one week, competing to create the least waste. With over 300 participants between the two years, the No Impact Challenge aims to get campus thinking more conscientiously about waste.

Natalie Jacobson (AMST 2018) helps students weigh and sort their waste during the Climate Action Week No Impact Challenge.

The Challenge: Waste and Participation

Natalie Jacobson (AMST 2018), lead organizer of Climate Action Week and head of SOPE, explains: "The No Impact Challenge provides a physical representation of the waste crisis in our culture. We live in a society that views disposability as normal and acceptable. My hope is that the No Impact Challenge pushes back on this notion. While lots of the Carleton environmental efforts focus on systemic change, which of course is incredibly important, I think it is almost as important that we all, as individuals, push ourselves to question or own choices and the impact that those choices have."

On the event's impact, she notes: "We have been thrilled with the success of the No Impact Challenge the last two years because of its high participation rate throughout many pockets of campus. Some of the participants were previously involved with environmental efforts on campus, but many I had never before interacted with in the context of environmental engagement at Carleton."

This year, St. Olaf joined the challenge. Sadly, they won.

Professor Tsegaye Nega and Professor Deborah Gross working on a cook stove--a project which will be incorporated into their new class, Climate Change and Human Health.

Student Internships

Robert Harris III: Ecotourism in Greece

Robert spent the summer in northwestern Greece near the border of Albania, working at an ecotourism company located in Northern Pindus National Park. Robert worked with a herd of 12 naturally managed and free range horses and was responsible for care of the horses and other farm animals. He also assisted on trail rides into the surrounding mountains where the team educated clients on horse herd behavior and the local ecology.

Interested in understanding how ecotourism affects conservation and park management, he learned how to mitigate human-animal conflict due to land use classifications by acting as a modern day shepherd. This eye-opening experience helped Robert to appreciate the challenges of reconciling conservation and development.

Morgan Vought: Elephants and Bees in Kenya

This summer, Morgan worked as an intern for Elephants and Bees in Voi, Kenya. Elephants and Bees is an organization working to solve elephant-human conflict spurred by elephant crop raiding. As elephants are afraid of bees, Elephants and Bees director Lucy King championed the idea of using beehive fences as elephant deterrents.

At Elephants and Bees, Morgan assisted with ongoing fence research, managing the organization's camera trap project and permaculture garden. She also assisted with environmental education at the local elementary school, collected and processed honey, and tracked elephants. She is excited to apply the creative field skills, agriculture skills, and management skills she learned from this research to further explore the intersection of humanity and the environment through green space design in the coming years.

[Click here to learn more about her experience.](#)

Robert Harris III (ENTS 2017) during his summer internship in Greece.

COMPS Symposium 2017

For their comprehensive exercises, the Class of 2017 focused on various environmental, social, and economic topics relating to this year's theme: A Local Lens.

Topics:

- *"Factors Influencing Farmers' Support for the Minnesota Buffer Law: A Cross-Country Case Study of Rice and Dakota Counties"* Sarah Goldman, Jenna Greene and Leland Swift
- *"Shifting Tallgrass Prairie Management Practices: The Influence of Fire on Public Health, Grassland Ecology, and Ranching Activities"* Robert Harris III, Hannah Marty and David Meraz
- *"Emerging from the Dark Ages: A Modern History of the Donald J. Couling Arboretum"* Carly Yu and Sacha Phillips
- *"Cultural Inclusion in the Couling Arboretum Restoration: Evaluating Ethnobotanical Connections and Assessing the Educational Value of Ethnobotanical Resources"* Gina Hatch, Molly Ross and Morgan Vought

[Click here for a recap of each presentation along with a copy of the studies.](#)

Interview with Deborah Gross

Deborah Gross, a professor of chemistry at Carleton, has been involved in the ENTS department since she arrived to Carleton in 1998. We interviewed Deborah on her involvement with the ENTS program, environmental chemistry research, and thoughts on some environmental topics. Click her photo to read the interview!

Looking to Next Year

Benedict Distinguished Visitor: John Dernbach

Next year we are excited to be welcoming as our Benedict Distinguished Visiting Professor John Dernbach, Commonwealth Professor of Environmental Law and Sustainability and Director of the Environmental Law and Sustainability Center at Widener University. Professor Dernbach is one of the nation's leading authorities on sustainable development and the law.

In addition to numerous publications on sustainable development and climate change, he has contributed to two recent landmark environmental law decisions: In its 2013 decision in Robinson Township v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court relied heavily on Professor Dernbach's scholarship in holding several provisions of Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale statute to be unconstitutional. Dernbach also co-authored an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in the 2007 case Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency, holding that the EPA may regulate greenhouse gases.

Professor Dernbach will be teaching two courses next spring, on sustainable development and on environmental law and policy.

New Course: Climate Change and Human Health

Next spring, ENTS professor Tsegaye Nega and Chemistry professor Deborah Gross will be teaming up to teach a new course titled "Climate Change and Human Health." This course will focus on case studies that show how the climate system can affect human health. As Professor Gross put it "in a lot of the case studies there is a climate change story and a human health story, so addressing one also addresses the other."

Professors Nega (conservation biology) and Gross (atmospheric chemistry) believe that the course will provide a tremendous opportunity for the students to learn from each other, connecting their knowledge and perspectives to discover the best solutions to climate and health issues. Professor Gross hopes "that students come through the class and feel like there is something they can actually do, as opposed to feeling that the world will end soon." Similarly, Professor Nega says: "If there is something that can be done, we should be able to do it. We have to ask: 'What is it that we as a faculty can do on the ground that can help students to see what they can do about it?'"