PROGRAM HISTORY & OVERVIEW

Since 2000, Ecology Project International (EPI) has involved more than 48,000 students in conservation education field programs in six countries. In 2013, EPI began hosting an educator-exclusive course, now known as the EPI Teacher Fellowship, which immerses teachers in EPI’s experiential education curriculum.

The Teacher Fellowship is an 8-day field workshop designed to engage participants in hands-on investigations, community science research projects, and inquiry-based learning activities that strengthen understanding of key ecosystems and their global importance. This powerful field experience also incorporates cultural exchange, service learning, and (in Mexico) urban sustainability in order to provide participants with cross-curricular learning experiences that inspire classroom instruction and deepen their students’ understanding of the complexities of global environmental issues.

PROGRAM CONTACT HOURS

- 40 hours of active participation in daily activities

PROGRAM DATES & CONTACT INFORMATION

- 4.22.2023 - Costa Rica  
  Costa Rica Contact: Grace Davidson - grace@ecologyproject.org
- 3.4.2023 - Mexico  
  Mexico Contact: Keri Geiser - keri@ecologyproject.org
- 3.4.2023 - Yellowstone  
  Yellowstone Contact: Miles Knotek - miles@ecologyproject.org

Office information: 315 S 4th St E • Missoula, MT • 59801 • 406.721.8784

EPI PARTNERS

- Pacuare Reserve (CR)
- Tirimbina Biological Reserve (CR)
- Centro Interdisciplinario de Ciencias Marinas (MX)
- National Park Service (YEL)
EPI TEACHER FELLOWSHIPS
2023 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

EDUCATING, INSPIRING, & EMPOWERING NEW LEADERS

At EPI, we strive to change the way youth connect with nature by engaging them with authentic hands-on science that makes a difference in conservation. Learning with EPI—whether across the country, across the globe, or in your community—is a life-changing experience.

EPI was founded around three principal values: scientific literacy, environmental protection, and cultural exchange.

We acknowledge the challenges facing our planet today and aspire, together with our students and teachers, to help create a motivated, informed, critical, and creative citizenry who, based on a better understanding of nature and their role in it, practice positive behaviors.

The Question: How do we nurture the next generation to appreciate the role of science in addressing local as well as global problems related to climate change, sustainable development, and resource conservation?

Teachers, teacher educators, and non-formal educators need to participate in and develop a robust understanding of science themselves in order to incorporate science-related competencies in their classrooms. They need to use inquiry-based techniques to guide students in the tools and skills of research. They need to experience critical ecosystems first-hand in order to teach about their importance to global health.

Our Approach: EPI’s Teacher Fellowship addresses these needs by engaging participants in hands-on investigations, community science research projects, and inquiry-based learning activities. These authentic learning experiences are set in ecologically sensitive and biodiverse locations in Yellowstone, Costa Rica, and Mexico, where the intensity of natural systems and the complex human interactions within them are observable as part of one, interrelated system. EPI’s Fellowship locations help model the importance of using authentic life experiences to teach science. Our professional staff of instructors implements a robust curriculum that focuses on promoting environmental literacy through the incorporation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

In the pre-field phase of the Fellowship, beginning with your invitation to our online learning platform, EPI works to familiarize Fellows with the field work ahead. Short writing prompts and an open forum for discussion are intended to provide building blocks for group formation and assess baseline knowledge and expectations.

During the Teacher Fellowship, participants get a close-up view of complex ecosystems and their interconnected relationships between soil, water, plants, wildlife, climate, and people. We explore how organisms have adapted and survived the test of immense competition to become unusual, diverse, and fascinating. Experiencing these unique ecosystems encourages a “new set of glasses” for one’s local environment and provides a wider context for exploring significant questions, such as:

What is biodiversity and why does it matter to me? What factors determine the biodiversity of these ecosystems, my hometown, and our planet? How will climate change affect them? How will it affect us locally? As a global citizen, what is my responsibility? How can I use this experience to improve my teaching?

