ANNUAL REPORT 2023

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER & CHAIR

It's hard to believe that it has been a little over six years since we launched Engineers & Scientists Acting Locally. We remain dedicated to our mission to increase local civic engagement by people with backgrounds in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Thanks to an incredible team, this year, we have evolved and expanded in ways I could not have imagined.

We have strategized and fundraised over the last few years to support ESAL's programmatic work and to hire our first staff member. Before March of 2023, ESAL was an entirely volunteer-run nonprofit. We are thrilled to have expanded our capacity by welcoming Taylor Spicer to serve as ESAL's first managing director. In this role, Taylor will use her civic engagement, nonprofit board service, and higher education experience to enhance ESAL's organizational, operational, and volunteer management capabilities. Taylor's hiring signifies a new phase of maturity for the organization and a harbinger of great work to come.

This year, we also launched our new website to better highlight our content and make it more navigable. This marks a structural change for ESAL that supports our core values of education and awareness-raising. Volunteers spent countless hours behind the scenes organizing and presenting ESAL's many resources in accessible and purposeful ways. Now, our Local STEM Database, Local Engagement Map, original articles, past events, workshop information, and much more can be easily searched and used by our audiences.

We begin almost every presentation at ESAL with the anonymous quote, "Decisions are made by those who show up," because we have experienced and witnessed first-hand the disproportionate ripples STEM professionals make when we show up in our local communities. Involving ourselves more deeply in the places we live and work--especially by listening to the needs of community members and policymakers--can reap personal, societal, and even professional benefits.

In the year ahead, ESAL will continue to develop broad-reaching programming and content. Through an upcoming virtual event, we will explore how filling gaps in local data allows municipalities to understand social realities and propose data-based policies and practices that help build more inclusive and supportive communities. ESAL members are also furthering our educational mission through insightful and diverse panels at many in-person national conferences and annual meetings throughout the year. In this post-pandemic period during which local and political contexts seem ever-changing, ESAL is dedicating resources to a strategic planning process. We see the value of reflecting on how we can best serve the needs of engineers and scientists seeking to make an impact in their communities both today and in the future. We aim to share a refreshed and aligned vision for the next phase of our organization in the coming year. We are humbled and excited to continue in this purposeful work with current and new partners, allies, supporters, and champions.

Sincerely,

Arti Garg

Arti Garg, PhD
Founder and Chair

JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION (JEDI) COMMITMENTS

ESAL carefully considers diversity in all of our content and programming and strives to feature people from all geographic backgrounds, at every career stage, with expertise across the breadth of STEM disciplines, having differing abilities, and who have a diverse set of identities, including racial, ethnic, religious, cultural, gender, and sexual orientation. ESAL has committed to:

- *Incorporate discussion of JEDI issues in STEM into all of ESAL's programming.*

- *Continue to use a JEDI lens for our issue-focused programming and content.*

- *Proactively conduct outreach and seek partnership opportunities with scientific societies and organizations for groups that have been historically marginalized in STEM.*

- *Conduct a quantitative internal review of ESAL's organizational diversity.*

- *Through our programming and content, highlight the historical and current intersections between Indigenous people and the mainstream U.S. STEM community, without shying away from controversy, particularly with respect to local ecosystem and land rights issues.*

This year, ESAL increased our issue-focused content that uses a JEDI lens and increased our programming that incorporates or centers JEDI, especially in regard to Indigenous peoples, within the work of professionals with STEM backgrounds. Learn more about last year's related work in our annual assessment here.

HIGHLIGHTS

Partner event with **Until Justice Data Partners**: **"Science for the People"**

SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE
Empowering Communities to Leverage Science and Engineering to Address Local Issues

Panelists:
Monica Unsled, PhD, MPH - Founder and Executive Director, Until Justice Data Partners
Darshan Karwat, PhD - Assistant Professor, Arizona State University
Omega Wilson - Co-Founder, West End Revitalization Association
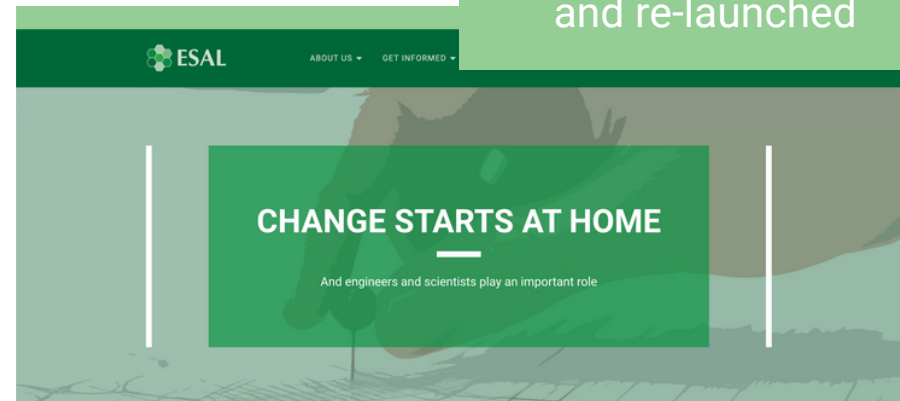Brenda Wilson - Co-Founder, West End Revitalization Association

