Elevating Climate Conversations at Wofford

by Dr. Laura Barbas Rhoden

On March 31, students, faculty and staff, and community members picked up brushes and paint to co-create art to elevate conversations about climate. We wrote messages of hope and urgency; talked with one another about how the climate emergency impacts our lives; and together painted images for a more regenerative future.

The event was hosted by students in Ibero-American Environmental Humanities (SPAN 420), taught for the first time at Wofford this spring. Students in the course thought with theoretical and creative texts from Latin America and Spain; listened to the voices of Indigenous and rural activists organizing to safeguard territories and lifeways in the Americas; and together envisioned, designed, and carried out a final, collaborative, participatory project. In addition to the art event, they started the first-ever, student-led petition for divestment by the college from fossil fuels; started a new Instagram account to educate peers; and met with Chief Financial Officer Chris Gardner and Wofford President Nayef Samhat to ask for change.

As a faculty member, I’m proud of the students’ efforts and grateful for students in Spanish to have a role alongside other classes, such as those in environmental studies and biology, in elevating climate conversations. Colleagues’ teaching in the social sciences, like sociology and international affairs, helped students make connections to dynamics of power at different levels of scale. And art, such as the banner centerpiece by Walker Antonio, brought a message to life. So, as we head toward Earth Day, we say thank you and adelante! all who further the work of climate education, justice, and resilience, here and everywhere.
Upcoming Events and Opportunities

**Ongoing**

**Spartanburg Area Conservation Internship**: SPACE is seeking an unpaid intern for summer 2021 to work with land conservation. Any interested students can contact Dr. Savage [savageks@wofford.edu](mailto:savageks@wofford.edu).

**April 15th, 1:00-3:00pm**

**Litter Sweep at Butterfly Creek Park**: Meet at the Farmer’s Market, 498 Howard Street. All are welcome!

**April 16th, 1:00pm Zoom**

**ASLE Spotlight – Water Works**: New public facing ASLE initiative to highlight recent creative, critical, and activist work in the environmental humanities. [Information/Registration](#)

**April 30th Application Deadline**

**USM Gulf Coast Research Laboratory’s Summer Field Program**: Two summer sessions available offering studies in coastal environments with intensive field and laboratory-based settings. [See their brochure](#) for more information.

**On going Until position filled**

**Spring 2021 SC Forestry commission Environmental Education Internship**: Help plan and implement forest conservation programs for natural resource professionals, formal and nonformal educators, preK-12 students, and/or the general public. 10-20 hours Monday – Friday (8:00 - 4:30) with occasional weekend work and/or travel (expenses covered by SCFC). **Location**: Harbison State Forest, 5600 Broad River Rd., Columbia, SC 29212. **Contact Project Supervisor**: Matt Schnabel, Environmental Education Coordinator, mschnabel@scfc.gov, 803-728-5968

**April 16th 1:00pm**

**Zoom ASLE Spotlight – Water Works**

**On going**

**PROFIE OF THE WEEK:**

**Vermont Law School – Environmental Law Center**

The Environmental Law Center (ELC) at Vermont Law School boosts that it offers more environmental and energy law courses than any other U.S. law school. From historically preserved and environmentally friendly campus buildings to participating in locally grown sustainable agriculture, students learn environmental concepts and energy policy in the world around them.

ELC offers several degrees including a Master of Environmental Law and Policy (MELP), Master of Energy Regulation and Law (MERL), Master of Food and Agriculture Law and Policy (MFALP) and Master of Arts in Restorative Justice (MARJ). Each of these can be pursued jointly with a JD degree. Post-JD students have the opportunity to pursue a Master of Law (LLM) in Energy Law, Environmental Law, American Legal Studies, or Food and Agriculture Law. Dual degrees are also offered through institutions such as Yale, Cambridge, and the University of Vermont.

Environmental Law Center at [Vermont Law School](#)