In the post-field phase, we provide a framework through which to cement your findings from the field and implement them into your teaching, and we gather your experiences to share widely.
FELLOWSHIP LOCATIONS

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem - As soon as you touch down in Bozeman, Montana, you’ll understand why this ecosystem inspired our national parks. The landscape’s singular beauty, abundance of wildlife, and fascinating thermal features combine to make this high-altitude plateau unique. Fellows will pursue a suite of research projects with teams from the National Park Service, spending time on foot or snowshoe (depending on weather conditions) and collecting data on species migration and land use in and around the park.

Baja, Mexico - While camping on this UNESCO-protected biosphere reserve, Fellows conduct a snorkel-based census of marine invertebrates and learn about the island’s unique desert ecosystem. Based out of EPI’s student campus in the city of La Paz, Fellows meet with local teachers and students and explore the culture of the city. The program includes a range of water- and land-based activities, including boat access and educational excursions. Fellows are expected to snorkel and participate in ongoing monitoring projects.

Costa Rica - Based primarily on the Caribbean coast, Fellows monitor a protected tropical beach, alongside instructors and researchers, in search of nesting leatherback sea turtles. These censuses are conducted at night, on foot. Fellows should expect long days in tropical conditions during this unique opportunity to participate in the conservation of Earth’s largest turtle species. Fellows will also explore biological rainforest reserves and learn about tropical forest ecology.

MENTAL PACKING LIST

Of all the things you bring into the field, the most important will be your open and inquiring mind. During the Teacher Fellowship, you’ll be guided by your curiosity, inquiry, and drive for discovery. Unlike a typical classroom course of study, this experience offers the opportunity to overcome fears, build confidence, recharge enthusiasm, explore different teaching techniques, experience the value of reflection, and develop connections with fellow educators while spending time in critical ecosystems. Your outcomes, however, are rooted in your personal investment, preparation, and willingness to engage.

FELLOWSHIP GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Develop your familiarity with EPI’s approach to education through field science & cultural exchange.

- Build a global perspective of the rich and interconnected nature of societies, cultures, and environments, as well as an awareness of the personal actions needed to sustain them.
- Observe the impact of globalization on local communities and ecosystems.
- Reflect on how personal experiences, choices, perspectives, and assumptions fit within the larger global context.

Celebrate & reconnect with the fundamentals of how students learn.

- Identify specific ecosystem-related topics that can be used to create engaging standards-based STEM learning experiences for students and communities.
- Identify research activities, protocols, and teaching strategies that can be used at a local level to engage students in inquiry-based learning and address national curriculum standards in a variety of subjects (e.g. science, social studies, language arts, & Spanish language).
- Deepen understandings of how to effectively use inquiry-based explorations as a means of constructing knowledge about the world.
**Provide unique experiences & activities to take back to your classroom.**

- Engage in hands-on guided explorations of your site’s ecosystem.
- Explore and describe the basic structure, components, and function of an ecosystem, and explain its role in maintaining a healthy global ecosystem.
- Understand different types of field investigations and how to use them to develop inquiry-based explorations with students.

**Build a supportive network of science educators working toward similar goals.**

- Engage in group conversations on challenges and opportunities in 21st century education.
- Share lessons, examples, and successes from your home institutions with a supportive group of engaged educators.
- Identify challenges to overcome in applying these concepts in the classroom—where help is required, how Fellows can contribute to each other, and how to develop an action plan.

**Introduce you to EPI’s work & promote future student courses to program sites.**

- Gain competency in using traditional field research tools as well as digital technology to monitor and evaluate different ecosystem components.
- Explore how basic tools and protocols of scientific exploration, as well as innovative science education resources, can be used to deepen knowledge and understanding about ecosystems, your local environment, and the world.
- Participate in field research projects developed by EPI and its research partners to gain an appreciation for the opportunities and rewards of field research.

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

**Pre-Assessment Tasks**

- Complete a pre-course goal setting assignment.

