



2019 SALISH SEA EQUITY & JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM REPORT

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in the marine and environmental fields in the Salish Sea region

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Prepared by:

Michael Chang (he/him)
Makah Tribe & Cascadia Consulting Group

Dana Wu/吳淑如 (she/her/they/them)
Seattle Aquarium

Jasmine Ramgotra (she/her)
Culture SHIFT

Ava Holliday (she/her)
Avarna Group

Melissa Watkinson (she/her)
Washington Sea Gran

Sara Breslow (she/her)
University of Washington EarthLab

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, we want to acknowledge the hard work that all Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) who continue to persist and work towards creating racially equitable, inclusive, and safe spaces for other BIPOC. We are incredibly grateful to the many wonderful speakers and presenters we had, but in particular to Ken Workman, Hannah Wilson, and Mari Shibuya. They helped create a tone for the symposium that celebrated the many intersecting identities for BIPOC and the spaces that BIPOC people operate in. We are grateful to all of our sponsors, who donated funds, labor, and expertise for this Symposium to happen. We are grateful to the original panelists of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion panel at the 2018 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference, who created the foundations and relationships that allowed for this Symposium to happen. We are incredibly grateful to and humbled by many of the other BIPOC environmental professionals who work across the Pacific Northwest and Salish Sea region. Their work has allowed the continuous discussions and progress that is necessary for a more just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive future. Finally, we are forever grateful for each member of this planning committee. Over the course of planning this Symposium, we have continued to challenge and grow with each other.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2019 Salish Sea Equity and Justice (SSEJ) Symposium was the accumulation of years of relationship-building and work of many individuals. Originally a conference panel at the 2018 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference, the SSEJ Symposium evolved due to the high turnout and interest in making environmental work in the Salish Sea region more equitable, diverse, inclusive, and just. The SSEJ Symposium happened from November 14 - 15, 2019. There was an opening night reception on November 14, 2019, where the film *Change from Within* was shown at the Seattle Aquarium. The SSEJ Symposium took place the following day on Friday, November 15 at the UW *wələbʔaltx*^w – Intellectual House in Seattle, WA. There were 3 plenary sessions structured around the following topics:

1. Strategies to address structural racism and inequity within the environmental field in the region.
2. Power structures and dynamics influence knowledge production.
3. Ethical and equitable community engagement.

After the plenaries, there were breakout discussion groups, where attendees had the opportunity to reflect on the Symposium's themes, connect over shared experiences or stories, and identify potential actions and solutions to make the environmental field more equitable, diverse, and inclusive. Key themes from the breakout themes were:

- It is critical to acknowledge and honor tribal sovereignty
- Everyone benefits from a more diverse environmental field
- Organizational leadership can progress DEI with active participation
- Equitable hiring practices can lead to a diverse staff
- To generate behavior change, organizations need to go beyond diversity trainings
- Creating safe and inclusive workplace cultures requires radical transformation
- The environmental field will progress with development and growth pathways that prioritize and center BIPOC environmental professionals
- DEIJ implementation requires organizational and individual accountability
- Indigenous youth may grow as scientists and community leaders with intentional career pathways
- Current systemic power dynamics will shift only when multiple sciences and knowledge production systems are equitably prioritized
- Evaluation criteria for funding programs can effectively progress the environmental field by including additional DEI metrics
- Community empowerment can lead to more equitable, ethical, and culturally relevant practices and outcomes

Finally, we wanted to highlight two other themes that emerged from the Symposium's discussion and post-Symposium conversations. Firstly, although there was a lot of turnout at the Symposium, multiple people commented on the lack of presence from organizational leaders. Buy-in and prioritization of DEI from organizational leaders is one of the key mechanisms of institutionalizing DEI progress. However, multiple national publications have continuously identified the lack of proactive actions from organizational leadership in diversifying the environmental movement. Many people stated that the noticeable lack of attendance from organizational and senior leadership reflected this broader issue. In reflection, if we were to hold this Symposium again, we would specifically invite organization leadership, especially white leadership, in discussing their roles in further equity and justice work.

Secondly, though we had about a quarter of all participants being BIPOC, the Symposium's attendees were still largely white-identified people. This trend coupled with the fact that many BIPOC attended the Symposium with co-workers who were often white, led to the hesitation of BIPOC to share stories, experiences, and perspectives due to continued fears of explicit or implicit retaliation within the workplace. In reflection, other mechanisms to directly address this issue is to expand the time dedicated for race-based caucusing and have more explicit spaces reserved for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

HISTORY OF THE SSEJ SYMPOSIUM

If we are to shift the paradigm of conservation to be a thriving movement, then diversity, equity, and inclusion needs to be embedded into the DNA of the Salish Sea and its conservation efforts. DEI is essential to ensure equitable and just conservation outcomes. At the 2018 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference (SSEC), the *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Environmental Progress* panel addressed questions of workplace culture, equitable hiring practices, retaining people of color within institutions, appropriate and equitable engagement with historically marginalized communities, roles and protocol for respecting and incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems, and the role of education within DEI strategies. The “standing room only” attendance indicated that there was a strong interest and need to continue these conversations around DEI within the environmental field in the Salish Sea region.

Following the 2018 SSEC, continued conversations among the panelists and other contributors, which included Jasmmine Ramgotra (Culture SHIFT), Michael Chang (Makah Tribe), Melissa Watkinson (Washington Sea Grant), Dana Wu/吳淑如 (Seattle Aquarium), Ava Holliday (Avarna Group), and Sara Breslow (UW Earthlab), led to an opportunistic development of a proposed event around environmental equity and justice that was geographically bounded to the Salish Sea and Northwest coast areas.

It has been shown that centering equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice in environmental work engenders environmentally beneficial, economically beneficial, and socially beneficial outcomes for everyone (Dawson et al. 2017; Pascual et al. 2014). From our conversations, three distinct themes emerged as relevant topics for the region.

1. Strategies to address structural racism and inequity within the environmental field in the region.
2. Power structures and dynamics influence knowledge production.
3. Ethical and equitable community engagement.

OBJECTIVES OF SSEJ SYMPOSIUM

Addressing inequity and working toward environmental justice is essential to a successful environmental movement. Currently, there are significant disparities in the representation, content, and processes for implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the environmental field across the Salish Sea and the Pacific Northwest Coast. Although professionals in this field are aware and concerned about issues related to DEI, there is an overall lack of understanding for how to integrate these concepts into the environmental workforce. Addressing inequity and working toward environmental justice is essential to a successful environmental movement.

CHANGE FROM WITHIN

On the evening prior to the Salish Sea Equity & Justice Symposium, there was an opening reception at the Seattle Aquarium, where the world premiere of the film, *Change from Within: Diversifying the Environmental Movement*, was shown.

SSEJ Symposium participants that also attended Change from Within felt that this event was very meaningful and was an important example of the intersection of art and science. The event also helped to set the stage for the next day's events. Below were some of the feedback we received from this event:

“CULTURE SHIFT was inspiring, and I connected to the stories of the elders. I feel like I need to watch these multiple times and would connect with different ideas each time.”

“I really appreciated the interdisciplinary approach, something we are very much lacking or in need of more to be brought to the forefront for communicating environmental issues. Really great job!”

“I was thrilled and honored to be part of the crowd at the Seattle Aquarium event. As a cis white person working in the environmental industry, it was refreshing to see space made for people of color, gender diversity, and varied cultural backgrounds to have an open and honest discussion about representation in the environmental industry. Jasmmine was a fantastic facilitator. Leading a crowd of strangers through exercises in vulnerability could have been quite fraught, but she created a comfortable atmosphere in what might have been a challenging exercise. Her presence is calming, and I really appreciated her honesty with what she was struggling with that evening. I've never felt so much that a facilitator was genuinely showing up and still in a place of learning. Thank you for making this event happen.”

SUMMARY OF ATTENDEES

There were 235 registrants, and overall 206 people attended the Symposium. A majority of attendees work for local governments or non-profits. About a quarter of attendees were faculty, staff, or students within academic institutions, and a few participants represented tribal governments or private businesses. Attendants largely represented Seattle-based organizations and there was very few, if any, geographic representation from other parts of Washington State, British Columbia, and the outer Washington coast. The dominant demographic was one that currently reflects the environmental field: cis, white, educated women in her thirties. This is not

surprising given that one of our target audiences were those who have historically represented environmental groups in order to engage them in doing their part of transforming their internal and organizational awareness and culture. More than half of the audience have a graduate degree. The audience was majority white. You can see a summary of the demographic information we collected from those who responded to the symposium evaluation in Appendix E.

WELCOME AND KEYSTONE SPEECH

Land Acknowledgment

The welcome and land acknowledgment for the SSEJ Symposium was provided by Ken Workman (he/his), who is the great-great-great-great grandson of Chief Seattle and is a member and leader of the Duwamish Tribe. Ken acknowledged the historical and current contributions of the Duwamish peoples as well as the sacred and ancestral connections to the land of what is now Seattle. He acknowledged the interconnectedness of landscapes and waterscapes, and honored the many Indigenous peoples, along the Pacific coastline as well as inland Tribes, for being the environmental stewards of the land, air, and waters. He welcomed the people in the room using the many Indigenous languages from the region.



