

Workshop 2: Creating an Arizona Environmental Leadership Institute

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Workshop Leaders:

Melaney Seacat, Pima County

Andrea Gerlak, Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy

Tom Murray, Sonoran Institute for Leadership Development

Student Assistants:

Anne Campbell, University of Arizona

Mariah Giardina, Northern Arizona University

Notes compiled by Melissa Lamberton, Water Resources Research Center, with input from Anne Campbell

The Mission:

Foster development of current and future leaders by empowering them with resources and skills to make a positive difference for people and the environment

1. Why are we here? Setting the context

Examples of other leadership institutes:

- Natural Resources Leadership Institute (NRLI), <http://www.ncsu.edu/nrli/>
 - o North Carolina, since 1995
 - o to develop leadership competencies for engaging today's environmental leaders
 - o 18 months plus practicum (six 3-day workshops)
 - o collaborative approaches for stakeholder development
 - o partner with NCSU, industry, and state agencies
 - o Cost is \$1,200
- Water Leaders, www.watereducation.org
 - o California, since 1997
 - o to educate community leaders about water issues and develop leadership roles on public boards and commissions
 - o one year (3 water tours, executive briefing, shadowing a water leader, formal presentation)
 - o California Water Education Foundation and donors
 - o Cost is \$2,500
- Environmental Leadership Program (ELP), <http://www.elpnet.org>
 - o national (regional networks), since late 1990s

- o designed to hone leadership styles, improve strategic communications, strengthen outreach to diverse constituencies
- o one year (3 overnight retreats)
- o Board of Trustees and staff, funded by foundations
- o Cost is \$750

Who is the customer?

- The environment
- Future stewards of the environment
- Anyone who uses water
- Elected officials/policy makers
- Elected officials from neighboring states
- Leaders within environmental community
- Citizens of the future
- The electorate

2. Summary of relevant roundtable information

Needed skills

- Create an environment for people to do great things
- Create a sense of community
- The courage to attack wicked problems
- The empathy and perspective to see all sides
- Broad knowledge of technical aspects of the environment
- Effective governance
- Balance among all stakeholders
- Consensus building

3. Needs assessment

Participants were asked to write down five needs that they felt the institute could meet, which were then grouped into categories:

- Umbrella Organization
 - o Provide an umbrella organization to connect environmental groups
 - o Coordination and organization of environmental community
- Policy and Management
 - o Listen to people about their concern about environmental issues
 - o Environmental planning
 - o Water resources management /Water conservation

- o Lead the development of a statewide environmental action plan
 - o Have (political) leaders educated about environmental issues
 - o Advise elected officials/Inform elected officials on key water issues
 - o Set workshops to educate people about environmental issues
 - Understanding of process, not just science, law and policy—how they are applied
 - o Provided a unified voice to push policy change/Green lobby, public relations
 - o Educate on political process—how to promote environmental policies
 - o Provide transparent information about decisions that are to be made by cities, etc, to enable participation or innovative entrepreneurial responses
 - o Address Native American rights
 - o Setting goals for safe yield outside AMAs, and giving “teeth” to safe yield inside AMAs
 - o Smart recreational uses
- Natural Resources
 - o Address sustainability verses development
 - o Address natural resources development verses natural resources preservation
 - o Setting public goals for residential and commercial water use (in gallons per person per day)
 - o Reservation of a larger percentage (or absolute amount) of Colorado River flow for the Colorado River Delta
 - o Timetable for implementing water conservation techniques in agriculture
 - o Legal framework to stop extraction of water from sensitive ecosystems
- Networking
 - o Effective communication between environmental leaders, environmental organizations and the community
 - o Create a bigger context for dealing with water issues
 - o Interactive communication platform and clearinghouse
 - o Building networks
 - o Records and resource directory/ Centralized resources and information
 - o Establish water governance beyond the mandated water managers—governance is a collective form of governing our resources (needs a mechanism and systems approach)
 - o Connect citizens with information, two-way communication
 - o Create a centralized point for Arizona environmental issues
 - o Promote collaboration among environmental organizations to reduce redundancies
 - o Connecting various grassroots, non-profit, governmental organizations toward common goals
 - o A strong network between economists, lawmakers, politicians, and scientists all working for environmental causes
 - o Maintain resource directory of groups and programs
- Jobs
 - o Leadership development and growth

- o Reduce the brain drain, keep students in Arizona, pipeline for internships and jobs
 - o Provide a path for career changers (not just students)
 - o Youth retention and young professionals
 - o Mentoring opportunities for young leaders
 - o Introduce new opportunities for students to get involved with and within their home state
 - o Career advisors, jobs and networking
- Leadership Development
 - o Connect leaders to each other
 - o Participate in other leadership organizations
 - o Leadership development with emphasis on aspiring public servants
 - o Develop leadership skills and connect with existing leaders
 - o Standardized training for leaders
 - o Have different time-tracks of commitment to allow maximum participation of various types of interested people
 - o Establish a Speakers Bureau
 - o Glorify leadership-make it something youth see as desirable
 - o Partnerships and involvement by state agencies, the three universities, and industry
 - o Help stakeholders better understand the needs of other stakeholders
 - o Collaborate, communicate, cooperate and advise
 - o Organize the direction/steering committee in a way that connects senior and junior leaders
 - o Build capacity for facilitative leadership, collaborative processes and communication skills
- Empowering Leaders
 - o Community organizing, engage and empower those who typically have no voice or influence
 - o Lead others in wanting to learn more about complicated issues
 - o Train environmental outreach specialists
 - o Groom future leaders so they can have an understanding of environmental issues in Arizona
 - o Identify leaders to step up and push forward
 - o
- Problem-Solving and Collaboration
 - o Collaborative problem-solving
 - o Think thank and collaborative brainstorming
 - o Stakeholder collaboration
 - o Fostering good communication
- Creativity and Enthusiasm
 - o Touch the heart and gut with issues of water (art, literature, and story)
- Education