**Formative Assessment Tasks**

- Use daily journaling time to stimulate reflection and guide discussions.
- Process daily activities and learn from other Fellows through reflection meetings facilitated by your instructors.
- Use guided questions and other tools in small groups to share what you’re learning and discuss applications in your classroom, community, and local environment.

**Summative Assessment Tasks**

- Use your daily log and prompts provided by EPI to write a reflection paper about your course experience.
PROGRAM FORMAT

Pre-Departure
The Teacher Fellowship takes place primarily in remote field locations. Before departure, EPI provides Fellows with background information, readings, a pre-course assignment, and curriculum documents through an online platform. Thorough participation in the pre-departure program greatly enhances the experience for all participants.

In the Field
The field component of the Teacher Fellowship takes full advantage of learning resources in each course’s home ecosystem. Each day offers new learning opportunities and is broken into morning and afternoon sessions. Sessions last 2-3 hours and include an initial challenge or question as well as a guided reflection activity. Field sessions are designed to actively engage participants via guided natural history explorations, inquiry-based learning activities, community science research projects, cultural explorations, and more. Incorporated into each session are activities designed to help participants deepen their understanding of best practices in inquiry-based learning and sustainability science.

Daily sessions are facilitated by course instructors, guest faculty, researchers, and local naturalist guides (in some cases). The following page contains an example of sessions and associated topics planned for the Teacher Fellowship.

Upon Return
The future of our planet depends on our youth. As teachers, we have the responsibility to help our students develop the dispositions, knowledge, competencies, and behaviors they will need to actively participate in a sustainable future. As an EPI Teacher Fellow, your task is to share and apply what you learn with your students, your district, and your community. Drawing upon all that you experience with us, what commitment will you make? What impact will you have? What legacy will you leave? We provide the tools, resources, and facilitation to stay connected to one another and share stories and successes.
### Session Title: Ecological Knowledge / Competencies Connection

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<tr>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Ecological Knowledge / Competencies Connection</th>
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<td>Types of Questions for Field Research Studies</td>
<td>- Ask well-defined questions to conduct an investigation.</td>
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<td>Descriptive Field Investigations</td>
<td>- Plan a field research procedure, identifying relevant independent and dependent variables.</td>
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<td>- Plan for control of your design and level of accuracy required.</td>
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<td>- Decide how much data is needed to produce reliable measurements, and consider any limitations on the precision of the data.</td>
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<td>Comparative Field Investigations</td>
<td>- Use spreadsheets, databases, tables, charts, graphs, statistics, and mathematics to collate, summarize, and display data and to explore relationships between variables, especially those representing input and output.</td>
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<td>Correlative Field Investigations</td>
<td>- Recognize patterns in data that suggest relationships worth investigating further.</td>
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<td>- Distinguish between causal and correlational relationships.</td>
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<td>Research Project Presentations</td>
<td>- Identify gaps or weaknesses in explanatory accounts.</td>
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<td>- Identify flaws in arguments; modify and improve them in response to constructive feedback.</td>
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<td>- Use text, tables, diagrams, and graphs to communicate understanding or to ask questions about a system under study.</td>
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<td>- Make oral presentations of results and conclusions and engage in appropriate discourse with other Fellows by asking questions and discussing issues raised in presentations.</td>
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PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Fellows are expected to:

• Review and respond to pre-departure readings and activities.
• Share and apply what they learn during the field experience.
• Be a positive, active, engaged team member before, during, and after the field experience.
• Maintain a daily log while in the field.
• Submit a post-course reflection paper about their field experiences.
PRE-COURSE ASSIGNMENT

Objective: Using the template available on your Fellowship's Google Classroom platform, conduct a self-assessment on your goals, questions, and concerns for your upcoming Fellowship experience.

Due Date: This activity is due one month before your course departure date, and should be submitted through the Google Classroom platform once complete.

Content: This self-assessment asks you to reflect on your preparation, personal goals, and expectations for professional development through a series of open-ended questions. You are also encouraged to develop questions of your own.

