

SUMMER 2018 | NEWSLETTER

SUMMER NEWSLETTER



CENTER FOR
Sustainable
Climate Solutions

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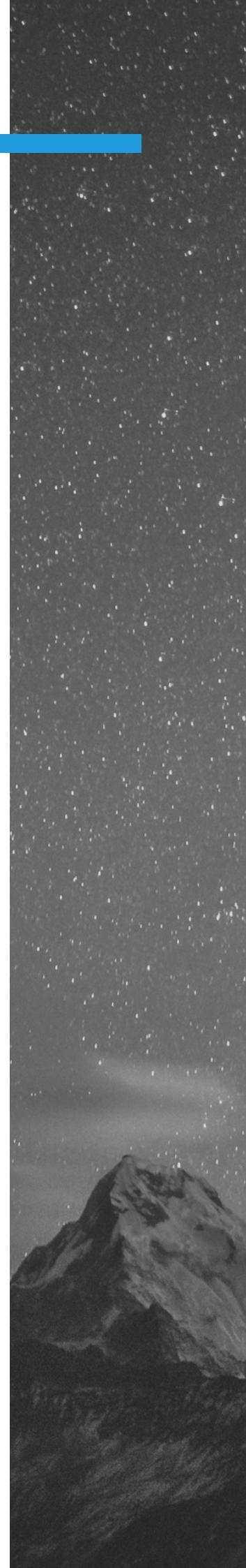
DIRECTOR'S NOTE

As CSCS starts its third year of operation, we're moving into a new phase for the organization, with more projects on the ground to help us attain our goal of moving the needle on climate issues. In many ways, two years seems like a short time for an organization. But in the two years since we started operation, atmospheric carbon dioxide levels have gone up by a full 1%. So we grapple with the same issue that other climate organizations do, the fundamental tension between the urgency of the climate situation and the reality that truly effective programs take time to develop.

One area of focus that we feel is responding with both integrity and urgency is in our student programs. We often say that youth are the hope for the future, I hear that not only in my role as an educator at Eastern Mennonite University, but also in my work in international development on water and agricultural issues. There's a good reason in seeing hope for action in the younger generation. Consider the current relationship of climate and politics in the US, where climate issues are often mired in partisanship. A recent analysis of survey data collected by CSCS suggests that political identity is the best predictor of environmental attitudes among Mennonites, just as it is in society in general. What's most interesting, though, are signs in is that this is not quite the case for youth in America. More so than for any other age group, concern about climate change among young people transcends political ideology-in youth of both Republican and Democrat persuasions. This shouldn't be surprising; after all, youth are the people inheriting the impacts of climate change.

We need to hear the concerned, passionate and hopeful voices of youth, and CSCS is working to elevate those voices in the climate conversation. As we highlight in this newsletter, we have a suite of programs that are giving youth the opportunity to turn their concerns into action. We're blessed to have placed two enthusiastic summer interns to inaugurate our annual internship program. Soon our first Climate Futures Fellows will be starting - watch for a stimulating podcast and photojournalism series. And we're extending our reach to other Mennonite campuses through the Climate Ambassadors program - where a student representative on each Mennonite campus will help raise the profile of climate issues in a more collaborative way.

In year three, we're excited about other programs starting as well, such as our Global South Voices program that brings in voices of our sisters and brothers from countries like Zimbabwe, Nepal and El Salvador, where the impacts of climate change are more dramatic. And for pastors wanting a deeper theological understanding of climate change in the context of creation care, we're supporting the development of a series of pastoral workshops. Watch for our features on these programs in future newsletters!



MEET THE STUDENTS

OUR 2018 FELLOWS AND INTERNS



HARRISON HORST

CLIMATE FUTURES FELLOW

Harrison Horst recently graduated from EMU with a B.A. in sociology and now works on the Shifting Climates podcast project. Harrison will be a co-host and producer for Shifting Climates, and is excited to learn from normal people doing cool things. Harrison enjoys listening to jazz, reading science fiction, and eating Doubanjiang (a spicy Sichuan-Chinese paste) over rice -- a remnant of his trip to central China in 2015.



MICHAELA MAST

CLIMATE FUTURES FELLOW

Michaela Mast recently graduated from Eastern Mennonite University, where she studied psychology, neuroscience, and music. This year she will act as podcast producer and co-host -- doing everything from vision development to interviews to the nitty gritty edits. An empathetic listener who is perpetually late, Michaela loves leafy greens, competitive running, and good handwriting.



SARAH LONGENECKER

CLIMATE FUTURES FELLOW

Sarah Longenecker is a 2018 graduate of EMU. She studied photography and graphic design, which she will put to use this year as she develops a website and photo story to accompany the podcast Shifting Climates. Sarah is a compost enthusiast, a Blues dancer at heart, and an artist in work and play.



