COLLEGE OF NATURAL
RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT
CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP
IN GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY
VIRGINIA TECH.

Executive Master of Natural Resources (XMNR) – Class of 2025

ZAKKIYYAH A BARRON

ZAKKIYYAH A BARRON is a 25+ year insurance professional with a strong commitment to problem-solving and risk management, now pivoting to a career focused on geography, GIS, and environmental science. Serving 8 years as a boiler technician in the U.S. Navy, she successfully navigated and excelled in a male-dominated field, championing inclusion and diversity within the military. With a B.A. in Geography, a B.S. in Environmental Science, and a master's degree in GIS, she brings a unique combination of technical expertise, leadership experience, and academic knowledge. She is eager to leverage her professional and academic background to develop innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable resource management.

GRAY STEPHENSON

GRAY STEPHENSON is a graduate of Indiana University Bloomington with a B.A. in Biology and minors in Animal Behavior and French language. Having a lifelong passion for the natural world and its systems, Gray is excited for the opportunity to play a part in finding solutions to combat encroaching climate pressures through the XMNR program. Gray has gained a variety of professional experience in education and legal services, all while working as a musician and organizing shows across the eastern U.S. Gray is excited to translate the organizational and team coordination skills he has honed in music into a conservation and sustainability focused workplace.

EMILY BRADLEY

EMILY BRADLEY holds a B.A. in Anthropology from Temple University and currently works at NRECA, an organization that ensures rural Americans can access reliable and affordable electricity. Growing up in Philadelphia, Emily witnessed how severe weather, unreliable infrastructure, and lacking sustainability practices have dire consequences to underserved communities. This led Emily to seek professional and academic experiences that support and uplift vulnerable communities including leading sustainability programs for Americorps and performing home repairs with Habitat for Humanity. Through the XMNR program, Emily intends to turn her experience into a career focused on developing solutions that combat environmental challenges facing disadvantaged communities.

DAVID MILES

DAVID MILES has spent the last 7+ years working in various analytical and technical roles in the sustainability consulting industry, most recently as the director of product for an environmental accounting software platform. David previously served in the Montana Conservation Corps (AmeriCorps program) and has a passion for land and water conservation. David hopes to work more directly with conservation projects in the future where he can leverage his technical and problem-solving experience to improve project outcomes. David holds a B.S. in Geographic Information Systems from the University of Maryland and is a veteran of the United States Navy.

ANDREANA JINJUE LIN

ANDREANA JINJUE LIN is passionate about engaging Northern Virginia's diverse communities in conversations on conservation, sustainability, and clean energy. Bringing experience with environmental nonprofits and grassroots movements, she serves as communications & outreach manager at Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions, Community Engagement Board chair for the Northern Virginia Bird Alliance, and is a certified Virginia Master Naturalist. She has a B.F.A. in Creative Writing from George Mason University, with double minors in Professional & Technical Writing and Conservation Studies through the Smithsonian Mason School of Conservation.

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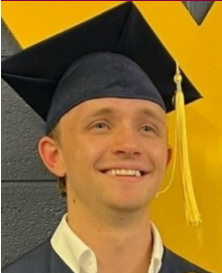
ANGIE PERSELLO

ANGIE PERSELLO holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering Technology from Old Dominion University and an MBA from Youngstown State University. Her intrapreneurial spirit has enabled her to improve processes and increase customer satisfaction while working internationally and across diverse industries. Currently, she specializes in project estimation, cost analysis, and pre-construction activities for infrastructure revitalization projects throughout the U.S. Outside of work, Angie is passionate about helping others, serving as a grant writer and volunteer coordinator for various nonprofits. Through the XMNR program, she looks forward to improving her leadership skills and integrating sustainability practices into her professional and volunteer work.