Community Agreements

The two lead organizers, Jasmmine Ramgotra and Mike Chang, opened the symposium with a welcome to the attendees. They then led and opened a discussion of community agreements, listed below.

1. Be present.

2. Move up, move up.

This is a twist on the more commonly heard phrase “step up, step back.” The reframing as “move up, move up” confirms that growth is happening in both experiences, and confirms that you do not step “back” in order to listen and choosing to learn how to listen is important for the individual and the group. Saying “move” recognizes that not everyone can take steps, while movement can happen in both body and spirit.

3. Call each other in as we call each other out.

When giving feedback to someone else, do so respectfully. And if you are having your own ideas or behaviors challenged, receive them respectfully.

4. Create a space for multiple truths and speak from your own experience.

We are only able to speak from our own experiences and should be intentional and aware of our language and vocabulary, especially when it comes to stereotypes and generalizations about others.

5. Assume best intentions...but recognize that intent is different from impact.

Assume that communication and comments are made from good intentions, but recognize that despite good intent, the impact of our communication can still be hurtful and harmful. Good intent does not absolve people from being held accountable and apologizing for negative impact.

6. Share gratitude for feedback.

Sharing experiences and stories are a gift. Make sure we thank those that choose to share, especially QTBIPOC folx.

7. Get free, prior, and informed consent.

Others’ stories and experiences are not ours to share. You should ask for consent if you want to share others’ stories outside of this space, and consent should be given freely without coercion and with prior knowledge of why their story is being shared.

8. Notice power dynamics and positionality.

9. Expect imperfection and center learning and growth.

Keystone speaker

We were intentional about replacing “Keynote Speaker” with “Keystone Speaker.” The term “keystone species” was first coined by University of Washington’s own Dr. Robert T. Paine, an ecologist who studied and identified that some species have greater influence in supporting biodiversity and healthy functions of an ecosystem than others. Much of his research on keystone species was in partnership with the Makah Tribe, where his continuous relationship with the Makah led to him being one of the few non-native scientists granted access to traditional Makah cultural and harvesting sites like Tatoosh Island, which is where part of his ashes were scattered when he passed in 2016. Washington Sea Grant has adapted this concept in their new [Keystone Fellows program](#), where recent graduates from diverse backgrounds are identified as emerging leaders in marine science and policy to respond to key WSG partners’ program needs and are

indeed a keystone to diversifying the environmental movement. Following this adaptation, we believe that “keystone address”, rather than “keynote address” is the appropriate title for the presentations by leaders who are working to center equity and justice in the environmental movement.

Our Keystone Speaker was Hannah Wilson, who recently earned her bachelor’s degree in Environmental Science at a recent graduate from the University of Washington. She initially found her passion for environmental justice work early on in college and during her time as a Doris Duke Conservation Scholar at University of Washington. She serves on the Seattle Commission for People with disAbilities and is an Outreach Coordinator with Earthcorps.

Hannah spoke about how her own identity as a Black, queer, disabled woman has directly informed her approach to environmental justice issues within her communities. She shared her own journey navigating environmental organizations and spaces, almost always dominated by white perspectives, and spoke specifically on how there needs to be an intersectional lens to address environmental issues. Hannah questioned whether and how environmental professionals assess power dynamics and historical racism when approaching their work and challenged how environmental organizations uphold racist systems. Hannah stated:

“The purpose of me sharing my own personal growth is to hopefully make it clearer to those in positions of power, those who are making decisions in this field, and many of you here today, what kind of invisible knowledge and strength and beauty people of color, LGBTQI+, disabled, and other communities experiencing oppression have before they even show up to work or school or an event. I mean the things that may not show up on a resume or cover letter. Or the reason why someone doesn’t have the network to those with hiring power in the environmental field. Or why an unpaid internship is unacceptable. Or why hiring people who are doing community work with communities of color should look like and understand that community.”



Symposium attendees were grateful for Hannah’s presentation and provided positive feedback:

“I absolutely LOVED the Keystone Address! I related to her experience on many fronts. I was honored to be in the room and to celebrate her successes and triumphs. It reminded me that I’m not alone. My hands go up to her and her fight.”

“Hannah may have been the first person I’ve seen bringing her whole identity to an address like this. Her story was inspiring, and her energy was infectious. I appreciated that she presented a calm radiance during her talk. That energy promises a slow burn, a long commitment to the work she is doing, and set a wonderful precedent and tone for an event that involves many, long and sometimes difficult conversations, in a field where there’s no real finishing point, just constant work towards improvement.”

Hannah’s speech, published with her permission, can be found [here](#).

PLENARY 1: POLICIES TO ADDRESS SYSTEMIC RACISM & INEQUITY

The “Policies to address systemic racism and inequity in the environmental movement” plenary session emerged from the need to acknowledge the history of racism in the environmental movement. It also addressed how the current environmental field is still upholding systemic racism, leading to an experience that scholars are calling a “diversity problem” (Dutt 2020; Taylor 2014).



Bridging the Great Divide: Reconciling Environmental Justice and Traditional Environmental Movements

Sean M Watts, PhD, SM Watts Consulting, LLC

Abstract: Over the past two decades historically white-led (HWL) environmental organizations have begun to acknowledge their lack of diversity, however the sector has had limited success in increasing diversity and working effectively with community-based organizations (CBOs). Even with the best intentions, lack of understanding and sensitivity has resulted in missteps — deepening distrust of HWL organizations. This divide perpetuates the concentration of power,

influence and money in HWL organizations and the disconnect between environmental, social and economic health and wellbeing. I present opportunities to address the “original sin” of exclusivity in ways that recognize the expertise of CBOs and facilitates authentic partnership.

- A key idea Sean offered is that “when you are accustomed to privilege, equity feels like oppression,” continuing that organizations who choose NOT to adopt DEIJ will become obsolete.
- Published with permission, Sean’s presentation is available on [our YouTube site](#).

Working toward racial equity in the world of Puget Sound and Salish Sea recovery as a historically white-led organization

Mindy Roberts, Washington Environmental Council

Abstract: Many historically white-led organizations, including Washington Environmental Council (WEC), recognize that we must change from within to ensure an equitable and inclusive future for the Salish Sea. Tribes, Indigenous People, and communities of color currently experience disproportionate environmental and health impacts. We will describe our organizational journey on the path to a more just future in the environmental movement and specifically within WEC and our Puget Sound program. We do not approach racial equity as experts or as a fully evolved organization. Instead, we identify tangible changes resulting from this work and the durable commitment needed to effect institutional change.

- A key concept that Mindy offered was that her organization still is on their racial equity journey and that centering racial equity within organizational decisions is difficult, especially when supporters and donors are unwilling to acknowledge the intertwined history of racism and environmentalism.

Resource groups: a strategy to address representation of marginalized communities

Maritza Mendoza and Lisa Kenny, EarthCorps

Abstract: People of color make up only 12-16% of people working in environmental organizations, foundations and government agencies (Dorceta, 2014). EarthCorps, an environmental non-profit, shares a similar statistic with POC making up 17% of staff and 20% of our AmeriCorps members. Resource groups offer an opportunity for members to process what it means to perform and exist in these white-dominated spaces and start to work towards liberation and empowerment with other people who share similar lived experiences. The changes sparked from EarthCorps’ resource group have already started to increase the ability for POC to support, mobilize and empower each other.

- Maritza and Lisa offered the key point that organizational leadership needs to do the work to support POC resource groups rather than tokenize them. “You can’t have a POC employee resource group if you don’t hire POC.”
- Published with permission, Lisa and Maritza’s presentation is available on [our YouTube site](#).

Key Themes

The key themes that emerged from this plenary include:

- The history of the environmental movement is racist, and without acknowledging and centering racial equity within environmental work, organizations are likely to reproduce and perpetuate environmental racism and white supremacy.
- The current environmental movement is still extremely white despite many diversity and inclusion policies. This disparity can be attributed to systemic racism, where BIPOC often do not have the same resources to access education, professional opportunities, and spaces as their white counterparts.
- For organizations to fully dismantle systemic racism, there needs to be active support and willingness to change from the leadership.
- Retaliation is still happening to people of color. This means that superiors, often white, retaliate by withholding promotions, salaries, bonuses, professional development opportunities, or creating a hostile working environment for BIPOC staff. This was a common theme that we heard from multiple BIPOC presenters and participants throughout the day. Historically white-led organizations need to actively invest and radicalize how they incorporate DEIJ into their mission, projects, and operations. This includes how organizations recruit and hire, build partnerships and relationships with historically underrepresented communities, building trust within communities and with internal staff of color, and educate supporters and followers. If organizations do not transform, they will likely become obsolete in the near future.
- All organizations are on their own journey and should constantly reflect and act on how they can better advance and center racial equity within their institutions.

The Plenary 1 was received as the most meaningful plenary of the day. Audience comments included:

“At times I had difficulty during this plenary session because I felt powerless as a white middle level employee at my nonprofit. I work hard to lift up and support the POC in my organization and hopefully the leadership of my org heard the message that was being conveyed during this session.”