KATIE ISAAC

FAITH OUTREACH INTERN

Katie Isaac is a fourth year at Fresno Pacific University studying environmental science and political science. As our Faith Outreach Intern for the summer, she assisted the Director of Pastoral Ecology with planning and promoting CSCS' upcoming pastoral retreats. She also interviewed congregations, wrote articles, and conducted outreach for the Mennonite Creation Care Network.



WHITNEY RICKER

CLIMATE ADVOCACY INTERN

Whitney recently graduated from James Madison University, where she earned a degree in Geographic Science. This summer as a Climate Advocacy Intern she had the chance to learn more about political advocacy and how religious groups play into advocacy. She hopes to pursue a career in environmental advocacy, and loves binging documentaries on Netflix or exploring new places with friends.

UPDATE:

SUMMER INTERNS



CSCS Faith Outreach Intern, Katie Isaac with Jennifer Schrock of MCCN, and Doug Kaufman, CSCS's Director of Pastoral ecology.

This summer marked the beginning of the Center's student programming, as the Center hired two summer interns to kick off the year.

Katie Isaac, a rising senior at Fresno Pacific University worked at the Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center with CSCS's Director of Pastoral Ecology, Doug Kaufman, as a Faith Outreach Intern.

Whitney Ricker, a recent graduate of James Madison University, worked with Mennonite Central Committee's Washington D.C. office as a Climate Advocacy intern, and will be continuing her work in the next two months at the request of the MCC office!

Together, Katie and Whitney reached out to churches, completed surveys, wrote articles and updates (both for the Center and for other publications), and created valuable resources for the Center's outreach programs. They were the ideal team for the first year of CSCS's summer internship program, as they worked diligently and passionately for the goals of the Center.

The internship program was so successful this summer, that we have decided to expand the program next year to include 1-2 more interns, including one internship in partnership with Everence, and one potential internship at Eastern Mennontie University, working with the Center's staff directly.

INTERN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Created surveys for pastoral retreats
- Conducted outreach to Mennonite churches around the country
- Created an election resource
- Published in Third Way Cafe... twice!

CLIMATE FUTURES FELLOWSHIP

**Working for the future of the planet,
and the future of their careers.**

"One of the best parts about the Fellowship is that you make your own hours and set your own goals, with guidance from the CSCS staff. Especially as a transition out of college life, it's nice to have something that is both stable and flexible, and it is such a privilege to have that autonomy in my work life."

-Harrison Horst, Climate Futures Fellow

This August, a new and exciting program began for recent graduates working with CSCS. The Climate Futures Fellowship is a year-long, paid contract fellowship, which offers recent graduates the opportunity to create their own fellowship, and craft their work around their interests, their career goals, and the needs of the Center.

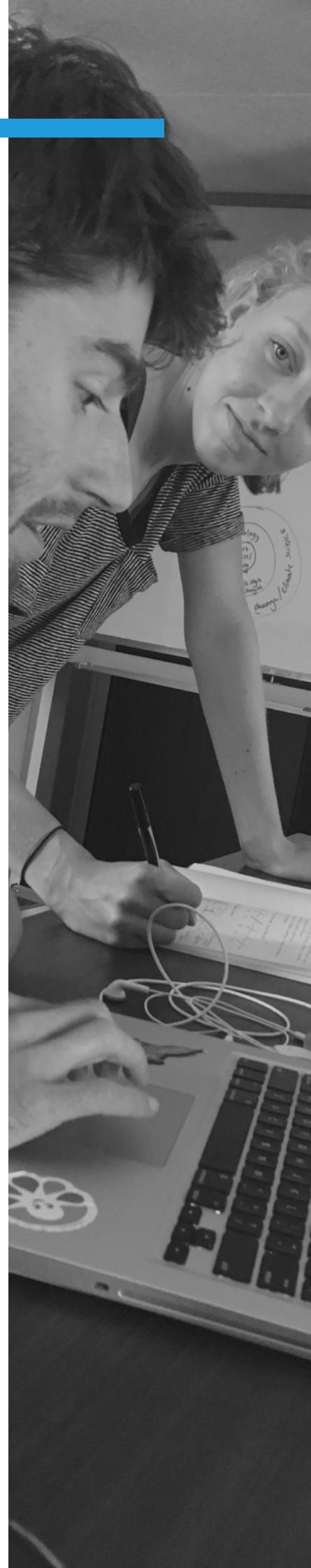
The program is unique as it allows students to customize their work, and to continue work they were working on during their education, under the supervision of CSCS staff and trusted advisers.

This year's fellows are recent graduates of Eastern Mennonite University: Harrison Horst, Michaela Mast, and Sarah Longenecker.

This year's fellows will be continuing a project they began as a senior capstone project while studying at EMU. In response to what they saw as a lack of communication around climate change in the Mennonite tradition, the fellows created a single episode of a podcast called Shifting Climates, which would engage people from across the professional and generational spectrum in a conversation about climate change and their faith.

