

Welcome to the NIC School!
Meet your amazing POD Leaders...

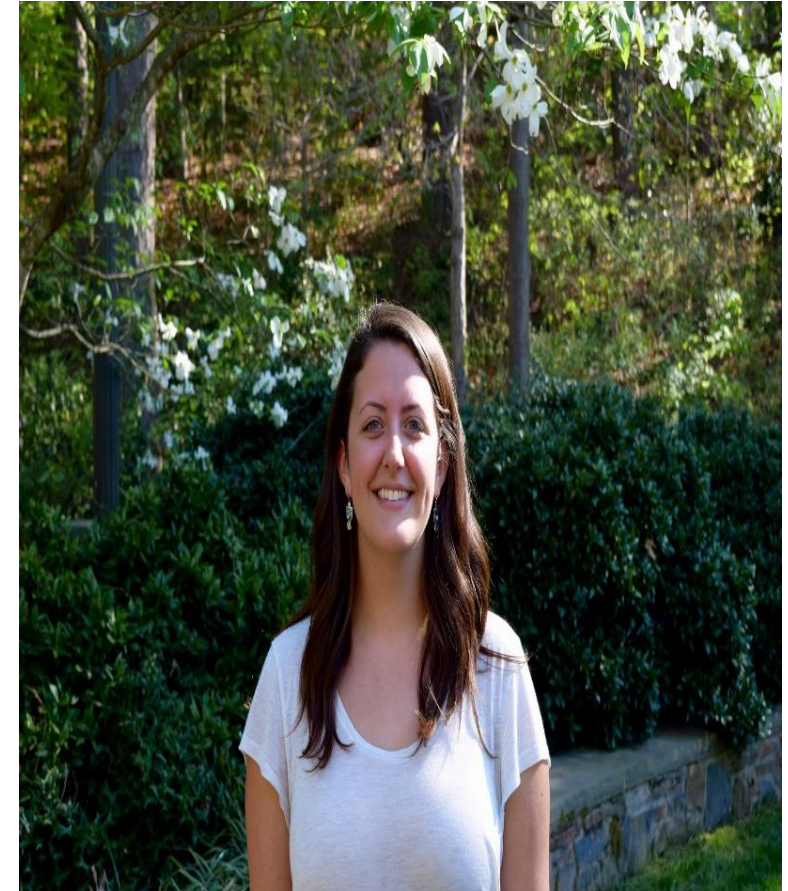


Maddie Atkins

I'm a water resources management (WRM) student, with a bachelor's degree in geology from Case Western Reserve University. After graduating, I spent a year working on federal environmental policy in Washington D.C. for a few different non-profits. This past summer I interned with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in Chicago, where I worked on floodplain management and water infrastructure finance.

At Duke, I'm co-President of the Duke Water Network (DWN), as well as co-Director of the Green Roof and Orchard Workforce (GROW). Aside from my love for all things water and rocks, I'm really interested in waste management, attempting yoga, going hiking, and taking care of my succulents. My favorite part about Duke are my passionate classmates, and my favorite things about Durham are the diverse community and ample beer.

madeline.atkins@duke.edu



Tali Brennan



I am from Atlanta, GA and went to UGA (go dawgs) for undergrad. I came to Duke straight from undergrad and have loved everything about the school and the MEM program. I'm a CEM so I will mostly be in Beaufort this year, but will be coming back for all the fun things (campout, games, Halloween, etc.). I am also very interested in the Business and Environment field and plan to go into that upon graduation, specifically consulting.

This past year I was president and outreach coordinator for the Ocean Policy Working Group club, and involved with both the Business and the Environment and Net Impact clubs. I did various research projects, participated in case competitions with students from other programs at Duke, and did the NC State B Lab clinic to gain more experience within the B Lab community and working with real clients. I enjoy going to all Duke sporting events, running, and exploring what Durham and North Carolina have to offer.

I love the community within the Nicholas School and Duke in general, and there are so many grad school social events like tailgates and formals that are so fun. Definitely explore Durham as much as you can, the restaurants, breweries, farmer's markets, Bulls games, etc. are all great. Can't wait to meet y'all!

taylor.brennan1@duke.edu

Rachel Brinks

Hi, my name is Rachel Brinks. I am an Environmental Economics and Policy student. I'm interested in working for a city or state government on energy and climate policies. I serve as a co-president of GROW-the Green Roof and Orchard Workforce and as the Event Coordinator for the Nicholas School Student Council.

I enjoy traveling, photography, and being outside hiking or rock climbing. One of my favorite things about Duke is being able to hang out in the Duke Gardens.

rachel.brinks@duke.edu





Gina Daniel

Hi first years! Hope you are all getting excited to start your time at the Nicholas School! My name is Gina Daniel and I am a second year Ecotoxicology and Environmental Health MEM. I am a proud "Double Dukie", earning my BS and MEM at Duke through the Cooperative College 3-2 program. My studies focus on human health risk assessments of chemical exposures, and my master's project is on air pollution in Shanghai. During the summer I have been interning at the World Health Organization in Geneva Switzerland as a Fellow in the Duke Program on Global Policy and Governanc.