“It was incredibly valuable for me to reflect and see that I have work to do in creating space for diversity in my work.”

PLENARY 2: POWER STRUCTURES AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

The “Power structures and how they influence knowledge production” plenary session emerged from identified problems of how environmental organizations were conducting conservation and research. This raises questions about how knowledge and science are constructed, owned, and utilized in the environmental movement (CTKW 2015; Gray 2017; Whyte 2017).



Queering our Connection and Relationships to Nature

Jules Hepp, Tiny Trees

Abstract: Participants will re-think what “nature” has meant and could mean. Jules will give tools to re-think how language and practice influences our connections and relationships to ourselves/other humans/our sense of place/other beings to keep practicing ongoing social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work.

- Jules offered a framework that queer theory can reframe how environmentalists interact, conduct work, educate, and relate to the environment.

Scientific imperialism: Tensions between Western Science and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Michael Chang, Cascadia Consulting Group (previously Makah Tribe)

Abstract: In light of multiple national and international climate change reports, there has been an emerging conflict in how some systems of science, knowledges, and understanding, specifically Indigenous and Local Knowledge systems, are excluded because they do not meet the "standards" of Western science. This presentation will explore existing tensions around how knowledge is constructed and how Western science constructs dominate scientific research agendas, who is included (or excluded) from participation or representation, and how we can begin to shift the paradigm of what we consider as valid science and knowledge.

- The key theme Michael proposed is that there needs to be clear ethical guidelines and protocols established around Indigenous and Local Knowledges (ILKs), because both the utilization and the disregard of ILKs can actively cause harm and perpetuate historical trauma.
- Published with permission, Michael's presentation is available [here](#).

Data as a good to leverage science, funding, and actions

Maria Baron Palamar and Graise Lee Jenni, Resolve Conservation

Abstract: How can we leverage community capacity to collect and share data? How can we influence partnerships, funding and the direction of science in our community? Generally, in every community, large research institutions obtain the funding, formulate the question, design the study, analyze the data, and synthesize results while becoming gatekeepers of the data. The community, involved in data collection, has little access to the scientific process, becoming the equivalent free labor. We are exploring a shift in the way we fund, store and use data, removing the need for centralized data management so it can become a trusted community good.

- Maria and Graise offered the key theme that the solution to address the inequitable disparities of access to funding and data is the structural redistribution of power and funding, which can lead to more equitable and just outcomes
- Published with permission, Maria's presentation is available [here](#).

Key Themes

Key themes from this plenary include:

- Power, in terms of who has it and who does not, directly shapes how environmental science, knowledge, and projects are conducted as well as how people interact with nature.

- Definitions of science and knowledge have historically and currently favor Western conceptualizations of scientific knowledge, which values objectivity, replicability, and reproducibility. The criteria for knowledge within Western epistemic systems inherently do not recognize the validation norms of other knowledge systems, such as Indigenous knowledge, while not recognizing protocols of ownership and utilization.
- Power structures directly influence who receives funding, gets to do research and keep data. Redistribution of power and resources will lead to more just and equitable outcomes.

Audience comments reflected the dynamic, critical, and overwhelming power structures that are faced in the environmental field and in environmental justice, which we were unable to cover all of. It is clear that this topic needs further discussion and critical insight.

“I’ve worked in all different types of organizations and I felt like this didn’t fully represent the lack of power that individuals have within larger organizations. Everybody has a boss. There are systematic problems across the board and individuals at all levels want tools to be engaged in working for good.”

“This was the most helpful plenary of the day- appreciated the contextualization of IEK, in particular the barriers to incorporating IEK in the western sciences in regard to climate change. I also appreciated the speakers on data and community science. These were so short though, and so few questions were able to be asked, I wished more time had been spent here.”

PLENARY 3: ETHICAL & EQUITABLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The “Ethical and Equitable Community Engagement” plenary was critical to address the environmental work that needs to be done with community. Many environmental organizations currently do not appropriately or ethically engage with communities, especially those who have been historically underrepresented within the environmental movement.



Building Authentic Relationships with Indigenous Peoples

Ellany Kayce (Tlingit Nation, Raven-Frog clan), Nakani Native Program

Abstract: In this presentation, lessons learned from creating a Racial Equity Toolkit with Puget Sound Cohort/Race Forward and the importance of allyship work with Indigenous Peoples, while centering equity and justice in community engagement, especially when linked to environmental justice.

- Ellany offered key concepts and principles of ethical engagement with Indigenous communities, and how Tribes and Indigenous peoples are not homogenous. Additionally, Ellany presented the recently published Racial Equity Toolkit.

Unlikely Alliances of Native Nations and their neighbors on the frontlines

Zoltan Grossman, Evergreen State College

Abstract: As Native nations asserted treaty rights, they were confronted by white neighbors fearful of losing control over natural resources. Yet faced with an outside threat to the common land and water, such as coal trains or oil terminals, some communities unexpectedly joined to protect the same treaty resources. The University of Washington Press book "Unlikely Alliances: Native Nations and White Communities Join to Defend Rural Lands" explores this evolution from conflict to cooperation in the Pacific Northwest (including Quinault and Lummi) and elsewhere. These rural cross-cultural populist alliances offer a hopeful alternative to working only with mainstream urban environmental groups.

- Zoltan offered a key concept that non-native organizations and communities can partner and respect Tribes and their sovereign status, through what he calls “Unlikely Alliances.”

Swinomish Place-based Science, Culture, and Environmental Education: A Swinomish Approach to Environmental and Resource Issues

Todd Mitchell (swalítub), Swinomish Tribe

Abstract: The Swinomish People have long standing traditions of protecting, honoring, and thanking Mother Earth for the gifts that nourish our people. The culture of the Tribe is intrinsically tied to the health of the environment that sustains the habitat for our important natural resources and cultural practices they support. While some of our work is directed at addressing immediate and specific environmental or ecological concerns, our objectives focus on the long-view of sustaining the Swinomish culture. We use the place-based knowledge and indigenous science of our ancestors combined with scientific research to develop innovative ways to protect our environment and resources not just for now but for the next seven generations. For Swinomish, it is not enough to simply work for the survival of a species or habitat: we strive to protect and preserve resources and their place in Swinomish culture. This presentation will: discuss what is place-based science, traditional ecological knowledge, and indigenous science; the connection of Swinomish culture to our lands, environment, and treaty-reserved rights; case study(s) of Tribally designed and lead placed based-science, research, and habitat restoration on the Swinomish Reservation; our environmental education efforts of bringing Swinomish specific indigenous science curriculum to the Tribal youth in the Community.

- Todd offered the key theme to reframe “science.” Specifically, Swinomish's K-12 education system is re-framing science as an amalgamation of Western science and place-

based Indigenous science, which has created opportunities and systemic paradigm shifts for Swinomish youth.

Process Behind Participation

Adrienne Hampton, Seattle Aquarium

Abstract: The Duwamish Floating Wetlands Pilot Project fostered pathways for community-led science. Community participants evaluated how floating wetlands may affect localized water quality and provide habitat for salmon smolts in the Puget Sound, while inspiring community stewardship and education. Even in its limited capacity as a pilot, the project worked to infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion across all aspects of community science from transportation and accessibility to activities, speakers, and data dissemination. Yet the approach to achieve such goals often took a creative approach due to the constraints of western science (protocol, methods, and design) and how research must look to be perceived as legitimate.

- Adrienne offered multiple key themes that have come from her experience as a woman of color working in the environmental field. Specifically, she encourages shifting from “citizen science” to “community science,” to compensate communities of color for their time, and to avoid “transactional” relationships.

Equitable Partnerships and Community Empowerment: Building a Health Promotion Program to Advance Environmental Justice in the Lower Duwamish Superfund Site

Luz María Cárdenas, Emma-Maria Maceda, and Binh Tran, Community Health Advocates

Abstract: The program established by Public Health-Seattle & King County (PHSKC) for the EPA, focuses on building capacity and creating power-sharing spaces for agencies to partner directly with us, the community members so that we can provide input on decisions that affect us. We build capacity by bringing our communities together, training our community members to become Community Health Advocates (CHA), and empowering the CHAs to work towards a solution to protect their health. Our work allows us to talk with decision makers on breaking down the barriers that affect us and give our community a voice so that we can work together to help create a change for future generations.

- Presenting in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, the Community Health Advocates offered the key theme on the need to empower leaders within communities, as they are the most appropriate to best engage on critical issues within their own communities.



Key Themes

By the time the third plenary came, attendees communicated that they had already been provided with a lot of information and they would have liked more time to process and reflect with their peers. However, the presentations offered different and unique perspectives that shaped the day's learning.

“At this point in the day, I was already so FULL.”

“Wonderful to see English language learners and Indigenous voices centered.”

“Adrienne was awesome. I wrote down ‘good ideas don't always mean good process,’ which is so true.”