Their mission is to use the podcast to re-humanize the conversation about climate change in the Mennonite church, and bring new and unexpected perspectives to the table. They will be presenting their project in full at the MCUSA convention in Kansas City in the Spring!

Applications for next year's fellowship are now open, so if you are or know of a recent graduate who might be interested, send them to <https://www.sustainableclimatesolutions.org/climate-futures-fellowship/> or have them email daniel.bellerose@emu.edu for more information!



OTHER PROGRAMS & **ONGOING PROJECTS**

PROJECTS

- Global South Voices
- Sustainable Housing Research
- Climate Change in Menno media
- Board of Reference Meeting
- Fundraising



GLOBAL SOUTH VOICES

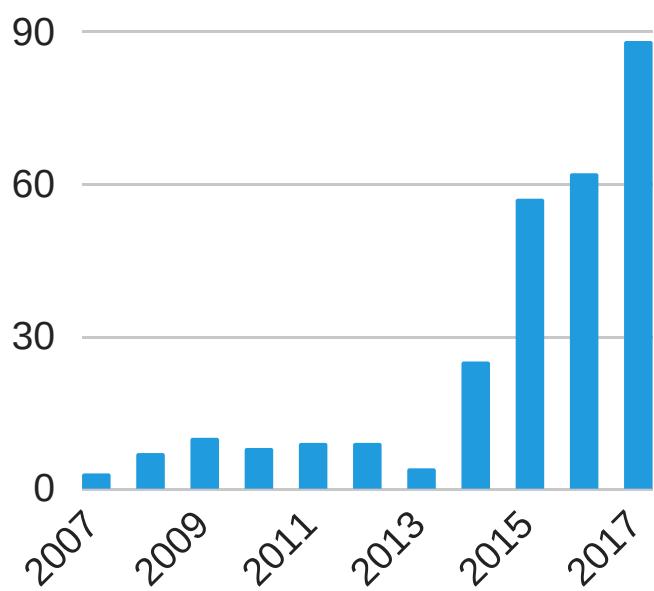
One project which has generated substantial excitement is our Global South Voices project, which will bring speakers from around the world to discuss the impacts of climate change on their countries. In partnership with MCC, this year's program will bring participants from El Salvador, Zimbabwe, and Nepal, who will travel around the east coast to speak to churches, and events. They will start off their trip by participating in the Rooted and Grounded conference at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and speaking at our pastoral retreat at Camp Friedenswald in September. Their wealth of experience and wisdom will be a valuable resource to anyone interested in climate justice.

SUSTAINABLE HOUSING RESEARCH

Last year, the Center began funding the research of EMU professor, Jim Leaman. Jim is researching the potential for solar power to be a solution for low-income families to have sustainable homes, without the large cost of having a tight envelope in the home. He hopes to have a calculator on the Center's website, allowing anyone interested to calculate the potential long-term benefits of having solar on their home.

CLIMATE CHANGE USAGE IN MENNONTIE MEDIA

In an effort to begin to monitor conversations about climate change in the Mennonite church, the Center has begun researching the usage of "climate terms" in Mennonite media online. The graph to the right shows the increased usage of the phrase "climate change" in seventeen different media outlets over a 10-year period. We hope to use this research to help us understand trends in the Mennonite church relating to climate change.



UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 17TH

Who care about climate change? Pastoral retreat
Camp Friedenswald, MI

SEPTEMBER 30TH

Climate Change Impacts on the Global South
Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, VA

NOVEMBER 19TH

Who cares about climate change? Pastoral retreat
Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat, ON



Camp Friedenswald, where the first CSCS pastoral retreat will be held in partnership with Mennonite Creation Care Network.

BOARD OF REFERENCE

This March, we had our first Board of Reference meeting and were lucky to have a very successful weekend, full of helpful input, and inspiring board members. It is our pleasure to announce the following individuals as honored members of the CSCS Board of Reference, starting this March:

- Ray Martin, Honorary Chair, Founding Donor
- Shantha Alonso, Executive Director, Creation Justice Ministries
- Ben Brabson, Emeritus Professor of Physics, Indiana University Bloomington
- Russell de Young, Retired, NASA
- Mitch Hescox, President/CEO, Evangelical Environmental Network
- Chad Horning, Vice President, Everence
- Lawrence Jennings, Lay Leader, Infinity Mennonite Church
- Vurayayi Pugeni, Humanitarian Relief and Disaster Recovery Coordinator, MCC Canada
- Lyubov Slashcheva, Board Chair, Board President, Mennonite Healthcare Fellowship

Board of Reference meeting at Eastern Mennonite University, March 2018. Photo by Andrew Strack, with many thanks to Eastern Mennonite University.