JULY 19, 2022 | 5:00pm ET

JUL > AUG > SEP >

Partner event series with **Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP)** and **Geological Society of America (GSA)**: **"Power and Indigeneity"**

ESAL website updated and re-launched

CHANGE STARTS AT HOME
And engineers and scientists play an important role

HIGHLIGHTS

Local engagement **workshop** with **National Society of Black Engineers** (NSBE) Aerospace group; ESAL's first publicly-accessible, virtual workshop

OCT > **NOV** > **DEC** >

Panelists at conferences: **Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science** (SACNAS) National Diversity in STEM and **Society of Women Engineers** (SWE)

Session at the **American Geophysical Union** (AGU) conference: **"Shaping Local Policy Where It Counts"**

"The mission of ESAL is **to bring together a community** of people with varied STEM backgrounds from across the country who choose to use their expertise and time to guide their peers into local civic engagement opportunities. Almost all of the work ESAL does is **created, led, and implemented by talented and passionate volunteers**."

— **Taylor Spicer**
Managing Director

HIGHLIGHTS

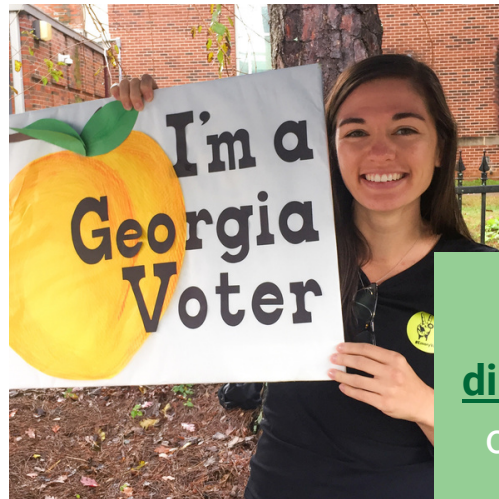ESAL event: **"Scientists Needed: Using Your STEM Skills in Local Government"**

Three conference panels and a networking event at the **American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) annual meeting**

JAN > **FEB** > **MAR** >

ESAL hires first **managing director** to oversee operational, organizational, and volunteer management

HIGHLIGHTS

ESAL professional development workshop hosted for **AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellows**

APR

MAY

JUN

ESAL's second publicly accessible workshop, **"Advocate for a Policy with State Legislators or Legislative Staff"**

Learn more at
esal.us/events

Partner event with **Ecological Society of America** (ESA):
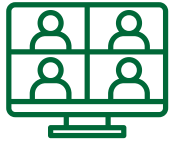**"Protecting Wetlands for Healthy Communities and Ecosystems"**

DIRECT ENGAGEMENT

17 CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP SESSIONS

3 VIRTUAL PANEL EVENTS

500+ PARTICIPANTS

SOCIAL REACH

2,550 FOLLOWERS

+34,800 IMPRESSIONS

+1,300 ENGAGEMENTS

Eng&SciActLocally @ESAL_us · Apr 19
We are excited to announce our upcoming panel event, "Protecting Wetlands for Healthy Communities and Ecosystems," which will take place May 8, 2-3pm ET. Co-hosted with @ESA_org. Learn more and register here: esal.us/event/protecti...

EVENT

Protecting Wetlands for Healthy Communities and Ecosystems

Erika Harris
Senior Planner
Puget Sound Regional Council

Royal C. Gardner, JD
Professor of Law
Stetson University

Register at esal.us/events
Monday, May 8
02.00 PM ET

Engineers & Scientists Acting Locally

esa

14   10   1,783

BY THE NUMBERS

26 **ARTICLES OF ORIGINAL CONTENT**

All Articles

Filter Results

Category
- Deep Dive (7)
- Events (30)
- Local STEM (51)
- Other (48)
- Postcards (22)
- Stories from the Field (61)