DEIJ THEMES AND STRATEGIES

After the three plenary sessions, all participants were randomly assigned to one of 15 breakout groups. Each breakout group was tasked to provide opportunities to reflect on the presentations from the day and discuss further questions, resources, and stories. As there were many stories shared by POC and other junior and medium-level staff, we understand the sensitivity and vulnerability in sharing these stories and have promised to protect people's anonymity unless they have expressly given permission to share their stories. This decision is also aligned with community agreement #7 of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. Below, we outline the emerging themes that reflect existing issues within the environmental field and associated strategies to address those issues, all of which were identified within the breakout group discussions.

General reflections from the day

There was almost unanimous consensus among all breakout group participants that there needs to be a substantial shift for the environmental field to be more diverse, inclusive, equitable, and just. There was acknowledgment that BIPOC are resilient peoples because of the historical and current racism that has led to the systemic underrepresentation of BIPOC within decision-making spaces, often leading to disproportionately negative outcomes for their communities. Many white-identified participants acknowledged that they understood racism still exists today yet were surprised to learn how racism and settler-colonialism permeates through all aspects of environmental work and is the structural foundation of which much, if not all, of the environmental movement is built upon. There was general agreement that organizations should center racial equity to ensure a more diverse and inclusive workspace which leads to more equitable and just environmental outcomes and solutions (Dawson et al. 2017; Pascual et al. 2014). For BIPOC, electing to center racial equity in their work and workplace is not a privilege and is central to their everyday experience and decision-making. There was almost unanimous consensus among the breakout groups that white people need to more of the deep work to dismantle systemic and structural racism and not place the burden solely on BIPOC.

Summary of Themes:

- It is critical to acknowledge and honor tribal sovereignty
- Everyone benefits from a more racially diverse environmental field
- Organizational leadership can progress DEI goals with active participation
- Equitable hiring practices can lead to a racially diverse staff
- To generate behavior change, organizations need to go beyond diversity trainings
- Creating safe and inclusive workplace cultures requires radical transformation
- Development and growth pathways that prioritize and center BIPOC will lead to increased racial diversity
- DEIJ implementation requires organizational and individual accountability

- Indigenous youth may grow as scientists and community leaders with intentional career pathways
- Equitably prioritizing multiple sciences and knowledge production systems can help shift power dynamics
- Evaluation criteria for funding programs can lead to inclusive and equitable outcomes
- Community empowerment can lead to more equitable, ethical, and culturally relevant practices and outcomes

Theme: It is critical to acknowledge and honor tribal sovereignty

It is important to acknowledge and honor tribal sovereignty in all spaces and projects. This can manifest in multiple ways, including conducting appropriate land acknowledgments, supporting tribal treaty rights, and developing and partnering with tribal and Indigenous peoples and communities. However, many tribal representatives identified how even well-intentioned actions from non-tribal and non-Indigenous organizations resulted in additional harm. This includes not doing a proper land acknowledgment, electing to stay neutral or in opposition to Tribes when treaty rights are being violated, and homogenizing tribal and Indigenous communities and governments when conducting engagement (e.g., the misconception of “I talked to one Tribe and they agreed to this project/policy, therefore all Tribes agree to this project/policy.”).

Theme: Everyone benefits from a more racially diverse environmental field

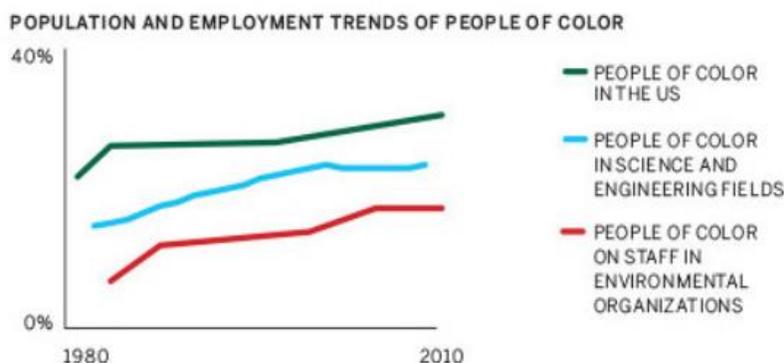
Almost every breakout group identified the importance and benefits of having a more diverse workforce in the environmental field. Despite this acknowledgment and intentional DEI strategies from some organizations, there has been little progress in diversifying the environmental workforce in the Salish Sea region. The underrepresentation of BIPOC individuals in the region reflects national trends in the U.S. (Taylor 2014, Allala 2016). In a 2016 workshop in Seattle, *Breaking the Green Ceiling: Empowering People of Color in the Environmental Sector*, participants identified the root causes of the lack of racial diversity as:

- Structural and institutional oppression
- Uninviting and exclusive cultures
- Lack of access to educational and professional pathways

Many of our breakout group discussions reinforced these same issues.

“The failure of environmental organizations and agencies to increase recruitment and retention of people of color comes despite the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on communities of color and the fact that people of color poll higher than whites in support for environmental issues.” – Taylor 2014.

Figure 1. Representation of BIPOC in Environmental Organizations (figure from Taylor 2014).



Theme: Organizational leadership can progress DEI goals with active prioritization

Every single breakout group identified that organizational leadership, senior management, and board members did not prioritize attending the Symposium. Research has shown that there needs to be clear and accountable actions from the top-down to ensure that an organization will actively center racial equity (Beasley 2017). The lack of participation and presence from many organizations' leadership, senior management, and board members was seen as a symptom of leadership not actively prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion and justice despite saying that it is an organizational priority. This is reflective of the "Diversity in Name Only" discussion from Plenary 1, and has led to continuous frustration from middle-level and lower-level staff, some who are BIPOC, feeling like organizational leadership is capitalizing on the trend of being "inclusive" rather than devoting the required time and energy to dismantle systemic racism.

Some of the solutions identified in the breakout groups include:

- Hire and promote more BIPOC to senior leadership positions. In the past decade in the environmental field, most BIPOC staff members make up lower-level and mid-level positions, with very few BIPOC being represented in senior leadership (Taylor 2014; Johnson 2019; Beasley 2017; Beasley 2016).
- Require senior leadership to actively participate and be present around discussion and dialogue of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. If senior leadership members are unwilling to make this time and energy investment, they should not be part of the organization's leadership, especially if the organization has prioritized DEIJ. (Link to accountability?).

Theme: Equitable hiring practices can lead to a racially diverse staff

Almost every single breakout groups identified inequitable hiring practices that their organization still ascribed to, including:

- Placing required years of experience;
- Placing educational requirements, especially for PhD or Master's degree holders;
- Not listing salary ranges;
- Not explicitly requiring that racial equity is an integral part of a position;
- Hiring from existing professional and social networks;
- Not requiring Human Resources to undergo racial sensitivity or implicit bias training;
- Subconsciously (or consciously) labeling specific people as diversity hires.

Each of these hiring practices is affected by the histories of systemic racism, which has led to an environmental workforce that is largely dominated by white people. These practices have been shown to actively and inactively exclude BIPOC from applying to jobs and placing BIPOC at a disadvantaged position in salary and benefit negotiations (Johnson 2019; Pedulla & Pager 2019). These practices often lead to negative organizational outcomes of low BIPOC staff retention rates, more racially homogenous and white workplaces, less racial diversity in mid- and senior level positions, and contributing to the gender and racial wage gap (Johnson 2019; Kamimura 2019; Gerard et al. 2018).

Strategies identified within the breakout group sessions include:

- Create accountability within organizational hiring processes
- Utilize more inclusive language within job announcements.
- Posting job salaries and salary ranges.
- Utilizing an intentional strategy to recruit among a diverse range of networks. Utilizing existing professional and social networks can reinforce systemic racism through selection bias.

Theme: To generate behavior change, organizations need to go beyond diversity trainings

Most participants in the breakout groups stated that their organizations had mandatory racial equity or DEI trainings. These trainings were often identified as the outcome of an organizational DEIJ work rather than the beginning of an organizations DEIJ work. These trainings covered issues that spanned racial equity, micro-aggressions, implicit biases, and tribal and Indigenous engagement. However, most participants also identified that these trainings, though useful for general awareness, was insufficient to engender behavioral changes and shifts within the organization. Additionally, these trainings sometimes further alienated and tokenized BIPOC staff members. For example, one POC workshop organizer stated that they heard comments from

a coworker at a racial equity training on how they feel like they should not be apologizing for slavery.¹ These trainings were perceived as easy ‘wins’ for organizations on their DEI journey yet led to unintended consequences of potentially creating hostile work environments for BIPOC staff.

Some of the solutions identified in the breakout groups include:

- Create systems and metrics of accountability to ensure the DEI does not end at the training and is infused into all types of organizational work (Beasley 2017).
- Require all employees to do the necessary pre-work on racial equity before placing them in a mandatory DEI workshop that could lead to harm against BIPOC colleagues. The pre-work could include actions like readings, seminars, and white staff-only workshops.

