IMPACT + ENGAGE
Building community and capacity through your support

Report on Giving & Alumni Engagement
JULY 1, 2015 - JUNE 30, 2016

PHOTO BY: ERIN LITZOW
What a fantastic year it has been at the Nicholas School of the Environment!

We have celebrated the achievements of the School’s first 25 years, and are developing a strategic plan that lays the groundwork for continued leadership and excellence in the future. We have shared the results of groundbreaking studies by our faculty and students, and sent our newest graduating class into the world well-prepared to make a difference in a wide variety of environmental professions. We have increased our efforts to connect alumni with the School and with each other. We have passed the leadership torch at our Marine Lab (Congratulations to our new director, Andy Read!), and named the deanship in recognition of two of our most steadfast and generous supporters (Thank you, Fred and Alice Stanback!).

Moreover, thanks to the generosity of donors like you, this year we have also hit new heights in fundraising. As a result, we have been able to create new professorships to attract and retain outstanding faculty; increase financial aid and experiential learning opportunities for our students; and advance highly acclaimed research to understand and address our world’s most pressing environmental concerns.

One of the most gratifying aspects of this significant growth in philanthropy is that, in addition to our steadfast contributors, we have welcomed many new donors into the Nicholas community who share our desire to forge a more sustainable future. Gifts from alumni and friends, old and new, provide a tremendous vote of confidence for our faculty, staff and students. Thank you.

As you read this report, please know that the achievements highlighted – and everything that happened this year – were made possible by the tremendous support of our alumni and friends, including financial support and through your volunteer efforts and engagement. Thank you for helping us strengthen the Nicholas School and reach our important goals.

Jeff Vincent
Dean, Nicholas School of the Environment
July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Gifts & Pledges by Source

1,850 donors contributed $26,161,000 to the Nicholas School in fiscal year 2015-2016

450 Nicholas Alumni made gifts to the School

280 new donors made their first gift to Duke’s environmental programs

Corporations $2,334,000
Foundations $1,000,000
Other $6,263,000
Individuals $16,564,000

PHOTO BY: MICHAEL GORALCZYK
Gifts & Pledges by Purpose

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

- Annual Fund $1,661,000
- Endowments $11,744,000
- Sponsored Research $4,589,000
- Programs and Other Needs $8,167,000

PHOTO BY: LUKE MAIER
Endowments

Endowments provide much-needed long-term support for programs and faculty positions throughout the Nicholas School. This past year, the School received $11,744,000 toward new and existing endowment funds to support scholarships, fellowships, faculty chairs, research and educational programs.

The need for financial aid endowment support is especially acute. Providing a premier interdisciplinary environmental education is expensive, and while the Nicholas School provides as much financial aid as possible, to remain competitive and open more doors for talented, diverse students to pursue an environmental education at Duke, we must significantly increase financial aid resources. The School expects to make this a fundraising priority over the next few years.

In December 2015, the Nicholas School community was shaken by the passing of Dr. Diana Nemergut, the wife of Dean Alan Townsend, after an 11-month battle with brain cancer. A gifted microbiologist, scholar and teacher, Nemergut was particularly committed to making education accessible to outstanding young men and women from economically disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds.

The Diana Nemergut Scholarship Endowment Fund was established by Nicholas School Board of Visitors members Brad and Shelli Stanback to honor her memory and the values she held so dear. Recipients of the Nemergut Scholarship may be part of our new Nicholas Scholars program, a merit-based financial aid program that identifies outstanding candidates representing a range of backgrounds and experiences, provides them with the highest level of financial aid support, and rewards them through additional activities.

Nemergut Scholarships emphasize and encourage diversity, both within the Nicholas student body and, ultimately, throughout the environmental realm, bringing important new perspectives to the table to address environmental challenges and opportunities. We welcome additional contributions to build this fund.
Sponsored research grants awarded by government agencies, corporations and foundations enable our Nicholas School faculty to seek answers to critical environmental questions and provide hands-on learning opportunities for our students. In 2015-2016, Nicholas faculty were awarded 73 grants and received more than $4,589,000 to shed light on the most significant environmental issues of our time. Numerous faculty received scientific acclaim for their research findings.
A National Science Foundation grant fueled the first systematic measurement of radioactivity in coal and coal ash stored in holding ponds and landfills nationwide. An interdisciplinary team of researchers, led by Nicholas School Geochemistry and Water Quality Professor Avner Vengosh and PhD student Nancy Lauer, uncovered the presence of high levels of radioactive contaminants in coal ash: up to five times higher than in normal soil, and up to 10 times higher than in the parent coal itself.