Our Goals: We designed this assignment for two reasons: to encourage EPI Fellows to mentally prepare and reflect on their participation, and to ensure that we’re as prepared as possible to meet (or help adjust) your expectations for the Fellowship experience.

Recommended: Review EPI’s pre-course resources and the materials available in your Google Classroom before completing this assignment to create a frame for thinking about your upcoming field experience.
ON-COURSE & POST-FELLOWSHIP ASSIGNMENTS

Description: While you’re in the field with EPI on your Teacher Fellowship, we’ll ask you to keep a daily log—in your own journal or in the space provided in your EPI course journal. Plan to use this space to reflect on your daily experiences. Beyond describing what happened, challenge yourself to analyze those events and reach the **why** that underlies them.

The field portion of your Fellowship is an intensive period of learning, study, and reflection. How do we hold on to the knowledge and experiences obtained on course? You will be asked to write a reflection paper using your daily log and the prompts provided on your Google Classroom platform.

Due Date: The reflection is due **one month after your course return date** and should be submitted through the Google Classroom platform once complete.

Our Goals: Every EPI Teacher Fellow serves a community of learners back home; our goal is to help you extend what you learned through your field experience to create the largest possible impact upon your return. We envision this assignment as the cement to help you build on the Fellowship and its impact on participants. By keeping a daily log and synthesizing those thoughts into a reflection paper, we’re aiming to lock in the knowledge and experiences you gained in the field, making them accessible and meaningful.
Excellent guides and great interactive curriculum. There was such a variety of meaningful things to do...so many great resources were shared. I learned so much new information and skills at each activity. I already use experiential learning but I will definitely use more because this brings home the value. I want to work on adding the community engagement piece [to my teaching practice].

-HEATHER LABELLE, 2021 TEACHER FELLOW
Meet the 2023 BAJA Teacher Fellows

MARCH 4 - 11, 2023
CHRISTINE HIRST BERNHARDT
Christine is a STEM/Astronomy education leader. In 2021-2022 she was in US Congress advancing education policy as an Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow. Her passion for space fostered the Excellent Astronomy Teaching award and participation on NASA’s SOFIA mission. Christine has written space curricula and programs such as high altitude balloon program, student space symposium, and international space camp. She holds master’s degrees in Space Studies and Science Education. Her doctoral research centers on international astronomy education and teacher learning with a social justice lens. She hopes to form international connections and collaborations amongst countries and classrooms.

TATUM BRANAMAN
Tatum is the Dean of Signature Programs at the Atlanta Girls’ School, where she works closely with educators and community partners to enhance student learning. She also teaches biology, service-learning, and runs travel courses. A native Arkansan, Tatum holds her BS/MS from the University of Central Arkansas. She spent her early career as a biologist at the University of Florida and later served in the Peace Corps in Ethiopia. Tatum loves to hike – especially with her French husband and Ethiopian dog – to travel, to read, and to spend time with family in the Ozarks and the Alps.

BOBBIE DOWNS
Bobbie is currently the director of the Child Study Team, Related Services, and Educational Services Unit at a special services school in New Jersey. She decided to pursue a career in education after serving as a teacher at a school for Sudanese refugees in Cairo, Egypt. She has a passion for student mental health, mindfulness, and trauma-informed practices. She also works for a foundation dedicated to teaching about the Korean War. Bobbie enjoys traveling and spending time with her border collie.

TRISH FINERTY
Trish has been teaching high school and college science courses in Wisconsin and Michigan since 1999 and currently teaches A&P and summer biology travel courses at Mid Michigan College. She earned a BS in Secondary Ed. and Biology, a master’s degree in Life Science and a graduate certificate in A&P. She has led several experiential learning trips with students to the Florida Keys, Costa Rica, and Belize and is excited for this new experience with other educators who are passionate about science education. She also enjoys SCUBA diving, photography, and travel with her partner and their five children.

CLARE GILROY
Clare is in her 5th year of teaching Biology and Sustainability at Rye High School in New York. She graduated with a BA in Biology from Binghamton University, and loved it so much, she stayed at Binghamton for her MAT. During her first year of teaching, Clare and a group of other dedicated teachers received the “Extra Mile Award” for their work implementing project-based learning in their classes. She also advises many clubs at Rye. When not teaching, Clare loves traveling, exploring her home of NYC, and painting.