Theme: Creating safe and inclusive workplace cultures requires radical transformation

Almost every breakout group discussed workplace culture issues and needs and associated strategies and solutions. Overall, many participants identified the need to have a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace, especially for BIPOC staff, and mentioned multiple instances in when their own workplaces failed to do that. When there is not a diverse or inclusive workplace culture, dominant cultures can unintentionally force BIPOC and LGBTQ+ employees to assimilate, resulting in lost opportunities for organizational growth and innovation (Equity in the Center 2018). These workplaces can also contribute to employee dissatisfaction, affect BIPOC employees’ health and wellness, and result in lower retention rates, especially for BIPOC (Taylor 2014; Johnson 2019). Some of the many examples identified of inequitable and non-inclusive workplace cultures include:

- Microaggressions and macroaggressions to BIPOC and LGBTQ+ employees;
- Taking credit for others’ work or not giving credit to others for their work, especially BIPOC employees;
- Discounting a BIPOC staff member’s perspective, especially when it comes to race and racism in the workplace;
- Creating a culture where BIPOC staff do not feel comfortable sharing their experiences and knowledge around DEI with their colleagues;
- Expecting BIPOC staff members to lead or work on organizational DEI without appropriate compensation.

Multiple strategies emerged from the breakout group discussions about creating more inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplaces, including:

- Require implicit bias and racial equity training for all staff.

¹ This comment was shared with the participant’s explicit permission.

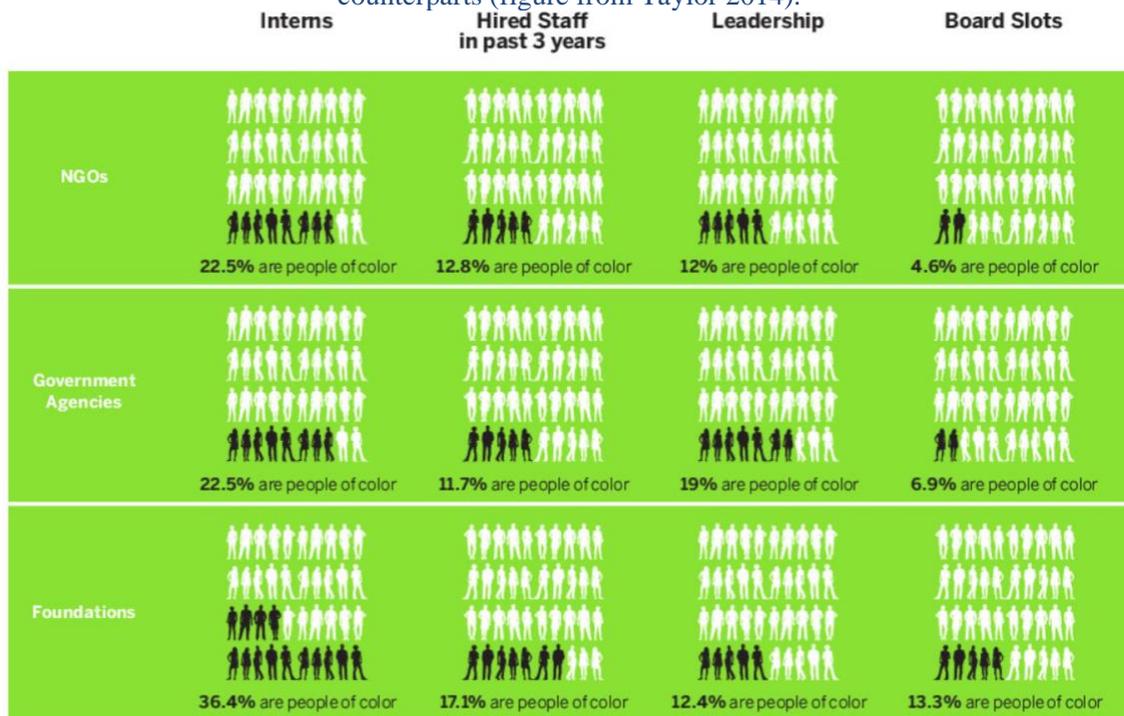
- Create systems of accountability that elevates the voices of BIPOC and holds staff who contribute to inequitable and non-inclusive workplace cultures accountable.
- Have ‘conversation clubs’ for white-identified staff members to do the necessary work, without BIPOC, to address white privilege, implicit biases, and systemic racism.
- Regularly scheduled (i.e. annually) workplace culture assessments to track how an organization is fulfilling its commitment to racial equity.
- Having BIPOC-only spaces within the workplace (e.g. employee resource groups).²

Theme: Development and growth pathways that prioritize and center BIPOC will lead to increased racial diversity

One of the most common experiences that BIPOC-identified participants shared was the lack of professional development and growth pathways for BIPOC employees and professionals. BIPOC make up 36% of the population in the U.S. yet make up only approximately 12-16% of staff in environmental organizations, mostly within low-level and mid-level positions (Figure 2). This trend of “diversity decreasing as responsibility increases” is reflected in national statistics, suggesting that environmental organizations fail to use existing career and development pathways effectively to promote and develop BIPOC environmental professionals (Taylor 2014). Additionally, as of 2014, every single large environmental organization that had publicly available data or voluntarily shared data did not have a single BIPOC serving as president, vice-president, assistant or associate director, CEO, or board president (Taylor 2014). This trend actively reinforces systemic racism by continuing to position white people as key decision-makers on projects, funding, policies, and decisions around environmental conservation, when it is proven that environmental hazards disproportionately affects communities of color (CIG et al. 2018).

² In Plenary Session 1, presenters Maritza Mendoza and Lisa Kenny specifically mentioned that organizations need to hire BIPOC in order to have BIPOC employee resource groups. We wanted to reiterate that point here.

Figure 2. BIPOC environmental professionals do not have the same career mobility as their White counterparts (figure from Taylor 2014).



Multiple strategies and solutions emerged from the breakout groups, including:

- Have paid internships specifically for BIPOC and create career development plans with them specifically due to the historic and current inequities that still permeate race and hiring in the environmental field.
- People in positions of power to hire people (e.g. senior leadership, human resources) should be better advocates and sponsors for BIPOC applicants and candidates.
- Create racially sensitive, ethical, and appropriate career and professional development plans and mentorship opportunities with BIPOC staff.
- Value the contributions of BIPOC more during annual or biannual reviews and promote them accordingly. BIPOC have done the hard work within environmental organizations and communities and have not been appropriately compensated. Upvaluing their contributions is one mechanism of reconciling historic lack of recognition and compensation.
- Create an inclusive and equitable workplace culture to prevent pushing BIPOC staff members and talent out of the organization.

Theme: DEIJ implementation requires organizational and individual accountability

There was unanimous consensus among all breakout group discussions that there was virtually no accountability metrics and measures or accountability actions for historically white led organizations, staff members, and senior management and leadership. Many participants attributed their organizations' DEIJ stagnancy or failure of effectively sustaining and implementing DEIJ organizational strategies to the lack of coordinated accountability metrics and actions. This trend reflects national research, which states that there needs to be clear senior leadership support, participation, and accountability for effective organizational shifts to become more racially inclusive and equitable (Beasley 2017; Johnson 2019; Taylor 2014; Equity in the Center 2018).

Furthermore, BIPOC environmental professional participants shared multiple experiences of when they tried to hold colleagues and senior leadership and management accountable, their comments and actions were often disregarded and sometimes led to retaliation. These forms of retaliation manifested itself into microaggressions, having less project responsibility assigned and thus less subsequent opportunities for professional growth and development, lack of promotional opportunities, and lack of proportional salary raises offered to their counterpart white colleagues.

Not having accountability metrics within an organization will almost certainly lead to the failure of organizational implementation of DEIJ strategies. Many participants identified that the lack of accountability metrics within their organization made them feel complicit in contributing to sustaining environmental racism and white supremacist systems within the Puget Sound area.

There were multiple strategies that participants identified in the breakout groups to ensure organizational and staff accountability for DEIJ implementation, including:

- Mandate that all promotions and annual reviews have explicit DEIJ requirements and expectations. If a staff is unable to meet this requirement that staff member should not be eligible for promotions.
- Require all staff to participate actively in a DEIJ activity. These activities can range from participating in DEIJ workgroups, attend internal or external trainings and workshops, or lead conversations around DEIJ topics. These activities are associated with staff buy-in to DEIJ work and should directly reflect whether staff are meeting their DEIJ objectives.
- Require bi-weekly check-ins for all senior management and leadership on organizational DEIJ accountability and implementation.
- Multiple participants said that a common refrain that they hear from senior management and leadership is that there is not enough 'time' to focus on DEIJ implementation. Unpacking these statements in the breakout groups led to the realization for many

participants that this excuse from senior management and leadership often means that they are not prioritizing DEIJ as much as they say they are.

- Some participants suggested that if senior management and leadership are not prepared to hold themselves accountable for DEIJ implementation, then they should not be in those positions of decision-making power. If they are allowed to continue in those positions, it will often lead to the reinforcement of systemic racism.
- Hold senior leadership and management accountable for the organizations DEIJ success and failures. Research overwhelmingly shows that for effective cultural change, there needs to be strong action and support from senior leadership and management. Change, especially around cultural shifts regarding DEIJ, require multi-directional accountability, and organizations with senior management and leadership that shield themselves from being held accountable lead to negative outcomes for their staff, workplace, and their organization's bottom line (Taylor 2014; Miller 2019).

