

# DIVERSITY · EQUITY · INCLUSION

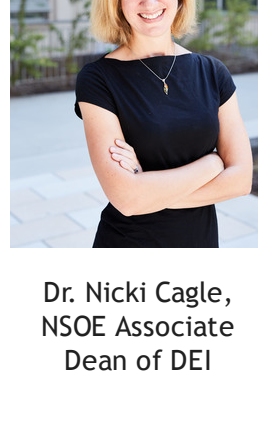
## NICHOLAS SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT · DUKE UNIVERSITY



### From the Associate Dean of DEI

Welcome to the Nicholas School of the Environment's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion newsletter!

If you would like to add announcements or information to future NSOE DEI newsletters, please email me at [nicolette.cagle@duke.edu](mailto:nicolette.cagle@duke.edu).



Dr. Nicki Cagle,  
NSOE Associate  
Dean of DEI

If you have any feedback about DEI initiatives or issues in the Nicholas School that you'd prefer to leave anonymously, please use this [DEI at NSOE feedback form](#).

## COMMUNICATE

### NSOE's DEI Resources

To create community and help our semester get off to a great start, please visit our NSOE DEI Website.

On the website you can "[Learn About Our Work](#)", including discovering the details of [NSOE's DEI Implementation and Anti-Racism plans](#), how we promote [accountability](#), upcoming and on-going [DEI initiatives](#), and how we [celebrate DEI](#) in NSOE.

We also encourage you to "[Find Resources](#)" on [DEI events](#), [reporting](#), [support](#) for students, staff, and faculty from a variety of identities, and [finding community](#). You can also "[Expand Your Knowledge](#)" with resources on of [inclusive teaching](#), [inclusive learning](#), [land acknowledgements](#) (an exploration), [diversity in the workplace](#), [environmental justice](#), and [reading lists](#) on the intersections between DEI and the environment!

Join the **DEI listserv**! We also encourage you to sign up for the DEI listserv ([dei-nsoe@duke.edu](mailto:dei-nsoe@duke.edu)). Subscribe at [lists.duke.edu/sympa](https://lists.duke.edu/sympa).

### Accountability Meeting - Oct 12!

The Nicholas School uses regular Accountability meetings, open to any student, staff, or faculty member to guide our path towards increased inclusivity, diversity, and racial equity.

Before each meeting, the Dean and Associate Dean of DEI release an update on recent activities that: 1) increase our Knowledge, 2) change our Behaviors, and 3) recast our Identity. These are interdependent. Without a sustained effort to continue to educate ourselves and change our behaviors, our School cannot achieve the diverse identity and perspectives we seek to be truly excellent as the Nicholas School of the Environment.

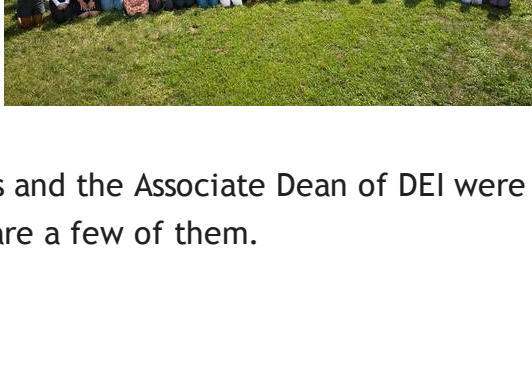
During the meeting, community members reflect on key questions in small groups and then offer feedback and questions to the whole group, including the Dean and Associate Dean of DEI. You can find past Accountability Meeting updates [here](#).

Our next Accountability Meeting is scheduled for **October 12, 11:30am-12:30pm**. Sign up will be sent out a couple weeks beforehand.

## CELEBRATE

### Welcome Class 2024!

The DEI Office is excited to welcome the incoming cohort to the NSOE community! We look forward to working alongside you as we learn, grow, explore, and achieve together.



During orientation, the DEI Actionators and the Associate Dean of DEI were involved in several initiatives, below are a few of them.

### Actionator Session

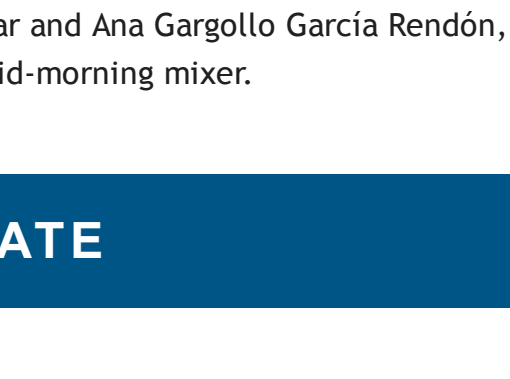
The Actionators convened an orientation session to review the history and future of DEI efforts, resources, and planning at NSOE. The session began with an introduction by Dr. Tim Johnson followed by a recitation of the history of Durham and Beaufort by Nancy Kelly and Stephanie Hillsgrove, respectively. Melissa Kotacka gave an overview of demographic data and Dr. Nicki Cagle touched upon several upcoming DEI events.

### Cultural Competency & Humility Workshop

On August 25th, Dr. Cagle led a workshop for incoming students that challenged current approaches to environmental stewardship by prompting her audience to critically re-examine concepts of culture, humility, and the life long pursuit of a growth mindset. This was done through the case study, *Recycling in Buenos Aires*, and an exploration of 10 cultural continua.