SIAN PROCTOR
Dr. Sian Proctor is a geoscientist, explorer, space artist, and astronaut. She is the CEO of Space2Inspire and founder of The JEDI Space Foundation. She was the mission pilot for SpaceX Inspiration4, the first all-civilian orbital mission. She is the first African American woman to pilot a spacecraft, the first African American commercial astronaut, and the first African American to paint in space. Dr. Proctor is a geoscience professor at South Mountain Community College, in Phoenix, Arizona. She is a global leader and ambassador for the Maricopa Community College District.
KATE SCHAFER
Kate Schafer is the department chair and biology teacher at Sequoyah School in Pasadena, California during the school year and directs the Children’s School of Science in Woods Hole, Massachusetts during the summer. While studying coral reefs in Belize for her dissertation, she witnessed a coral bleaching event at her study sites. This experience and a deep connection to the natural world have led her to commit to doing everything she can to stave off the worst impacts of the climate crisis. She has been teaching high school for 16 years, including marine biology and a summer field course.

JENNIFER SHERBINSKI
Jennifer received her BS in Marine Science and Biology at the University of Miami and a year studying abroad in Australia. Jennifer worked at Carolina Ocean Studies teaching children about island ecology before working for corporate America. In 2004 she received her Master’s in Education. Jennifer teaches biology and marine biology. Jennifer was awarded a grant that enabled her students to go on a trip to Hurricane Island where they collaborated with educators in the field on issues like climate change and lobster migration. She is constantly looking for engaging activities including Algae Academy and building a life-size whale.

JONATHAN SHAPIRO
Jonathan Shapiro has been teaching since 2000, first as a biology teacher and adjunct professor, then as a high school assistant principal, high school department head, and K12 science curriculum supervisor. He was the first recipient of the MassBioEd Champion for Biotechnology Education award, largely for his work initiating and leading a four-year biotechnology program that included a capstone course and student internships. Jonathan’s background is in neuroscience and education. He lives with his wife and their pet ducks and chickens (Lucy, Lola, Larry, Pebbles, and Stevie). Jonathan enjoys spending his free time kayaking, paddleboarding, skiing, hiking, and baking.

DANIELLE SMITH
Danielle currently teaches Regents Chemistry and AP Environmental Science in Webster, New York (Schroeder) with 20 plus years of experience. She is the Green Club Advisor and Tier 1 team member. She is originally from Troy, New York and earned her BS in Chemical Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and began her career at Xerox. She quickly learned that her passion was teaching, switched careers and earned her Master’s in Education. Danielle lives with her husband and two daughters in western New York. She enjoys kayaking, baking, reading, and skiing. Danielle is excited for this Fellowship opportunity and to share with her students.

BRITTNEY TRAYNOR
Brittney is in her 4th year of teaching. Her first two years were spent in Manassas Park, Virginia. Now she is teaching middle school science and coaching track and field at the Environmental Charter School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She earned a BA in Environmental Studies and Biology from Washington and Jefferson College, and a Master’s of Teaching from the University of Virginia. Prior to becoming a teacher, she studied abroad on the Galapagos Islands, volunteered with AmeriCorps, and spent time in Costa Rica as sea turtle field assistant.
Meet the 2023 YELLOWSTONE Teacher Fellows

MARCH 4-11, 2023
PAUL CORNETT
Paul has worked in Pre K-12 education for 22 years and is currently the elementary school science specialist at Saint Andrew’s School in Boca Raton, Florida. He is also a faculty member for his school’s international boarding program and lives on their beautiful school campus with his wife Heather, their two daughters Ava (14) and Maddy (12), and their dog Maverick. Paul has a BA in Elementary Education with Science Endorsement and a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership. He enjoys spending his free time with his family and visiting the beach to paddleboard, paddlesurf, snorkel, scuba dive, and relax.