Theme: Indigenous youth may grow as scientists and community leaders with intentional career pathways

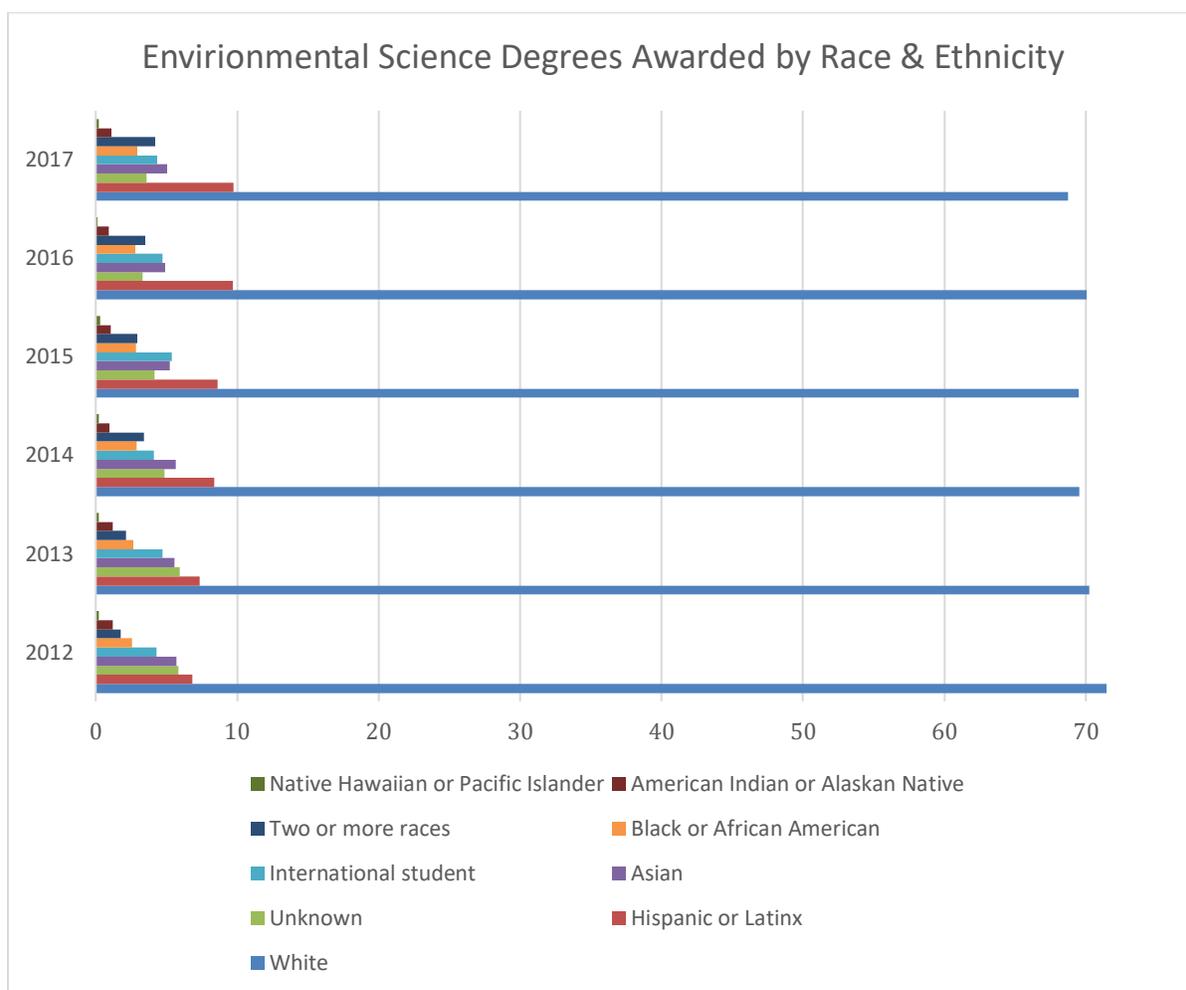
Throughout the plenaries and the breakout group discussions, there were many discussions specifically around educational and career pathways for Indigenous youth because of place-based teachings, structural challenges of Indigenous youth accessing scientific education and career development opportunities, and the opportunity of tribal and Indigenous communities to hire from their own membership and community. Many tribal representatives stated that many of their tribal and Indigenous youth did not see themselves reflected in the environmental workforce, which may discourage youth from pursuing these types of careers. However, reframing what “science” is to tribal and Indigenous youth can encourage them to pursue environmental science educations, which can lead to their development as scientific and community leaders (Mitchell et al. 2019).

Theme: Equitably prioritizing multiple sciences and knowledge production systems can help shift power dynamics

There was discussion among many of the breakout group discussions on how science and knowledge production reproduce systemic power structures and dynamics (Uriarte et al. 2007). These types of results are largely products of having racially homogenous research and project teams (Whyte 2017; Uriarte et al. 2007). Breakout group participants largely agreed that science, specifically Western science, is its own type of ‘cultural’ knowledge – or knowledge that is produced and validated through culturally and socially accepted methods and norms (Roesch-McNally et al. 2020). There is a critical need for the environmental science field to ethically engage and represent other forms of knowledges and epistemologies, such as Indigenous knowledges and local knowledges.

BIPOC make up 36% of the population in the U.S. and 32% of all undergraduate environmental science degrees awarded in 2017 (Figure 3). Despite these undergraduate rates, BIPOC are still vastly underrepresented in environmental graduate programs and faculty positions (National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics 2015; Baber et al. 2010). Multiple participants identified the lack of racial diversity within the environmental sciences, both in environmental organizations and in academic departments, as barriers for appropriately engaging and/or representing other types of knowledges. A few stories touched on issues of project leads and managers acting as gatekeepers between project staff and researchers and different spaces, such as communities. These actions often led to unethical and inappropriate research practices, leading to feelings from BIPOC project staff of failing those communities.

Figure 3. Racial breakdown of Environmental Science Degrees Awarded (figure from Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System).



Theme: Evaluation criteria for funding programs can lead to inclusive and equitable outcomes

In some breakout groups, there was the discussion of how funding programs and organizations can prioritize DEI, which can lead to capacity building and more equitable and inclusive outcomes. The current funding landscape for environmental organizations “remain[s] inadequate to fulfill the overall need and desire for change” (Bonta 2019). Additionally, integrating DEI into current funding programs is virtually absent. During breakout group discussions, key representatives that work within funding organizations stated that one method to begin institutionalizing and funding DEI capacity building and more equitable and inclusive projects was to have explicit DEI metrics and criteria for any funding opportunity.

Theme: Community empowerment can lead to more equitable, ethical, and culturally relevant practices and outcomes

There were a few breakout groups that discussed the opportunity of empowering communities in environmental projects. Empowering communities could mean engaging communities prior to project initiation, having communities be financial and project partners, and transferring agency and financial resources into the community. Utilizing these types of strategies to empower communities can lead to a broader power shift from historically-white led environmental organizations to the community itself. Doing this will shift power dynamics from an environmental organization to the community itself, which is likely to lead to more equitable and ethical practices (e.g., having community autonomy in how information is used) and culturally relevant practices and outcomes (e.g., using appropriate language dialects, outcomes supporting community values and priorities). However, participants identified multiple challenges of meaningful community empowerment, including but not limited to:

- White saviorism, or the idea that “trained environmental professionals” are the most suitable people to conduct environmental work.
- Lack of early, often, and meaningful engagement with communities to build partnerships and empower the communities.
- Lack of formal financial structures within communities that promote redistribution of financial resources.

RESOURCES AND ACTION ITEMS

Part of the breakout group discussions was also the solicitation of DEI resources. Below we outline some resources that were shared during the Symposium. We envision that this resource list is a living document, so please share any additional resources to ssejsymposium@gmail.com.

General resources and action items:

- Thriving Earth Exchange, <https://thrivingearthexchange.org>.
 - American Geophysical Union's Thriving Earth Exchange advances community solutions to solve local challenges related to natural resources, climate change, and natural hazards.
- The Rising, <https://crosscut.com/2019/12/crosscut-documentaries-presents-rising>.
 - Documentary on sea level rise, coastal flooding, and relocation for the Quinault Indian Nation.
- Race caucusing and affinity groups, <https://www.racialequitytools.org/act/strategies/caucus-affinity-groups>.
 - White people and people of color each have work to do separately and together. Caucuses provide spaces for people to work within their own racial/ethnic groups. For white people, a caucus provides time and space to work explicitly and intentionally on understanding white culture and white privilege and to increase one's critical analysis around these concepts. A white caucus also puts the onus on white people to teach each other about these ideas, rather than constantly relying on people of color to teach them. For people of color, a caucus is a place to work with their peers on their experiences of internalized racism, for healing and to work on liberation.
- DEIJ Vocabulary Sheet, https://sequityandjustice.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/6/0/126080103/ssej.vocabulary_resource_sheet.pdf.
 - Vocabulary sheet, collated by the SSEJ Symposium organizers, that highlight key principles and definitions.