### International Community Presentation and Mixer

On August 26th, the international community gathered together to welcome the incoming cohort and the start of the new fall semester. The event kicked off in Field Auditorium with a presentation, by Ishani Palandurkar and Ana Gargollo García Rendón, and icebreaker activity, followed by a mid-morning mixer.



## EDUCATE

### Neuroscience of Trust

Research shows that diverse teams out-perform and out-innovate teams with less diversity. But if that is the case, why aren't diverse teams the dominant mode now? The answer is neurobiology and time.

Neurobiologically, we get a quick dopamine award from people that are like us (our "in-group"). Did you know that we more quickly make friendships with people that smell similar to us or have similar intestinal flora? If someone is different from us, we don't get an automatic dopamine or oxytocin reward and thus we need to consciously create conditions to build trust and help us get those neurochemicals.

How do we consciously create conditions to both build trust and allow diverse teams to reach their maximum potential for innovation?

- Form small but diverse teams, and add new people to the team periodically - people from different identities, walks of life, and backgrounds.
- Engage with people that violate your stereotypes and bias. Actually begin doing the work with someone different from you! For this to work neurobiologically, you have to invest time and effort - a coffee alone isn't enough - and then you will get a big chemical reward.
- Prevent herding! Research shows that when women are a minority in a decision making team that makes decisions by majority rule, they are ignored. This undermines the team's performance (this happens with majority based decision). Thus, decision making needs to be consensus-based: everyone has to participate and agree.
- Use a flat hierarchy when problem solving.
- Create a high-degree of psychological safety on the team - let people share crazy ideas, encourage mistakes and risk-taking!

Diverse teams are more effective, but they require an investment of time to build trust and reach their maximum potential. But models of employee lifetime value show that investing in trust pays off in a big way!

(Summarized from Ming, Vivienne. Feb. 17, 2022. "The Neuroscience of Trust and Implications for Diverse Teams." Duke Corporate Education, Leadership Series Webinar)

### Sex and Gender in Toxicology

Dillon King, an NSOE doctoral candidate, has recently published a piece on sex and gender in toxicology studies. Check it out [here](#).

Want to learn more about intersections between ecotoxicology and identity? Check out the following seminars:

**Sep 16:** [Understanding Occupational Exposure to Known Carcinogens: A Program of Research in Progress](#)

- In this seminar, Dr. Walton will discuss her work to date to understand and improve the pesticide protective behaviors of Latino migrant and seasonal farmworkers. She will also discuss her research and policy work to measure and modify occupational exposure to antineoplastic drugs for healthcare workers, including nursing assistants and environmental services workers who have less education, training, and social capital in the workplace than nurses and pharmacists whose exposures are more commonly considered.

**Oct 7:** [Environmental Health Research: Current Trends and Future Directions](#)

- This seminar will discuss recent research on the links between environment and human health with a focus on research challenges and future directions. Topics include heat waves, green infrastructure, climate change, and environmental justice.

**Oct 21:** [The Intersection of Global Environmental Health and Climate Change](#)

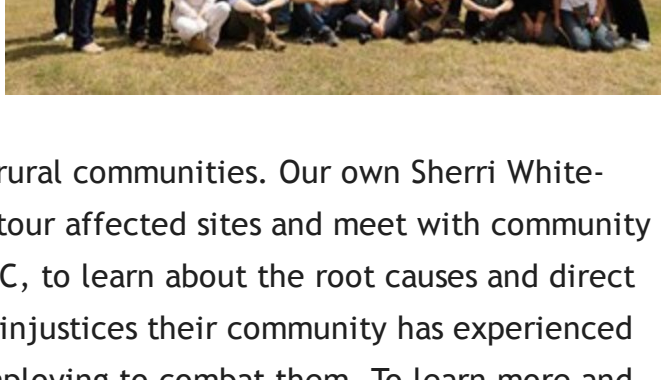
- While climate change may be the existential challenge the world faces, we also must deal with overwhelming additional environmental challenges to global health. Health disparities, water and soil pollution, microbial threats all challenge our knowledge as well s our future. What are some of the key research needs facing us at this time? And how can we address them

**Nov 11:** [Partnering for Action: Cultivating Science and Justice](#)

- Defined broadly, participatory approaches to research can challenge and change inequity and mistrust in science, particularly when the effort reflects the diversity of publics and does not reinforce existing inequities in science, environmental decision-making, and society. These efforts are transforming investigations, for example, through the development of new monitoring tools, co-production of data, and sharing of results.

### Faculty & Staff Sign Up for Sampson County EJ Field Trip

NSOE faculty and staff from Durham and Beaufort campuses are invited to join an all-day field trip on Sept. 9 to learn about the impacts



of environmental injustice in rural communities. Our own Sherri White-Williamson will lead us as we tour affected sites and meet with community leaders in Sampson County, N.C., to learn about the root causes and direct impacts of the environmental injustices their community has experienced and the strategies they are employing to combat them. To learn more and register click [here](#).

### Other Upcoming Events:

September is National Recovery Month & September 15 marks the start of National Hispanic Heritage Month

- Sampson County Environmental Justice Field Trip (Sep. 9)
- Community Snacks for National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sep. 15)
- Field Day (Sep. 17)
- Global Week (Sep. 19-23)
- PRIDE in Durham (Sep. 24)
- Rosh Hashanah (Sep. 25-17)

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"Keep on beginning and failing. Each time you fail, start all over again, and you will grow strong until you have accomplished a purpose - not the one you began with perhps, but one you'll be glad to remember." - Anne Sullivan

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NSOE's DEI Resources