Megan Hawley has been teaching for 7 years at Ada High School in Ada, Oklahoma. Her degrees include a BS in Biology and M.Ed Science. Megan teaches a variety of science classes – zoology, botany, anatomy/physiology, and AP environmental science. She also works for the College Board as a Reader for AP Environmental Science. Megan truly believes in the importance of being a lifelong learner, and hopes to instill that in each of her students. She is eager to bring real-life examples back to her classroom. In her free time, Megan enjoys spending time with family or reading.

LAURA DEERING
Laura lives in Kansas City, Missouri with her husband and two children. She teaches biology and environmental science at Park Hill South High School located in the KC Metro area. Laura is currently working toward her Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Kansas. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, working in her gardens, adding to her seed and plant collections, playing card and board games, reading a good book, and traveling.

TINA GASER
Tina is a National Board Certified teacher who currently teaches biology and AP Environmental Science. She graduated with a BS in Biological Sciences and worked in a clinical chemistry laboratory for 7 years before getting her M.S.ED. Throughout her 25-year teaching career, she taught middle school life, physical, and Earth/space Sciences. She took a 3-year hiatus from the classroom by serving as a content specialist for a professional development company. Upon returning to her district, Tina has taught high school biology, AP biology, anatomy & physiology, and APES. Tina lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania with her husband.

JOCELYN HANDLEY-PENDLETON
Jocelyn has been teaching high school science in Hauppauge, New York since 2008. Currently, she teaches IB Environmental Systems, an Environmental Studies elective, and Science Research. Each year she works with students who compete in various local, national, and international science competitions. In the past, she was a participant in the Department of Energy’s ACTS program and she has been part of Brookhaven National Lab’s SPARK Program since its inception. She and her students work collaboratively with other schools and BNL scientists in the field of protein crystallography. Jocelyn lives on a small sheep farm with her husband and two children.

MEGAN HAWLEY
Megan Hawley has been teaching for 7 years at Ada High School in Ada, Oklahoma. Her degrees include a BS in Biology and M.Ed Science. Megan teaches a variety of science classes – zoology, botany, anatomy/physiology, and AP environmental science. She also works for the College Board as a Reader for AP Environmental Science. Megan truly believes in the importance of being a lifelong learner, and hopes to instill that in each of her students. She is eager to bring real-life examples back to her classroom. In her free time, Megan enjoys spending time with family or reading.

SHELLIE KERRIGAN
Shellie has taught biology and environmental science (academic & AP) for over 20 years at North Reading High School in Massachusetts. Growing up in Vermont and going to college in Maine, she spent a lot of time outside in nature. Shellie’s favorite thing about teaching environmental science is helping the students make connections between their everyday choices and the greater world. She also loves her annual canoeing field trip at a nearby wildlife sanctuary. When she is not teaching and advising students, Shellie enjoys traveling with her husband and son, dancing, reading books, and walking her dog in the woods.
KRISTEN MCDERMOTT
Kristen has been teaching high school science for 15 years. She has a degree in Environmental Science and a Master’s in Secondary Science Education. She currently teaches IB Environmental Science and Biology but spends most of her free time planning science-focused student travel. She most recently took 35 students to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands. When not planning travel excursions or teaching, she goes to yoga classes, reads historical fiction novels, or walks her dog in the open space behind her house.

ARIANE SCHAEFFLER
Ariane has been a home-school educator for the past eight years, as well as the director of an educational nonprofit that focuses on science and nature themed lessons and activities for a group of 15-20 families in the Capital Region of New York. The organization works closely with local state parks, nature centers, museums, and educational groups to provide hands-on learning opportunities for pre-k through 9th grade students. Ariane recently went back to school to get a degree in environmental science and conservation, with the ultimate goal of heading up a nature/educational center. In her free time, she loves hiking, traveling, and doing anything outdoors with her family.