Resources for BIPOC

- Environmental Professionals of Color, <http://epocseattle.weebly.com/>
 - A Seattle-based network of BIPOC professionals that work towards an inclusive, equitable, and relevant environmental movement.

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APPENDIX B: SSEJ SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

2019 Salish Sea Equity & Justice Symposium

Thursday November 14, 2019

Change from Within, [Seattle Aquarium](#)

6:30 pm to 7:15 pm

Seattle Aquarium open for event

6:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Reception with Light Bites

7:30 pm to 8:15 pm

Land Acknowledgment and Premiere of *Change from Within* Film

8:15 pm to 9:00 pm

Resonance Workshop

Friday November 15, 2019

Salish Sea Equity & Justice Symposium

[watab?altx^w - Intellectual House](#), University of Washington

9:15 am to 10:00 am

Registration and Breakfast

10:00 am to 10:45 am

Welcome to space

- Land and water acknowledgement - Ken Workman (Duwamish Tribe)
- Welcome and community agreements - Jasmmine Ramgotra (Culture SHIFT) and Michael Chang (Makah Tribe)
- Keystone address: Creating my role in environmental justice, not fitting into one, Hannah Wilson (2019 UW Graduate, Doris Duke Conservation Scholar)
- Artist introduction – Mari Shibuya

10:45 am to 11:45 am

Plenary 1: Policies to address systemic racism and inequity in the environmental movement

Moderator: Ava Holliday (Avarna Group)

- Bridging the Great Divide: Reconciling the Historic Roots of Environmental Justice and Traditional Environmental Movements, Sean Watts (SM Watts Consulting)
- Working toward racial equity in the world of Puget Sound and Salish Sea recovery as a historically white-led organization, Mindy Roberts (Washington Environmental Council)
- Resource groups: a strategy to address representation of marginalized communities, Maritza Mendoza and Lisa Kenny (EarthCorps)

11:45 am to 12:45 pm

Lunch and Affinity Group Networking

12:45 pm to 1:45 pm

Plenary 2: Power structures and how they influence knowledge production

Moderator: Melissa Watkinson (Washington Sea Grant)

- Queering our Connection and Relationships to Nature, Jules Hepp (Tiny Trees)

1:45 pm to 2:00 pm

2:00 pm to 3:15 pm

- Scientific imperialism: Tensions between Western Science and Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Michael Chang (Makah Tribe)
- Data as a good to leverage science, funding, and actions, Maria Baron Palamar and Graise Lee Jenni (Resolve Conservation)

Break

Plenary 3: Ethical and Equitable Community Engagement

Moderator: Michael Chang (Makah Tribe)

- Building Authentic Relationships with Indigenous Peoples, Ellany Kayce (Nakani Native Program)
- Unlikely Alliances of Native Nations and their neighbors on the frontlines, Zoltan Grossman (Evergreen State College)
- Swinomish Place-based Science, Culture, and Environmental Education: A Swinomish Approach to Environmental and Resource Issues, Todd Mitchell, swəlítub (Swinomish Tribe)
- Process Behind Participation, Adrienne Hampton (Washington Sea Grant Keystone Fellow, Seattle Aquarium)
- Equitable Partnerships and Community Empowerment: Building a Health Promotion Program to Advance Environmental Justice in the Lower Duwamish Superfund Site, Luz María Cárdenas, Emma-Maria Maceda, and Binh Tran (Community Health Advocates)

3:15 pm to 3:30 pm

3:30 pm to 5:00 pm

5:00 pm to 5:30 pm

Break

Breakout Group Discussion

Reflections and Conclusion

Mari Shibuya, artist

APPENDIX C: SSEJ SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZER AND SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Organizer Biographies

Ava Holliday, Avarna Group

Ava (she/her) believes a sustainable future is dependent on simultaneously working towards social and environmental justice. She has devoted the last eight years to researching and working in this field. As a graduate student at the University of Washington in the department of Anthropology, Ava was able to deepen her understanding about justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts and challenges in environmentalism, conservation, and outdoor recreation. At UW, she taught courses covering topics such as power, identity, environmentalism, health, and wilderness. She left graduate school to put theory into practice at the Avarna Group. In addition to her work at the Avarna Group, she has supported the LGBTQ Outdoor Summit and serves on the Next 100 Coalition. Throughout her academic and professional career, Ava has supported thousands of people and hundreds of organizations in service of deepening understanding of and cultivating skills to address oppression in environmentalism, conservation and outdoor education.

Dana Wu, 吳淑如, Seattle Aquarium

Dana (吳淑如; pronouns: she/her/they/them) identifies as queer, ethnically Teochew, and the eldest child of refugee parents displaced by and survived what some call the "Vietnam War".

Dana was raised on the ancestral homelands of the Tongva and Gabrielino tribes and is a first-gen college graduate with Biology and Environmental Studies degrees. Dana's dedication to marine conservation led them to work with the Student Conservation Association and Olympic National Park, leading community science programs and coordinating marine debris removal projects along WA's wilderness coastline. As the Aquarium's Community Outreach Coordinator, Dana connects historically disenfranchised partners with their local beaches and watersheds.

Jasmmine Ramgotra, Culture SHIFT

Jasmmine Kaur Ramgotra (JASE) is the founder of Culture SHIFT, a digital dance and production company that uses movement to tell stories, start conversations, and spark individual action and behavior change. [@jasecreations](#) is focused on teaching emotional intelligence through movement, mindfulness, and activating energy with creative collaboration. Combining mediums from research, to movement, to music and live performance she creates multi-dimensional experiences that shift paradigms and lead to deep cultural change with a specific focus on environmental and social justice.

Melissa Watkinson, Washington Sea Grant

Melissa Watkinson (Chickasaw) is a social scientist with Washington Sea Grant where she supports the Olympic Coast Ocean Acidification Vulnerability study, a community-based participatory project with WA's coastal treaty tribes. She also works on diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to ensure that the environmental workforce is representative of the communities most impacted by climate change. Melissa has a master's degree in policy studies from the University of Washington Bothell. In 2016, she completed the Hershman Marine Policy Fellowship at The Nature Conservancy. Melissa served on the City of Seattle's Environmental Justice Committee from 2016-2019.

Michael Chang, Makah Tribe

Mike is the Climate Adaptation Specialist for the Makah Tribe. He is a queer, first-generation immigrant. He is aboriginal Taiwanese (*Amis*) on his maternal side and is trilingual. He has led the Makah Tribe's Climate Impacts Assessment and coordinates the climate adaptation and resiliency planning process across tribal departments and the Makah tribal community. He was an author for the Northwest chapter of the recent U.S. 4th National Climate Assessment, where he focused on highlighting climate impacts to Tribes and Indigenous peoples, cultural heritage, and frontline communities. In his free time, he loves to swim and is learning how to sail.

Nancy Huizar, Got Green

Nancy is a south Seattle native with leadership experience in environmental justice. Nancy holds a degree in Aquatic and Fishery Sciences from the University of Washington. She has experience in research, policy, community organizing, and education and outreach. From 2016 to 2019 she served as a committee member on Got Green's Young Leaders campaign where she worked to create Green Job Pathways for low income, youth of color. Nancy also co-chairs the City of Seattle's Environmental Justice Committee. In her free time, she likes to hang out with her dog and go for walks around Seattle.

Sara Breslow, EarthLab

Sara Jo Breslow is an environmental anthropologist and transdisciplinary broadly interested in the interdependencies of sustainability and social justice. She currently serves as the Social Science Lead at EarthLab at the University of Washington where she catalyzes collaborative environmental problem-solving. In her own research, Sara uses ethnographic and arts-based methods to study senses of place, environmental conflict, and human well-being with a focus on the Salish Sea region and translates social science into tools for decision-making at local to global scales. Sara holds a BA in biology from Swarthmore College and a PhD in anthropology from the University of Washington.

Speaker Biographies

Hannah Wilson, Keystone Speaker, 2019 UW Graduate and Doris Duke Conservation Scholar

Hannah is a recent graduate from the University of Washington where she majored in Environmental Science and minored in Geography. While she has always been curious about the connection between humans and their environment, she found her passion for environmental justice work early on in college through her classes and during her time as a Doris Duke Conservation Scholar. She will continue her work with Earthcorp next year as an Outreach Coordinator as well as working with various EJ organizations and serving as a Commissioner on the Seattle Commission for People with disAbilities.

Mari Shibuya, Artist

Mari Shibuya is a Creative Empowerment Specialist. The goal within all they create is to highlight the regenerative, healing power of Creativity and the power of visual information in reimagining growth. Mari works as the Youth Development Leader for Urban Artworks, as a Lead Facilitator for Young Women Empowered in addition to leading Creative Facilitation Trainings for Partners for Youth Empowerment. Mari is also a working Artist and Muralist. Mari takes delight in incorporating graphic facilitation and visuals in all the group processes they lead to harness the power of our collective radiant thinking to catalyze epiphanies and innovation.