Tag
All Tags

Topic

Deep Dive 3

Local STEM 5
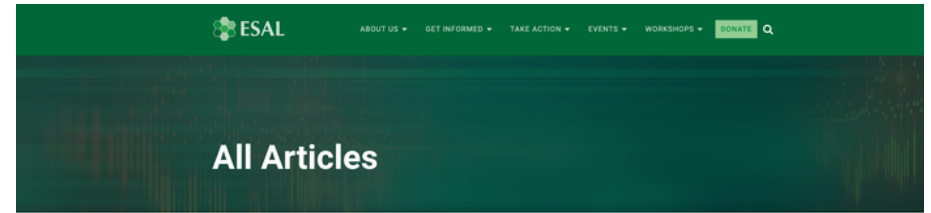
ESAL News & Guest Blogs 4

Stories from the Field 6

Event Write-ups 5

Postcards 3
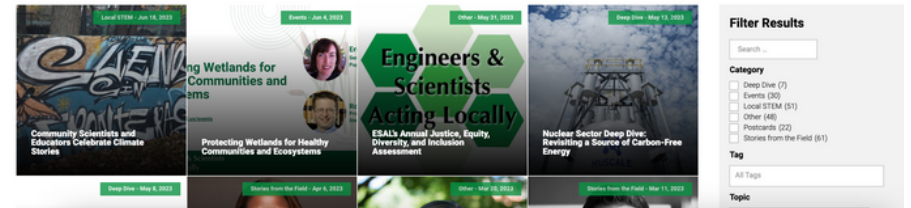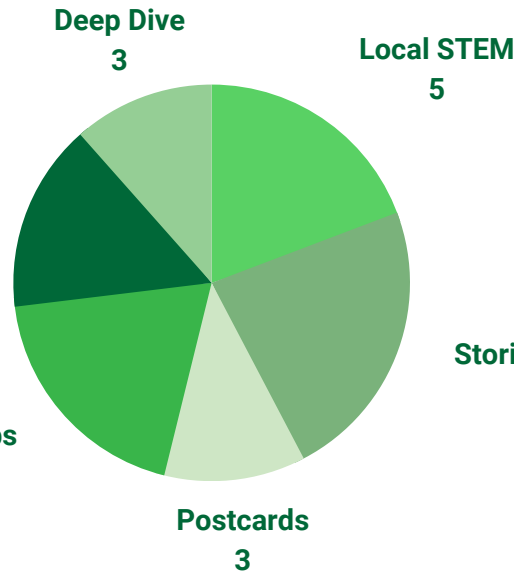
ESAL newsletter
engage local.

June 2023 Newsletter

This month, as we celebrate Pride and the Juneteenth holiday, ESAL reviews the commitment we made to promote justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in our broader advocacy for local engagement. Chair Arti Garg evaluates how the organization has measured up against those goals over the past year.

The latest story on ESAL's blog talks to the leaders of a Thriving Earth Exchange project based out of Chicago, which aims to "amplify climate narratives in migrant communities." And if you missed the virtual panel last month, you can now find a recap of the event, Protecting Wetlands for Healthy Communities and Ecosystems.