ANDI TWISS
Andi Twiss teaches 6th grade earth and space science. She’s been teaching for four years and loves expanding and enriching her curriculum. Andi is passionate about hands-on, engaging, and experiential learning opportunities. Some special projects she has pursued with her scholars is designing and building a raised garden bed to experiment and test best management practices in sustainable agriculture, and an overnight environmental education field trip. Andi loves to travel, spend time outdoors, try new things, and eat great food.

SAMANTHA RECKNAGEL
Coming from a family full of science teachers, Samantha grew up wanting to become a teacher. She has been teaching 4th grade in Chicago Public Schools for 11 years and truly enjoys sharing her love of science with her students. Since her first EPI course in March 2022, she has been committed to sharing ecology and conservation studies with her students and is bringing it to the 6th-8th graders through after school programming. She has a goal of bringing a group of 8th grade students on an EPI trip next year. In her free time, Samantha enjoys running marathons.
Meet the 2023 COSTA RICA Teacher Fellows

APRIL 22-29, 2023
EPI TEACHER FELLOWSHIPS
2023 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

KATE COSEO
Kate teaches math and science courses at a public charter high school, the Ecology Learning Center, in Unity, Maine. In addition to having a passion for fostering connections between math, science, and the natural world, she is deeply committed to sustainable living and wilderness exploration. Kate has over a decade of teaching experience at both the high school and collegiate level. Outside of the classroom, Kate can be found working in her garden, hiking with her dog, and exploring beautiful places with her family.

LIANNA MANES
Lianna attended Brock University in St. Catharines, Canada, for her Bachelor of Science (Honours Biology) and Bachelor of Education, completing a bacterial genetics research thesis in conjunction with Agriculture Canada during that time. She now teaches general science, biology, chemistry, and geography. In 2019, she participated in an ESL certification program in Shanghai, China, igniting her passion for international educational travel. In 2020, Lianna became a certified National Geographic Educator and looks forward to continuing to build her skillset as an educator with the EPI Fellowship!

JENNIFER DONAIS
Jenn Donais is a K-8 STEM Coach in Massachusetts. She was awarded the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) in 2016, the highest recognition that a mathematics/science teacher may receive in the USA. In 2021 Jenn was awarded the Air Force Association 3rd place National Teacher of the Year. As a PAEMST Alumni Representative, Jenn increases engagement among alumni between the state and national level. She is an international STEM trainer and has facilitated professional development in the UAE. Jenn believes students need to be given the skills to solve complex problems in the world.

JOANNA EDELMAN
Joanna is a full time teacher at Kaneland High School, about 60 miles west of Chicago. She teaches AP environmental science, freshman-level environmental science, as well as astronomy. Joanna loves being outside. She and her two boys (ages 10 and 7) are traveling as much as they can; camping, road trips, and hiking. Joanna graduated from Northern Illinois University in 2010 with a bachelor’s degree in Geology and Environmental Geosciences. She continued with her Master’s and then her Doctorate (which she had to postpone due to personal reasons). Joanna is so looking forward to this Fellowship experience!

EMILY INTELICATO
Emily has been married for 16 years and has twin sons. Their names are Parker and Dominic and they are complete opposites! Emily has been a cyber teacher at PALCS for over 16 years teaching various science courses. She holds a BS in Forensic Science and Chemistry and a MEd in Urban Education. Emily has a passion for true crime and loves setting up crime scenes for students to solve. She loves traveling to different countries with her students, especially the Galapagos Islands. Emily is an assistant PADI instructor and teaches during her free time.

KATE COSEO

JENNIFER DONAIS

JOANNA EDELMAN

EMILY INTELICATO

LIANNA MANES

KRISTA MARCUM
KRISTA MARCUM

Krista teaches environmental science at Gulf Shores High School. She is also the President of the Alabama National Board Certified Teacher Network. She serves as chair of the Gulf Shores City Schools National Board Leadership and Science by the Shore teams. She has an Education Specialist degree in administration and is in her 17th year of teaching. In 2021, Krista was a finalist for Alabama Teacher of the Year and the Presidential Award of Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. She is an avid environmental education enthusiast that encourages her students to be good stewards of the environment.
JASON MAURO
Jason teaches classes in middle school life science and a college credit environmental science class through SUNY ESF. He was accepted into the New York State Master Teacher Program in the fall of 2018. Through the NYSMTP he attended a 10-day trip to Belize in 2019 and he also takes a group of students to the Florida Keys for an educational field trip every two years. Jason helps organize a Youth Climate Summit and is the advisor for the school’s Environmental Club. He enjoys hiking, running, camping, kayaking, and birdwatching, and loves sea turtles.