ERIKA ALLEN

ERIKA ALLEN graduated with a bachelor's degree in Wildlife and Fisheries from Frostburg State University in 2020. Recently, she has taught people of all ages about the natural world in her previous role as an outdoor educator for Lake Fairfax Park and currently as an environmental education director for a Northern Virginia preschool. In her free time, she volunteers as a member of the Arlington Master Naturalist program, which allows her to assist in the preservation and maintenance of her area's local ecosystems. Erika is excited to broaden her understanding of the environment and sustainability practices to advance her career and better serve her community.

LEWIS FRADY

LEWIS FRADY works as an environmental technician at Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc. His key tasks include wetland delineations, vegetation monitoring, and endangered species assessments to ensure compliance with environmental regulations. He has a degree in Environmental Soil and Water Science from West Virginia University, which supports his passion for sustainable practices and protecting natural resources. Lewis specializes in environmental monitoring, technical reporting, and regulatory compliance. He's dedicated to tackling environmental issues through innovative scientific solutions. He aspires to become a steward to the world's complex water resource challenges.

SRUJANI SHRAWNE

SRUJANI SHRAWNE is an environmental and social development professional who began her career at Reckitt Benckiser (FMCG) in the Global Sustainability team. Since then, she has worked at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and now at the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), both of which are part of the World Bank Group. In her current role, she supports business decisions in alignment with the MIGA Sustainability Framework. She holds a post graduate diploma in Renewable Energy, a bachelor's degree in Environmental Engineering, and a certificate in ESG Investing from the CFA Institute. Srujani also served on the World Bank Group Youth Summit Steering Committee and the IFC Young Professional Network Executive Board.

FRANCHESKA SACOTO

FRANCHESKA SACOTO holds a bachelor's degree in Geography, specializing in environmental conservation, sustainability, and development, from James Madison University, with a minor in Environmental Studies. Francheska works at Commonwealth Energy Partners (CEP) Solar in Richmond, Virginia, where she has conducted research on key topics including environmental justice, land use, and the circular economy and developed a deep understanding of renewable energy and its critical role in the global sustainability movement. A passionate environmental advocate, she aims to leverage the XMNR program to enhance her leadership skills and make a lasting impact within the environmental community, contributing to a more sustainable and harmonious future.

MELODY VINSON

MELODY VINSON is a biological scientist for the U.S. Air Force managing installation natural resources at Cannon AFB in New Mexico. She brings hands-on experience in wildlife and conservation through her previous work as a zookeeper in aviculture and as an urban ecology tech for Colorado State University's CEMML, where she worked in Tinker AFB's Natural Resources program in Oklahoma City. Melody earned her bachelor's in biology from Texas Tech, is passionate about land stewardship, and enjoys topics such as urban ecology, environmental policy, birds, and bats. In her free time, she enjoys bird watching and creating art.

LORI TRAWINSKI

LORI TRAWINSKI is a lifelong learner and Master Naturalist with a passion for nature, wildlife, and the Outer Banks of North Carolina. She is the financial policy research director at the AARP Public Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. She is also an adjunct instructor at the NYU School of Professional Studies, teaching courses in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion certificate program. Lori holds a Ph.D. in Economics and Finance, an M.A. in International Economics, and a B.A. in Financial Management from The Catholic University of America. Through the XMNR program, Lori hopes to bring sustainability considerations to the forefront of her current work.

BRIA WILLIAMS

BRIA WILLIAMS holds a B.A. in Computer and Information Sciences from Berea College and has worked as a professional software developer since 2019. Bria is passionate about creating more sustainable environments for communities like the one she grew up in. Her humble beginnings in Alabama gave her the voice and the tenacity to be a voice for those who are often left out of the conversation around climate and social issues. She plans on applying what she learns from the XMNR program to promote more sustainable tech solutions and be an advocate for underserved communities that are impacted the most from climate change.

ASHLEY R. MCKEON

ASHLEY MCKEON is a seasoned public policy and sustainability professional with expertise in global food systems, sustainable supply chains, agriculture, climate change, and conservation. She is dedicated to advancing strategies that position agriculture as a solution to global sustainability challenges. Ashley has led initiatives in regenerative agriculture at a multinational agribusiness company, shaped agriculture and conservation policy in the U.S. Senate, and guided regulatory and farm strategy at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A Utah native, she holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Portland and lives in Arlington, VA, where she enjoys hiking, travel, and spending time with her family.