- Hands-on experiential engagement with the community and environment
- Building interdisciplinary environmental knowledge
- Community college outreach
- Put on environmental seminars, workshops and events
- Education and outreach for elected officials
- Youth training, K-12, etc.
- Educate voters (especially retirees) in engaging ways on water issues
- Education in communication skills, law, science etc.
- Educate and empower active engagement in water issues for every one (all ages and groups)
- Educate the community about basic needs and what they can do to help
- Environmental education in K-12, public, and universities
- Public awareness and outreach
- Better ways of reaching out to the public—newspapers, online blogs, etc.
- Teach about the environment and needing to experience nature to understand meaning and values.
- Research
 - Investigate research
 - The “watershed approach”—how do issues overlap and link with one another?
 - Consider environmental aspects and work in a holistic way; account for social and economic aspects that relate to the environmental/water/sustainability perspective
 - Understand water realities; physical, climate change, supply, quality, and vulnerability.
- Funding
 - Allocate funds for education on environmental issues
 - Develop funding to implement programs
 - Resources for emerging leaders
 - Resources for green start-ups

4. Mission Statement

“In ten years, what would be different in our lives and community if an Environmental Leadership Institute was successful?”

- Healthy economy because of commitment to sustainability
- Balanced needs with resources for healthy quality of life
- Citizens have ready access to information, experts, policymakers
- Everyone would know an environmental leader personally
- Less black and white and more grey—better informed citizenry
- Decision-makers have nuanced knowledge and tools
- Leaders are connected to research/science, vision respected, trusted public servants
- Decisions made with 25 plus year outlook, focused on future generations; long term assessment

- Better education of elected officials
- Young leaders are more empowered
- Pipeline of environmental leaders into politics
- Enlightened electorate with environmental values
- Young people actively engaged in real projects (development and research)
- Resources for young leaders
- 50-year water/environmental state plan that is adapted to local policy
- More collaboration and the skills to collaborate
- Arizona seen as enlightened state in environmental issues

Mission Statement: Foster development of current and future leaders by empowering them with resources and skills to make a positive different for people and the environment.

5. Breakout Groups

What are the products and services that this institute should provide?

- Environmental Leadership Training
 - Teambuilding and group dynamics
 - Vision
 - Recruiting and fostering others
 - How to communicate with policymakers
- Tracks:
 - Youth/K-12 programs, fostering interest in environmental issues and policy making
 - Summer intensive Camp with some ongoing weekend programs, tangible incentives (like badges)
 - Elected officials and policy makers
 - Aspiring public servants, non-profit organizations, business and industry—future leaders
- Following Up
 - Annual conference or retreat to reconnect and update on current issues (maybe the track 2 people present)
 - Content for track 3: networking, mentoring, career resources
 - Have alumni from track 2 mentor participants from the other two groups
 - Have track 3 people writing ongoing educational briefs for track 2
 - Internships for high school students
 - Career services, certificates, mentorship, profiles/resumes

Who are the principle instigators and partners for this institute?

- Possible instigators/partners:
 - University of Arizona
 - Arizona State University's Sustainability Program
 - Northern Arizona University

- o Community Colleges
- o UA Institute of the Environment (clearinghouse)
- o Udall Foundation and Udall Center
- o CLIMAS (science translation organizations)
- o All government agencies (have data and resources)
- o SALC and other business groups
- o Sonoran Institute
- o Sonoran Desert Museum
- o Green Chamber of Commerce
- o Nature Conservancy
- o Imagine Greater Tucson
- Organizational Structure
 - o Government Entity
 - Uncertain funding
 - High political impact
 - Diversity of ages
 - Board
 - Integrating desired outcomes
 - Education
 - Research
 - Development and entrepreneurship
 - Policy
 - o Independent NGO
 - Neutral
 - Grant funded
 - Trusted
 - Well suited to collaboration
 - Ability to attract diversity of leadership
 - o Independent private sector
 - Business model
 - Revenue stream
 - More advocacy
 - Limited political impact
 - o Academic
 - Land grant university serve and clearinghouses and outreach through extension
 - Existing infrastructure and a model for research and outreach
 - Research/knowledge generated here

What funding and resources are needed to create/sustain this institute?

- Prestige—star-studded cast
- Executive Director and Board

- o Marketing team to sell value
 - o Program development, curriculum, fund raisers
- Location must be strategic
- Sources and amount-- \$500,000 to 1.3 million seed money
 - o Insurers
 - o Developers
 - o Conservation groups and environmental organizations
 - o Mining and forestry
 - o Industry
 - o Retail
 - o Energy
 - o Foundations
 - o Citizens—tax return
 - o (Pima) Association of Governments
 - o Board members (like Arizona Corporation Commission) and their companies
 - o Diamondbacks and sports teams

6. Wrapping Up: How Does Everything Fit Together?

The proposed environmental leadership institute would have three tracks targeting K-12 education, environmental leadership training, and existing leaders and policymakers. Annual conferences and alumni groups would provide opportunities for members of all three tracks to interact. No decision was reached on whether to house the institute in a government entity, non-governmental organization or an academic setting, but NGOs were favored for their trustworthiness, collaboration skills and access to grant funding. Partners would have a diverse balance between sectors and ages. It is expected to need approximately \$500,000-1.3 million in seed money to get started. It is important to start with an executive director and board to give legitimacy and professionalism to the project.