During my free time I like to run and explore the Durham food scene, which often times coincide in races such as the Krispy Kreme Challenge and the Pie day Pi K (let me know if you would like to join me in my running/eating adventures!). I am excited to meet you all, and wish you safe travels to the Bull City!

gina.daniel@duke.edu

Olivia Eskew

I am a graduate student at the Nicholas School of the Environment focusing on corporate social responsibility, with an emphasis on the importance of pollinators and the alleviation of food scarcity on a national level. I currently hold leadership positions within student rooftop gardening initiatives, business and environment groups, law forums, and am working toward accrediting Duke University as a Bee Campus USA institution.

Ideally, I would like to work within the food and agriculture industry with a focus on supply chain and how that relates to food quality. I am interested in the community-based environmental management certificate, for I care strongly about environmental justice issues. I am particularly invested in the issue of food deserts and how that relays into economic health and disparities. The Master of Environmental Management serves as a bridge between my natural science background to policy and supply chain management.

olivia.eskew@duke.edu





Sydney Fishman

Hi there! My name is Sydney Fishman, and I am a 2nd year in the Coastal Environmental Management (CEM) concentration. I'm interested in the threats that coastlines face from sea level rise and other natural hazards, and I hope to pursue a job in resilience planning and sea level rise adaptation after I graduate. To that end, I'm pursuing the Geospatial Analysis certificate and also taking classes at UNC-Chapel Hill (aka enemy territory) in natural hazards resilience. My MP will focus on social and infrastructure vulnerability to nuisance flooding in 28 coastal cities. And, I'm a bit of a weirdo in that I'm a CEM who's staying in Durham for their entire second year (so I'll be around to answer questions!).

While at the Nic School I've done research with the Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions and the Duke Environmental Law and Policy Clinic, and this year I will be the Durham representative for The Coastal Society—one of the many awesome clubs here. In my free time I enjoy watching sports and home renovation shows, watering my plants, and exploring new food and drink spots around Durham. I look forward to meeting you all and answering any questions you may have!

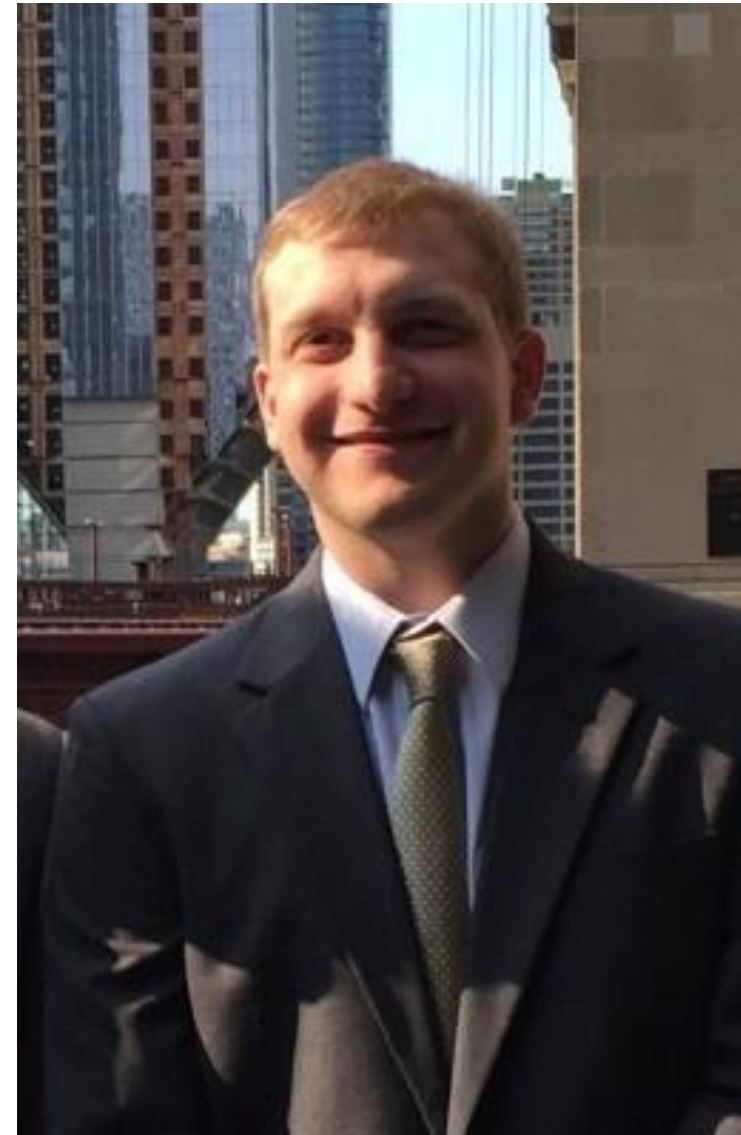
sydney.fishman@duke.edu

Tal Jacobs

I grew up in Concord, North Carolina. I'm in the Ecosystem Science and Conservation concentration, and I focus on conservation planning and landscape analysis.

