STRAW’s Community College Summer Volunteer Project
PURPOSE
• To share and learn about the community college project that STRAW piloted this summer!

OUTCOME
• Point Blue staff will feel knowledgeable and inspired to support the program in various capacities.
• We will understand there is an alignment between Point Blue’ goals and this program.
• Point Blue staff will learn more about the RAY Fellowship and consider hosting a fellow in the future.

PROCESS
• Why?
  • RAY Fellowship
  • Community College Student Population
  • Strategic Plan & Project Alignment
• What?
• How?
  • Pilot Project Overview
  • Project Summer 2020
• Now What?
RAY Conservation Diversity Fellowship

● Dr. Roger Arliner Young
  ○ Howard University B.S., University of Chicago M.A., and University of Pennsylvania Ph.D.
  ○ First American Black woman to receive a doctorate degree in zoology in the 1930’s

● By recognizing Dr. Young through the RAY Fellowship Program, we aim to honor a pioneering figure that overcame a myriad of social and personal barriers in her journey to make a pivotal change in the science community.
RAY Conservation Diversity Fellowship

- Fellowship is designed to ethically and racially diversify the predominantly-white environmental field by providing environmental jobs and professional development support to recent college graduates of color with exceptional promise to be environmental leaders.
Community College Student Population

- **Undergraduate Student Population**
  - 40% of all undergraduates are in community college
  - ~6 M (US), 2 M (CA)
  - 2/3 of CC students are below the median household income

- 61% (CA)

References:
1. [https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport13/](https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport13/)
2. [http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/PolicyInAction/KeyFacts.aspx](http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/PolicyInAction/KeyFacts.aspx)
Community College Students’ Barriers

2. https://nscresearchcenter.org/signaturereport13/
We will increase the pace, scale, and impact of climate-smart conservation, and demonstrate successful approaches to catalyze solutions to the global climate, water and biodiversity crisis.
Strategic Plan & Project Alignment

**Inspiring Conservation Action**

**Key Strategy** is to develop ambassadors of climate-smart conservation by having young scientists:

- **Train** in climate-smart restoration
- **Set** career goals in science and engineering fields
- **Graduate** from our young scientists ambassador programs

**Outcome:** *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

- Our education programs are about empowering leadership now and developing new leaders who can help find solutions to the environmental problems affecting all of; to do that, we need to reach and reflect our entire population.
“STRAW is rooted in the idea that nature is everywhere. We empower students by valuing them as scientists and contributing community members...we connect students with nature, nurture their understanding of the local environment, and engage them in solving environmental problems.”
The summer volunteer project will inspire and empower a cohort of community college students to be a part of local conservation efforts that will expose them to the environmental field to further develop their academic & professional goals.
Summer 2019 Project Overview

- The program design has been informed by meetings with local community college students, high school volunteer program 2018, Gina, Melissa, and Jordan Williams.

- 5 community Santa Rosa Junior College student volunteers
- 8 week project
- 2 days per week, Field Day & Enrichment Day
Summer 2019 Project Overview

• Timeline

• Recruitment from SRJC - May 2019
• Application Due - Sunday June 9
• Project Start Date - Week 1, Wednesday June 19th
• Project End Date - Week 8, Friday August 9th
Project Overview, Field Day

• Goal was to have their volunteering time align with tasks that already need to be completed. Their field day should provide an experience that can inform their career goals and can also be referenced in future conservation-related opportunities.

● 11 Restoration Days
  ○ Weeding
  ○ Checking irrigation lines
  ○ Watering

● 4 Marine Lab Days
  ○ Brandt’s Cormorant Pellet Dissection
  ○ Dropped Fish Work

● 1 Watershed Week Day!
Project Overview, Seminar Day

• Goal was to have seminar days serve as the enrichment component of their project, a dedicated time to focus on their professional and personal development.

• Seminar Day Content
  • Climate Smart Restoration - John Parodi
  • Phytophthora Training - Alison Pollack
  • Plant ID Basics - Alison Pollack
  • Communicating Climate Change - NNOCCI
  • Traditional Ecological Knowledge - Nick Tipon
  • Career, Forestry - Harold Appleton
  • History of Environmental Field
  • Visioning Exercise
  • Resume Review
  • Elevator Pitch
Project Overview, Seminar Day

**Week 5: History of Environmental Field and Creating Vision**

**Date:** 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 a.m., July 18th, 2019  
**Location:** Farallon Room  
**Speakers:** AEL  
**Attendees:** Jenna, Matthew, Carlos and Phillip

**Learning Objectives:**
- Students will have a greater understanding of the current status of the environmental field regarding diversity, equity, and inclusivity.
- Students will understand the origins of the American conservation movement (ACM) lies mostly on elites (i.e. powerful, rich, white men) and is heavily influenced by race, class, and gender.
- Students will use this knowledge to better understand their position and role that they have in the current conservation field and the one that they will aim to have.

**Essential Question(s):**
- What are the origins of the American conservation movement?  
- What is the importance of knowing this origin to knowing your position and role in the conservation field?  
- How can you use this knowledge and incorporate this in your vision as you pursue your conservation career?
Project Feedback

Students Feedback

- Students felt it was worth their time!
- An informative experience to learn more about Point Blue, STRAW, and careers in the environmental field.
- Field Days were great but challenging sometimes, which made Seminar Days an important part to their volunteering experience
- Accommodating schedule for other responsibilities.
- Program was well-organized and scheduling communicated.

Changes

- More
  - versatility in field day work.
  - lessons on environmental science
  - opportunities they can participate now as community college students and as university students.
Project Feedback

Staff Feedback

Positives

- Maintain small cohort of 6 students to avoid “too many hands in the kitchen.”

- Their work was helpful to the success of maintaining projects.

- Overall, staff felt they had a good general understanding about the program content and purpose due to introductory presentation.

Changes

- More
  - facilitated community building with the students.
  - time in the field so the training to work time ratio is balanced.
  - Relevant science background (via papers, videos, etc.).
  - communication on scheduling and volunteer attendance.
Summer 2020 Project Description

The summer volunteer project will inspire and empower a cohort of community college students from underrepresented communities to be a part of local conservation efforts and the global environmental field, immersing them in the environmental field to further develop their academic and professional goals.
Summer 2020 Project

• Timeline, 10-week project
  • 6 SRJC Students
  • Start Date- Week 1, Monday June 1st
  • End Date- Week 10, Friday August 17th

• Field Days
  • 4 weeks in marine lab
  • 6 weeks in restoration sites

• Seminar Days
  • Career Pathways
  • Environmental Field Hiring Panel
  • Future Internship/Job Opportunities
  • Ecological Science Basics
  • Riparian, wetlands, transition zones, working lands
Summer 2020 Project

• How does the program advance JEDI efforts?
  • Provides a holistic introduction to the environmental field
  • Inclusive to more community members
  • Inclusive to a variety of socioeconomic statuses
    • Aim to provide
      ✓ field gear (rain coat, boots, hat, etc.)
      ✓ stipend
      ✓ college credit (if there is students’ interest)
Dear Diary,

How do I become more involved with CC students?

Can you say that into the microphone, Mr. Bird?

I was just saying that I wish CC students were out here learning more about me!
It takes a village...

On your half-sheet of papers, please WRITE YOUR NAME and answer the two questions below. Keep your papers until instructed otherwise.

1. With funding, what science topics would you be interested in teaching CC students?

1. What piece of advice do you have for early career environmental professionals?
Questions?