ALUMNI PORTFOLIO

The Coastal Science and Policy Program prepares rising leaders to identify, innovate, and implement scalable and socially just solutions to climate, biodiversity, and other sustainability challenges in coastal zones around the world.

UC SANTA CRUZ
COASTAL SCIENCE AND POLICY

Anne Kapuscinski

Director, Coastal Science and Policy Program;
Professor of Environmental Studies at
UC Santa Cruz

From small island nations to urban cities, it is clear that solutions to address our most pressing coastal challenges will take leaders who are trained in interdisciplinary approaches that benefit coastal communities through science, innovation, sustainability, and equity.

The Coastal Science and Policy Program at UC Santa Cruz is designed to train emerging leaders through mentorship, interdisciplinary coursework and an individual, year-long capstone project that each student co-designs with a practitioner addressing a complex coastal issue. This approach provides our alumni with the skills, experience, and support they need to advance solutions.

As the director, but also as someone learning along with our students, I have found the diversity of our cohorts to be one of the most rewarding aspects of the program. I can genuinely say I have learned so much from being in a community of students with a great breadth of cultural, lived and professional experiences at the table.

Our alumni successes have proven that CSP serves as a launching pad for advancing their careers and implementing solutions to complex coastal, ocean, and sustainability challenges. This is what propels us forward.

I am proud to share some of our alumni stories here.

To date, the program has trained 55 masters students, and 23 Ph.D. students with a designated emphasis in coastal science and policy

Craig Dudenhoeffer

Chief Impact & Investments Officer at Sustainable Ocean Alliance, Co-Founder Ocean Solutions Accelerator
Class of 2023

I lead ocean impact startup investments at Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA) and its affiliate VC fund Seabird Ventures. This entails leading investment performance metrics and the measurement of positive ocean impact outcomes. One highlight is that I built a universal framework and online tool used to organize and report positive ocean impact across SOA's portfolio of 300+ grantee and 50+ startup organizations.

Through the Coastal Science & Policy Program, I had access to incredible mentors and advisors for my capstone project that challenged me to achieve more than I thought was ever possible.

The program emphasizes intensive collaborations with practitioners in business, government and non-profits

Jamal Galves

Belize Program Coordinator at Clearwater Marine Aquarium Research Institute, Belize

Class of 2023

I am Belize's lead marine mammal expert and I oversee the county's manatee and marine mammal research and conservation efforts, including working closely with the government and stakeholders to establish the country's conservation strategy and legislation.

The government of Belize utilized my capstone project findings in the country's first ever Marine Spatial Plan. The work I do has been featured in a National Geographic children's book, a BBC documentary, and NPR's 'Going Wild' podcast. I've received the Global Humane Hero Award and been named to the 2023 Explorers Club 50, which helps amplify the voices of scientists, educators and conservationists to make the world of science more diverse and inclusive.

The Coastal Science & Policy Program elevated my profile, and my capacity to bring my work to life and to be utilized in meaningful ways by the people that matter the most. I gained knowledge on how to convert theory to practice and concrete actions. The program allowed me to open my mind and see the world and the work from a wider lens, and to focus on big picture efforts and results. It encompassed what I needed for my future.

Alumni from 23 Countries:
50% International
50% Domestic

Brook Thompson

Yurok Tribe Restoration Engineer;
<u>Ph.D. Student</u> in Environmental Studies,
UC Santa Cruz

Designated emphasis in Coastal Science & Policy

As a restoration engineer, I help design alterations for rivers, streams, and vegetation to be more beneficial for salmon and local species in Northern California. My Coastal Science & Policy chapter of my dissertation will be on how non-tribal organizations can work better with tribes on restoration projects; I'll be working with the California Society for Ecological Restoration.

I received an Emerging Artist Fellowship from the California Arts Council. A goal of mine is to promote the connection between art and science as an Indigenous woman. I was also one of 87 students nationally to be awarded the prestigious Pre Doctoral Ford Foundation Scholarship. I'm frequently engaged as an invited speaker at local schools to international treaty conferences.

The sense of world-wide community is meaningful for me, as highlighted in the Coastal Science & Policy Program. Despite being separated by thousands of miles, we are all connected by our desire to help the oceans and coastlines.

**Diverse, inclusive student body:
73% Black, Indigenous or
Persons of Color**

Ross Davison

Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer at Understory
Class of 2020

I started a company, <u>Understory</u>, and I lead strategy and R&D of new technology to monitor and track changes in nature to better support environmental conservation and natural resource management. Understory uses machine learning to assess habitats at scale, down to the species level, to mitigate the effects of environmental change and biodiversity loss.

I won highly competitive National Science Foundation Small Business Innovation Research grants for phases 1 and 2 startup development.

Through the Coastal Science and Policy Program, I developed a much deeper understanding of the interconnection between ecological processes and human systems, and a strong connection with my cohort.

Alumni are consistently recognized through competitive national and international awards and fellowships

Mali'o Kodis

Project Manager, Climate Corps Fellowship team at <u>Environmental Defense Fund</u>

Class of 2020

I manage partnerships across the public and private sector for the Environmental Defense Fund's Climate Corps program, a leading sustainability fellowship for graduate students. I am proud to have developed key new relationships to advance sustainability initiatives at companies like Wendy's, Lululemon, MGM Resorts, and United Natural Foods.