JUSTIN LOUGH

JUSTIN LOUGH graduated from Chowan University where he earned a B.S. in Biology with a concentration in environmental biology. During his studies, he performed research in the Currituck Sound and used Alligator Weed Beetles as biological pest control in Lake Vaughn. While at Chowan, he was a member of the men's swim team, a peer tutor and co-president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee. His interest in sustainability stems from his studies in wildlife conservation and climate justice. He plans to use the knowledge and experiences gained from the XMNR program to further his leadership skills and begin a new career in sustainability.

KATHY HAGER

KATHY HAGER is the business manager for the Vice President of Outreach and International Affairs at Virginia Tech. Previously, she worked as the Virginia State 4-H Office Coordinator in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. She has over 30 years of experience in the financial industry and holds a B.S. in Marketing from Virginia Tech. Kathy plans on applying what she learns from the XMNR program to become a more effective leader and dynamically enable systemic change at any level. She spends her free time outdoors hunting, fishing and hiking with her husband and loves spending time with family and friends.

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KASEY HOLLIS

KASEY HOLLIS has over 20 years' experience as a K-12 and community college educator. She started her own Spanish language training, writing and research services company in 2014, contracting with global businesses and government entities. She is passionate about preserving the environment and protecting Virginia's bodies of water. She currently volunteers with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and within her local community, overseeing the health of both a 500-acre and 35-acre lake within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. She hopes to use the knowledge and connections gained through the XMNR program to dive deeper into the field of water security and environmental advocacy.

JUAN MURILLO

JUAN MURILLO has over 20 years of experience, specializing in international relations and logistics. He holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology, an MBA, and a master's in International Relations. His career includes extensive work in complex operational environments, fostering collaboration across diverse cultural and political landscapes to achieve impactful outcomes. Currently based in Falls Church, Virginia, he is pursuing an Executive Master of Natural Resources to transition into work focused on sustainability, environmental conservation, and benefiting future generations. In addition to his professional pursuits, he enjoys exploring investment opportunities, reading, and designing strategies for long-term success and growth.

ELANA KELLNER

ELANA KELLNER holds bachelor's degrees in Environmental Studies and Anthropology as well as a minor in Theater Arts from Brandeis University. She works at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) as a volunteer engagement associate on the membership engagement team. In this role, she works to strengthen and grow AAAS sections, develop trainings for volunteer leaders, host webinars and more. Previously, Elana worked as an environmental specialist at Maryland Environmental Service and a program assistant at the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education. In her free time, she loves hiking, spending time with friends, and reading.

CONNIE CARROLL

CONNIE CARROLL is an aspiring environmental leader passionate about combating climate change through a multifaceted approach. Connie holds a B.A. in Anthropology from SUNY Purchase and has 14+ years of work experience in the entertainment industry in addition to the nonprofit, sales and hospitality, and food service industries. Having recently worked as a canvasser for Children International, Connie is committed to fostering hands-on, community-driven change. Through the XMNR program, they are eager to dedicate themself to the intersection of anthropology, food and agriculture, and urban infrastructure, and to refine a sense of leadership within themself.

MEAGHAN FABIAN

MEAGHAN FABIAN is a Villanova University graduate with a B.A. in Sociology and Criminology. She recently transitioned out of the U.S. Army after serving seven years as a human resources officer, where she led teams of multi-disciplinary experts in their fields and collaborated with external organizations to fulfill organizational initiatives. She is shifting her professional focus to sustainability and conservation, applying leadership skills to harness her team's strengths to produce forward-thinking solutions to today's most challenging environmental problems. Meaghan enjoys spending her free time with her family, chipping away at her 'To Read' list, and exploring local running trails.