EMILY MORENO
Emily started her teaching career in North Carolina. While teaching she received her MA in Teaching in Biological Science from Project Dragonfly and Miami University. During her studies, she explored inquiry, community-based conservation, and environmental stewardship around the globe. She has also traveled with the NC Museum of Natural Science twice as an Educator of Excellence. She is currently teaching 5th & 6th grade science at FernLeaf Community Charter School. Emily, her husband, and son love to spend time in nature. They frequently take camping trips and love to go kayaking and hiking with their dogs in western North Carolina mountains.

ANGELA PALMIERI
Dr. Angela Palmieri has been an educator for over 21 years. She has taught grades K-6 in Los Angeles, Detroit, and San Francisco. Dr. Palmieri is the founding teacher of two K-6th Spanish dual language immersion programs in California. Angela is a graduate of the Educational Leadership Program (ELP) at UCLA. Dr. Palmieri is a Fulbright Distinguished Teacher (2016, New Zealand), as well as a recipient of two Fulbright Hays grants. Angela was born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela, and speaks Italian and Spanish fluently. She is an avid yogini who loves to travel the world in her free time.

SAMANTHA ROYCE
Samantha is an AP Environmental Science teacher in the Everett School District in Washington State. She was born and raised in the Seattle area. Samantha earned a Bachelor’s of Science in Zoology from the University of Washington and a Master’s in Teaching from Western Washington University. She has been teaching for 17 years and just recently earned National Board Certification. Samantha is married with two boys ages 13 and 9, and a lovable lab named Pop-Tart. In her free time she enjoys doing crafts, gardening, thrift store shopping, and spending time with her family.

ROBYN SCARTH
Just like surfing (a new favorite pass time), Robyn feels that teaching has moments when she feels in control of the desired risk and times when she feels tossed and tumbled at the whim of the universe. From her first teaching job in the Himalayan foothills to her current role as a high school ELL and history teacher on the Island of Hawaii’, Robyn has been challenged and continue to learn about the world, her students, and herself.

APRIL THOMPSON
April Thompson is in her 12th year of teaching. She currently teaches Earth science and biology. April holds a BS degree in Molecular Biology and a Master’s Degree in Education. She won teacher of the year several times. Currently, April is working on a professional development program with Huntsman Cancer Institute. She loves professional development and is so excited for this opportunity with EPI. In her free time April loves to read, run, and garden. This experience is a dream come true for April.
CAROL YOUNG
A lifelong resident of New Hampshire’s Monadnock Region, Carol has been teaching high school science for 28 years. This year she is in the classroom full time, instructing anatomy and biology students and advising their school’s Ocean Bowl Team. Carol has previously been Department Leader, Teacher Administrator, and Assistant Principal, and served on the Harris Center for Conservation Education Board of Trustees. When she’s not working, Carol can be found skiing, hiking, or traveling with her husband, 15-year old son, and two Labrador retrievers. Right now her students are fostering two painted turtle hatchlings for release this spring.

ERLENE TWEET
Erlene has been working in her current school district since 2014, in various settings with the last four years teaching 8th grade science. This level includes Earth, space, and physical sciences. She holds a Bachelor’s of Science degree in Education and Master’s of Science in Reading. Erlene has two children who she spends most of her free time with. She is an avid reader and has a passion for travel and learning more about other places and cultures. She has a goal of visiting all of the national parks in the United States, having visited 20 parks in the last few years.
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-THEA BURKE, 2022 TEACHER CHAPERONE