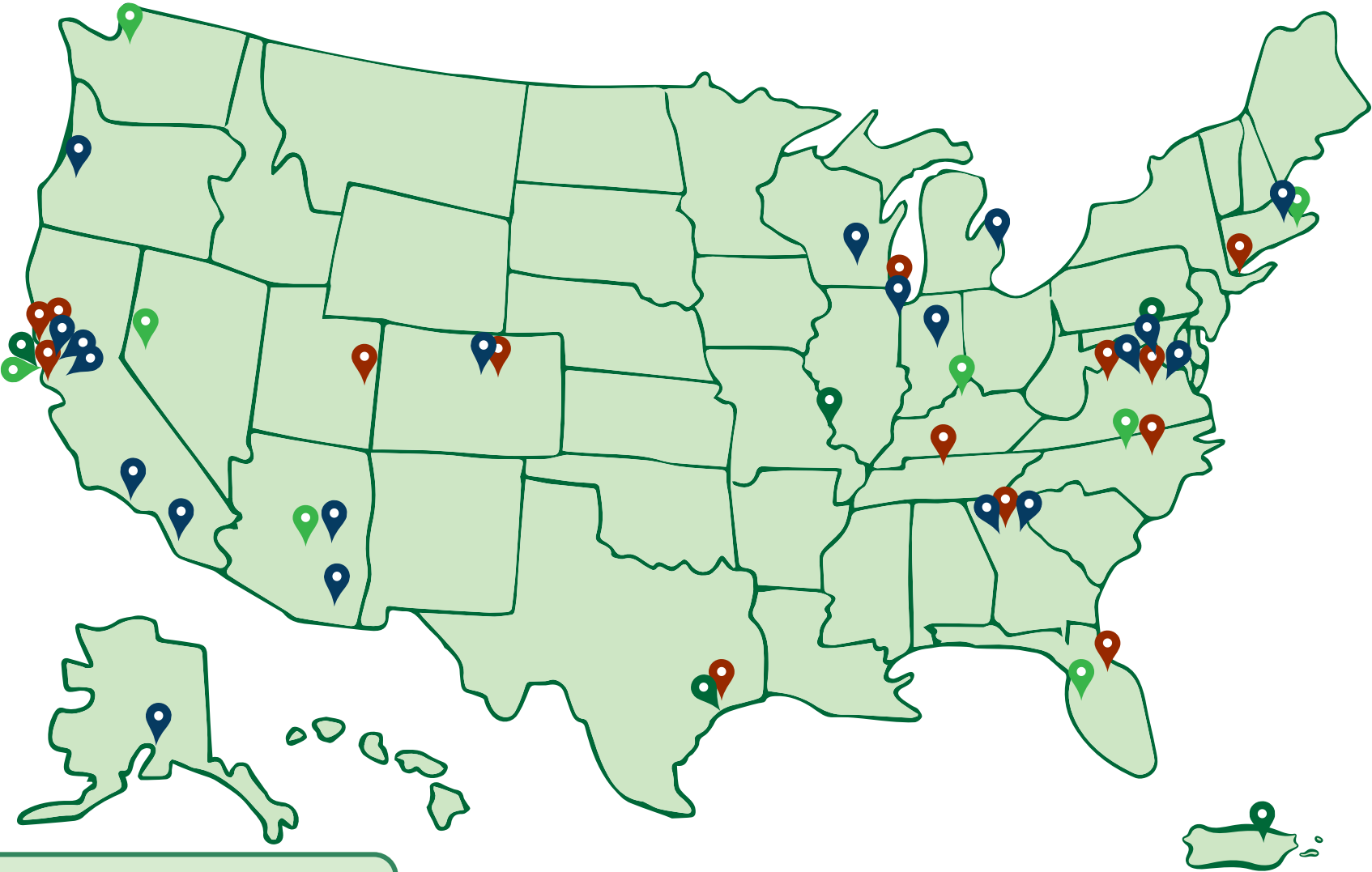Check out ESAL's Youtube channel for a fresh introductory video on Getting Involved in Public Policy as a Scientist.

1,100+

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

ENGAGING LOCALLY ACROSS THE NATION

Legend:
- ESAL Volunteers
- ESAL Conferences and Workshops
- Panelists of ESAL Events
- People with Backgrounds in STEM Featured in ESAL Articles

THIS YEAR'S NEW VOLUNTEERS

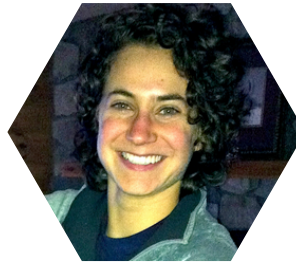**Cherry Cheuk Lam Cheung**
Communications Team

Mark DiTusa
Workshops Team

Julie Fornaciari
Communications Team

Skylar Knight
Communications Director

Erica Lieberman
Content Team

Hailey Reiss
Communications Team

Mica Smith
Content Team

Dalton Stewart
Workshops Team

Eric Wang
Web Team

Steering Committee

Arti Garg
Founder & Chair

Laurie Chong
Vice Chair

Nick Anthis
Secretary & Treasurer

Chris Jackson
Member-at-Large & Workshops Director

Chris Spitzer
Member-at-Large & Content Director

Kendra Zamzow
Member-at-Large

Leadership Committee

Taylor Spicer
Managing Director

Skylar Knight
Communications Director

Rebecca Mandt
Events Director

Rachel Owen
Development Director

Jake Pasner
Technology Director

Volunteers

Gwendolyn Bogard
Cherry Cheuk Lam Cheung
Matthew Diasio
Mark Feuer DiTusa
Rosie Dutt
Julie Fornaciari
Lyndsey Gray
Daniel Howard
Krystle Kalafut
Tolulope Kolapo
Joel Lesher
Erica Lieberman
Matt Martin
Robin Mays
Erin Partlan
Henry Pitts
Devin Reese
Hailey Reiss
Emily Schafer
Pooja Shah
Malvika Singhal
Dalton Stewart
Tony Van Witsen
Heidi Waite
Eric Wang
Grace Wickerson
Nanxi Xu
Lina Zhu

Sponsors

Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

GORDON AND BETTY MOORE FOUNDATION

Partners & Allies

AAAS

ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA
esa

THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA®

GLOBAL NETWORK FOR GEOSCIENCE AND SOCIETY

INSTITUTE for TRIBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS

AGU ADVANCING EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCES

NSPN National Science Policy Network

Union of Concerned Scientists

Engineers & Scientists Acting Locally