Adrienne Hampton, Washington Sea Grant Keystone Fellow and Seattle Aquarium

Adrienne grew up in Washington D.C. or what some call the "DMV" and has lived in the greater Seattle area since 2011. Adrienne often works at the nexus of collaborative processes and environmental issues, mindful that decisions made throughout a process matter. She hopes that her work will leave a responsible legacy of decision making which may even heal existing inequities in the environmental movement. Adrienne's career endeavors across sectors and lived experiences have taught her that the most important values within the environmental field are balance, connection and trust. Adrienne holds a Master's in Public Administration.

Ellany Kayce, Nakani Native Program

Ellany Kayce is an enrolled tribal member of the Tlingit Nation, Raven-Frog Clan. Throughout her career she's worked as a cultural consultant, event planner, coordinator, facilitator, trainer, curriculum developer and fundraiser. Expertise areas include: keynote speaking, workplace culture, workshop presenter, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and racial and social justice. Ellany has life-long experience working with Alaska Native, Native American, First Nations communities, and is a trainer, traditional drummer, singer, dancer, and activist.

Jules Hepp, Tiny Trees

Jules is an Environmental Educator, Artist, Forest Therapy Guide, and Queer person. Their passion to interweave all of their identities to practice nature connection through a Social Justice

and Anti-Oppression lens.

Lisa Kenny, EarthCorps

Lisa Kenny is a Filipino-born, Chicago raised, Seattle transplant. She's a first-generation college graduate with a degree in environmental studies and a capstone in acoustic ecology. Lisa holds 4 years of experience in habitat restoration in the Pacific Northwest. In her various roles of managing restoration crews and creating project timelines to coordinating volunteers, Lisa has often been one of few persons of color on these perspective teams. These experiences have mobilized her to co-create a POC Resource Group and serve as a racial equity advisor at EarthCorps. Lisa is passionate about re-imagining structures and systems to better support and uplift the voices of marginalized communities.

Luz María Cárdenas, Emma-Maria Maceda, and Binh Tran, Community Health Advocates

Luz is a trusted community leader and 'co-madre' among her peers, who consistently organizes her community on urgent and upcoming issues of environmental health. She also comes from a fishing family and prepares the seafood that her husband catches locally. Emma is a co-lead of the Latino community health advocates team. She started as a community health advocate 4 years ago and with time, was given the opportunity to step up in her role. She loves her role because she is able to be a CHA and is also able to support her teammates and help them grow into bigger leaders. Binh is an avid fisher and has found the friendship and community with the people he met through fishing. He is passionate and empowered to raise awareness about the contamination of Lower Duwamish River seafood so that he and his friends can continue to fish safely and eat seafood healthfully.

Maria Baron Palamar, Resolve Conservation

Maria is a wildlife veterinarian turned social scientist out of despair. After working directly with wildlife (her first passion), she realized people needed the most work if we wanted sustainable solutions. After five years in government, she co-founded Resolve Conservation with Graise. Maria now works connecting people to nature and to each other (her second passion), making natural resources management more equitable and sustainable; from the science and technology, to the resulting data and decision making, to the conservation organizations that do the work. Traveler, explorer and maker, she loves wildlife; watching it, touching it, and even poking it when scientifically necessary.

Maritza Mendoza, EarthCorps

Maritza Mendoza is a first-generation Mexican American raised in the Piedmont region of NC. Her interest in our natural world started at an early age and she was fortunate enough to pursue those interests in school, obtaining her Bachelor's in Environmental Science and a Master's in Marine Resource Management. Her experience in academia and the habitat restoration field

emphasized the lack of investment in creating avenues for people of color to navigate and succeed in these spaces. She wants to change the mainstream environmental narrative to include the intersections that affect peoples' lived experiences within our environment. She is eager to continue creating avenues for people of color to not only explore careers in the environmental field but also create the solutions needed to address our socio-environmental crises.

Michael Chang, Makah Tribe

Mike is the Climate Adaptation Specialist for the Makah Tribe. He has led the Makah Tribe's Climate Impacts Assessment and coordinates the climate adaptation and resiliency planning process across tribal departments and the Makah tribal community. He was an author for the Northwest chapter of the recent U.S. 4th National Climate Assessment, where he focused on highlighting climate impacts to Tribes and Indigenous peoples, cultural heritage, and frontline communities. In his free time, he loves to swim and is learning how to sail.

Mindy Roberts, Washington Environmental Council

Mindy Roberts leads the Puget Sound program at Washington Environmental Council (WEC). WEC's mission is to protect, restore, and sustain Washington's environment for all. For over 50 years, WEC has passed, defended, and enforced environmental laws that protect people, lands, waters, and wildlife through grassroots advocacy, policy development, initiatives, lobbying, and litigation as a last resort. The Puget Sound program advocates for clean water, healthy habitat, and renewed leadership to recover the Salish Sea region for future generations. Mindy is an environmental engineer with 30 years' experience synergizing human infrastructure needs with natural resources.

Sean Watts, SM Watts Consulting, LLC

Sean M. Watts has spent his career seeking environmental solutions that yield the greatest human and ecological benefits. He is the owner of SM Watts Consulting, LLC - empowering communities to drive environmental and land use policy and helping historically white-led organizations move from awareness to action to create an equitable and inclusive environmental movement. Most recently, as Director of Community Partnerships for the Seattle Parks Foundation, he created programs to advocate for and build capacity among resident-led groups to enhance open space in Seattle. He has worked to bridge gaps between science, policy and society as faculty at Santa Clara University; as an AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow at the National Science Foundation and as founding Director of the University of Washington, Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program. Sean received his BA in Biology from the University of Virginia; and PhD in Ecology from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Todd Mitchell, swəlítub, Swinomish Tribe

Todd A. Mitchell, swəlítub, a Swinomish Tribal citizen, is the Director of the Swinomish Department of Environmental Protection. He graduated from Dartmouth College (BA, Earth

Sciences & Film Studies) and Washington State University (MS, Geology) specializing in hydrogeology, igneous petrology and geochemistry. Todd works for Swinomish as a geologist and indigenous scientist researching the Tribe's water resources including traditional ecological knowledge, tidelands, surface water, groundwater, wetlands, and salmon habitat restoration research.

Zoltan Grossman, Evergreen State College

Zoltán Grossman is a Professor of Geography and Native Studies at The Evergreen State College in Olympia. He is a longtime anti-racist organizer and was a co-founder of the Midwest Treaty Network in Wisconsin, where he earned his Ph.D. in 2002. He was past co-chair of the Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers, co-editor of *Asserting Native Resilience: Pacific Rim Indigenous Nations Face the Climate Crisis* (Oregon State University Press, 2012), and author of *Unlikely Alliances: Native Nations and White Communities Join to Defend Rural Lands* (University of Washington Press, 2017).

APPENDIX D: LIST OF ALL PLENARY QUESTIONS ASKED

During each plenary, we used a PollEverywhere software for people to submit questions anonymously. Due to time constraints, we were only able to have speakers answer a few questions. However, we wanted to present the full list of questions that were asked, which are listed below.

How can science and policy incorporate Indigenous knowledge without co-opting or appropriating it?

How do you take care of yourself and set boundaries in a work culture that doesn't support that?

We started a voluntary DEI committee at work, but no people of color volunteered to participate. What should we do next?

How do historically white led organizations build trust with communities of color?

How do historically white led organizations approach potential funders to adopt a racial equity lens?

What are your recommendations for recruiting people of color in the environmental field and on org boards?

As a lower level employee within a hierarchical organization, how can I start to dismantle systemic racism and shift workplace culture?

How do we encourage internships and fellowships programs to pay people of color, who are also often expected to offer emotional and physical labor for free?

How can an organization be nudged to take bolder actions while preventing taking short cuts?

What advice can you offer to people of color working in white led environmental organizations?

What examples do you have on how racial equity is centered in decision-making processes, specifically at the board and leadership level?

How can we shift from prioritizing climate projects that also benefit equity, to prioritizing climate projects that center equity?

What are some good examples of community science being used well?

How can we incorporate queer pedagogy and identities into our conservation work as a predominantly cis het organization?

What are strategies for making initial community connections with communities who have a distrust of environmental organizations due to historical practices?

What are some barriers and challenges that you've encountered when working on community engagement projects? What are examples of this going well?

How can students participate in including multiple sciences and to think more critically about power structures in knowledge production?

How can I/my organization support Indigenous people coming into science roles in the coming generations?

APPENDIX E: POST-SYMPOSIUM SURVEY RESULTS

Following the symposium, we sent a

What was most meaningful?

Event Name	Mean	Median
Aquarium Event	1.9	2
Registration/Breakfast	2.9	3
Keystone Address	2.0	1
Plenary 1	1.9	2
Affinity Groups	3.0	3
Plenary 2	2.1	2
Plenary 3	2.0	2
Breakout Sessions	2.7	3
Mural Reflections	2.4	2
Goals met	2.0	2
*Scale 1-5, where 1 = most meaningful and 5 = not at all meaningful		

Based on responses from the evaluation, the most meaningful activities of SSEJ were the event at Seattle Aquarium, and the first plenary, with the Keystone Address being the most meaningful event of the symposium. The activities that attendees indicated were less meaningful, or could have room to improve, were the registration and breakfast process, and the affinity groups.

Demographics

Demographics of participants based on those who completed the symposium evaluation.

