

Increasing Diversity in Youth Leadership and Corps Programs



Session Organizers: Brittany Hall, National Park Service Chesapeake; Joseph Toolan, Chesapeake Bay Trust

1:50 pm - 2:40 pm

Session Padlet: <https://ncboestc.padlet.org/estcworkshops2/95v3ke94dxl48510>

Increasing diversity in the environmental field is essential to developing responses and solutions to climate change and other complex environmental challenges, directly and indirectly related, that we face as a society. Yet today's green workforce lacks a diversity of voices needed to achieve that truly inclusive movement. Providing opportunities for all youth to further their interest in the many different types of environmental work and advocacy is important to motivate and inspire them for their future and prepare them for the workforce demands of climate change.

Discussion Questions

- How can agencies and organizations better engage youth in these important opportunities?
- Once engaged, how can we make sure that these opportunities are inclusive and culturally proficient in meeting the needs of all youth?
- How do we ensure these opportunities are provided and designed equitably from the start?
- How can we meaningfully advance this work using existing COVID-19 Economic Relief funding, and the potential for additional funding for pandemic recovery, infrastructure, and/or climate change efforts?

Three Things You Must Know:

- Leadership and Corps programs that currently exist can be modified to be more diverse. However, intentional planning and funding is needed to support this work.
- There are organizations that currently focus on engaging historically underserved and underrepresented communities, these organizations and partnerships will be needed and necessary to meaningfully engage and diversify the next generation of environmentalists.
- By thinking creatively outside the field of environmental education, organizations can leverage federal, state, and local initiatives to source funding and build capacity for youth corps.

Background & Key Resources

- The Challenge: <https://diversegreen.org/research/the-challenge/>
- Starting a Youth Corps: <https://corpsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Starting-a-Corps.pdf>
- Eight Successful Youth Engagement Approaches: <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/tag/game-plan/approaches>
- The Corps Network: <https://corpsnetwork.org/about-us/contact-us/>
- National Park Foundation Youth Corps Funding: https://www.nationalparks.org/sites/default/files/2021npf_servicecorpsrpf.pdf

Session Speakers

Dalia Dorta, Latino Programs Director, ddorta@environmentamericas.org, [Environment for the Americas](https://www.environmentamericas.org/)

Brittany Omoleye-Hall, Education and Training Coordinator, [Brittany Omoleye-Hall@nps.gov](mailto:Brittany_Omoleye-Hall@nps.gov), [National Park Service Chesapeake](https://www.nps.gov/chesapeake/)

Joseph Toolan, Outreach and Education Program Assistant, jtoolan@cbtrust.org, [Chesapeake Bay Trust](https://www.chesapeakebaytrust.org/)

Susie Creamer, Executive Director, Susie.Creamer@audubon.org, [Patterson Park Audubon Center](https://www.audubon.org/patterson-park)

Lisa McClure, Senior Manager- Programs & Partnerships, lmccclure@nationalparks.org, [National Park Foundation](https://www.nationalparks.org/)