I was a Biology major at Washington and Lee University, and I took time off before coming to the Nicholas School to work as a field technician, tennis coach, teacher, and camp naturalist. I like to participate in a variety of sports and outdoor adventures. I spent this past summer working for a land trust in Asheville, NC.

john.jacobs@duke.edu



Bobbi Lesser



I am concentrating in Business and Environment, and I am looking to work in the field of corporate sustainability. I am most interested in the food or beer and wine industries. I am President of the Business and Environment Club-Net Impact, treasurer for GROW (the green rooftop garden), and secretary for FOREM. I am the only female in the men's Raleigh ice hockey league, and I also play squash.

I love to hike, kayak and do anything outside. My favorite part about Duke is the community in the Nicholas School. Everyone is extremely friendly and always willing to help each other out. You'll feel close and connected right from the start.

bobbi.lessner@duke.edu

Jackie McGarry

I am a second year CEM student pursuing a certificate in community based environmental management. Despite growing up in Wisconsin, I have always loved the ocean and its creatures. I attended American University in Washington, D.C. and graduated in 2013 with a double major in biology and film and media arts. After graduation, I served as a digital specialist at Ocean Conservancy for three years before deciding to go back to school.

I have particular interests in the local impacts of ocean acidification, understanding coastal communities' relationship to their environment, and environmental education. This summer, I served as a coastal policy and restoration intern for the North Carolina Coastal Federation, where I researched a number of topics related to living shorelines. I look forward to welcoming the incoming class of MEM and MF students to the Nicholas School!

jaclyn.mcgarry@duke.edu





Vanessa Ferrero Mendoza

My name is Vanessa, and I'm getting my MEM in the Energy and Environment concentration. I want to work on renewable energy development in the African context, helping countries industrialize and increase their access to energy in a sustainable way that won't negatively affect climate change, and the progress being made to reduce emissions.

Being at Duke has allowed me to meet so many amazing people and learn more about their passions, interests, and expertise, which I think is one of the most invaluable parts of our program. In my free time I love to cook yummy meals and desserts, binge shows on Netflix, and upload song covers to an app on my phone!

vanessa.ferrero.mendoza@duke.edu

Shane O'Neal

My name is Shane O'Neal, and I am an ESC from Westford, Massachusetts. I am focusing on wildlife conservation and policy, and I was an intern this summer with the Center for Biological Diversity in Portland, Oregon. I would love to work for an environmental non-profit or possibly the Parks Service (at some point) after graduating from the Nic School.

At Duke, I am the President of the Duke Conservation Society, on the board of FOREM, and a member of the Duke Cycling team, and my hobbies include biking (duh), hiking, petting dogs at bars, and reading. I have loved going to Duke basketball games so far, as it is unlike any other sporting experience in the world (do Campout!). Can't wait to get to know you all!

shane.o.neal@duke.edu





Emily True

I am in the Business & Environment concentration. My career goal is to work in corporate sustainability. I am a co-president of the Duke University Greening Initiative and the Social Chair of FOREM.

I am also a member of the Business and Environment Club and DICE. My hobbies include: tennis, spin, traveling, hiking, and drinking (lol). My favorite part of Duke is the amazing people!

emily.true@duke.edu

Celeste Whitman

I am a second year Master of Environmental Management student with a concentration in environmental economics and policy (EEP). I am originally from Asheville, North Carolina, and I come to the Nic School after completing an anthropology/sociology undergraduate degree from Agnes Scott College in Atlanta, Georgia.

At the Nicholas School, I have focused my coursework on community-based environmental management and water management plans/policy. Being the treasurer for DICE (Diverse & Inclusive Community for the Environment), I have been able to get more involved with diversity and inclusion issues. I hope to work with minority and underrepresented communities in an effort to empower these communities in the management of their own environments.

Though mainly a football fan, I have enjoyed being a part of K-ville and cheering for Duke's basketball team. Being from Asheville (AKA Beer City), I like exploring the Triangle's brewery scene. I spend most of my weekends hanging out around Durham with friends and nights snuggling with my little dog, Velvet.

celeste.whitman@duke.edu



*Hayley led the charge this summer in organizing the POD leaders and soliciting volunteers, and although she's not serving as a POD leader, **I want to extend major kudos to her for her tremendous efforts.** I hope that you will join me in thanking her!*



Hayley Hanway

Welcome 1st years! Seven years ago, I journeyed deep into the New Zealand wilderness as a conservation volunteer, and I emerged a stalwart ecosystem manager. I earned a BS from the University of Michigan before spending a few incredible years managing the habitats of snow leopards, black bears, giraffes, and lemurs (in a zoo). I came to Duke in the Ecosystem Science and Conservation concentration to broaden my expertise. . . and – possibly – earn a higher salary.

Thanks to a life of theatre and creative writing, and a childhood spent watching Bill Nye and Kratt's Creatures, I've realized a passion for science communication. I've spent the summer interning in the communications department at the Land Conservancy of West Michigan. My favorite aspect of Duke is the incredible people! (and the food).

hayley.hanway@duke.edu

Thank you so much to all of our wonderful POD leaders for your willingness to help new students as they become acclimated to life at the Nic School and in Durham!