The education that I received through the Coastal Science & Policy Program has been invaluable to my ability to engage with stakeholders from across sectors and industries and push these partners for transformative change.

Just as impactful to my life has been the foundation of relationships that I built with my peers and mentors in the program. It is unmatched in its support for students pursuing their passions, and to experience that community was very powerful at a pivotal time in my life.

All alumni secure career enhancing positions within six months of graduation

Rafid Shidqi

Founder, Thresher Shark Indonesia;
Ph.D. Student at Duke University
Class of 2021

My focus is on effective Ocean Governance for Small-Scale Fisheries to find effective policy measures that will transition people dependent on endangered marine fauna without sacrificing their cultural wellbeing, economy, and food security in Eastern Indonesia. I co-founded Thresher Shark Indonesia and our interventions have reduced shark mortality more than 50%, and we continue to engage more people embracing sustainable alternative livelihoods.

With Thresher Shark Indonesia, I have won several nominations and awards, including being the first Indonesian to win the Marsh Early Career Award for Conservation and being a nominee for Southeast Asia's Blue Water Heroes Award.

Upon graduating from the Coastal Science and Policy Program (CSP), I realized many improvements in my skills including grant writing, effective collaboration, and creative problem-solving. All these skills help me thrive in any professional setting. The CSP faculty are some of the most caring people I encountered who have helped me succeed academically and professionally.

The program provides fellowships to ensure rising leaders can attend, regardless of need

Sarah Mastroni

Program Officer at Ocean Visions

Class of 2022

I am responsible for leading and supporting the development of key programs, projects, and activities at the ocean-climate nexus. To date, my work has largely been focused on accelerating the research and development of marine carbon dioxide removal pathways.

The Coastal Science & Policy Program emerged me in the world of solutions and equipped me with a solutions-oriented lens through which to approach some of the biggest challenges facing the ocean and society. One highlight is that I co-authored a research agenda on sinking seaweed for carbon dioxide removal. This way of thinking is more critical than ever now.

While in the Coastal Science & Policy Program, I worked outside academia to get real world experience in a supportive environment. This gave me a lot of confidence and practical skills that I was able to seamlessly apply to my program officer role at Ocean Visions.

All students receive tailored mentoring and professional development to design, test & implement scalable solutions

Abel Mkulama

Program Associate, Center for Effective Global Action at UC Berkeley
Class of 2021

My current focus is on regenerative agriculture. The Coastal Science & Policy Program has been pivotal in shaping my success in administering innovative, policy-relevant research to improve small-scale farmer welfare through the broader utilization of productive technologies and digital services in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The program provided me with a solid policy foundation and enhanced my knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding leadership in transformative social and environmental management.

Through the Coastal Science & Policy Program, I cultivated impactful collaborations, leading to the development of science-based projects in socio-environmental projects that I lead, such as regenerative agriculture, education, and the Lilongwe clean cookstove project that emerged from my CSP capstone project. In 2021, I was honored to receive the Social Innovation Award from the Clinton Global Initiative University and Verizon for our digital tools promoting climate resilience among smallholder farmers in Malawi.

To date, students have generated more than $1.2 million in extramural funding

Austen Stovall

2023 Sea Grant Knauss Marine Policy Legislative Fellow serving in the office of Representative Jared Huffman (CA-02)

Class of 2022

As a fellow in the office of Rep. Jared Huffman, I manage a portfolio of ocean and coastal policy issues, staff the Congressman during House Natural Resource Committee hearings, and provide critical policy analysis to pieces of legislation sponsored by Rep. Huffman.

The Coastal Science & Policy Program was instrumental in making me a highly competitive applicant for the Sea Grant <u>Knauss Fellowship</u>, particularly because I built relationships with academic experts and federal agency employees through the creation and execution of my capstone project. One of the accomplishments I'm most proud of is that as a result of my capstone project, each of the states and territories in the U.S. with coral reef resources have signed resolutions declaring coral reefs as critical natural infrastructure.

Through the Coastal Science & Policy Program, I gained interdisciplinary policy analysis skills, built important relationships, and impacted real-world policy through creative problem solving.

Courses integrate policy, natural, social, and economic sciences with practical applications and innovations

Karlee Liddy

2024 Sea Grant Knauss Congressional Affairs Fellow

Class of 2023

I'm currently a Water Resources Scientist at Rincon Consultants, Inc. and the acting Legislative Officer for the Central Coast Branch of the Groundwater Resources Association. As a Knauss Fellow, I will be a policy liaison between scientists at NOAA Research and members of congress beginning in 2024.

The Coastal Science & Policy Program places students in a project manager role, where they must adapt to changing priorities, monitor progress, and distribute key deliverables to relevant audiences.This experience helped me hone my communication and leadership skills, which I carry with me into the next level of my career.

The program has connected students to leaders in 60+ practitioner organizations to co-design capstone projects