Until now, metals and contaminants such as selenium and arsenic had been the major known contaminants of concern in coal ash. This study raises the possibility that monitoring at disposal sites should include tests for radioactive elements, and opens the door for future evaluation of potential risks to human health in areas where holding ponds and landfills are leaking.

When Chinese government officials needed help understanding the impacts of air pollution on their citizens’ health, they contacted Duke. This spring, Global and Environmental Health Professor Jim Zhang and his colleagues published the results of a Chinese government-funded study on what happens to pregnant laboratory rats and their offspring who breathe Beijing’s highly polluted air.

The findings were alarming: Most of the exposed rats gained weight and experienced cardiorespiratory and metabolic dysfunctions and increased tissue inflammation after just a few weeks. They also had significantly higher cholesterol, triglyceride and insulin resistance levels – all factors closely linked to obesity and diabetes – than a control group, despite being fed the same diet. Similar results were shown in the rat offspring. If similar evidence is verified in humans, these findings will support the urgent need to reduce air pollution, in China and around the globe, given the growing prevalence of obesity in today’s highly polluted and industrialized world.
Gifts to Nicholas School programs help bring students and faculty together to explore environmental interests through hands-on learning and research. This year, donors contributed $8,167,000 to advance specific School programs.
Gifts to the Student Enrichment Fund give Nicholas students a chance to pursue exceptional professional development opportunities outside of the classroom.

This year, for instance, Devon Bonney MEM/MBA’18 and Xander Kent MEM/MBA’16 received stipends to compete in the finals of the Patagonia Eco Innovation Case Competition in California with a team of their fellow Duke grad students.

Over a hundred teams from around the country took on the challenge to solve a real problem faced by the manufacturer: the toxicity of chemical treatments that keep people dry while wearing outdoor gear. The Duke team made it to the final round of eight and presented their proposal for a new, durable, ecofriendly water repellent to Patagonia executives. While they didn't make it onto the medal podium this year, the Duke team did our university proud. And, thanks to support from the Student Enrichment Fund, our students enjoyed a valuable opportunity to apply their classroom learning to a real-world challenge at the intersection of business, environment, and human and ecosystem health.

A new research and training facility has taken flight at the Duke University Marine Laboratory, the Nicholas School’s coastal campus. At the Marine Conservation Ecology Unmanned Aerial Systems Facility (“the Drone Center”), Duke faculty and students are exploring new ways to use state-of-the-art airborne technology to advance marine science and conservation research, especially in remote or extreme conditions.

The Drone Center team, led by Assistant Professor Dave Johnston, is using this exciting new technology to measure and map coastal erosion, scope out ocean debris, count gray seals and sea turtles, and detect sharks in coastal waters. The center is funded by grants and private donations — including gifts to fulfill Johnston’s own faculty research wish list — and works closely with partners at other universities and state and federal agencies. It also provides training for students and working professionals on how to use drones in coastal research and conservation. As a result, North Carolina’s reputation as a global leader in drone-enhanced research is gathering speed.
Every year, gifts to the Nicholas School Annual Fund provide critical, flexible support for all areas of the School. The Annual Fund is fueled by the passion and commitment of all of us in the Nicholas community – alumni, friends, faculty, staff and students – who believe in the value of the Nicholas School experience and generously contribute to carry our mission of environmental leadership and stewardship forward. For our students and graduates, many of the moments that have meant the most at the Nicholas School have started with support from the Annual Fund.

“I was fortunate to go to Duke [undergraduate major in Environmental Sciences] on full financial aid. It was the best experience of my life, more than I could have imagined, and I would like the same opportunities to be open to others. Although I am currently in grad school and have limited income, I wanted to start showing my appreciation to this incredible university by giving back what I can to the Nicholas School Annual Fund.”

Garrett Hayward T’15
Environmental Sciences Major
Nicholas School Annual Fund contributor
Total Cash Raised
From July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016: $1,145,000

- **Friends ($1 - $999)**: $198,000
- **Supporters ($1,000 - $9,999)**: $343,000
- **Blue Sky and Vanguard Leadership Levels ($10,000+)**: $604,000

**Total Number of Donors**
From July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016: 1,700

- **Friends ($1 - $999)**: 1,480
- **Supporters ($1,000 - $9,999)**: 170
- **Blue Sky and Vanguard Leadership Levels ($10,000+)**: 50

a 3% Increase over last fiscal year
Planned and memorial gifts enable donors to harness their passions, or celebrate the legacy of loved ones, to make a lasting impact on the people and places important to them. The story behind each of these gifts is as unique and personal as the people moved to give.

Four new planned gifts were recorded this year, designating over $75,000 in support for the Nicholas School that will ultimately be used to provide scholarships, fund student internships, and establish new programs. Long-range planning — whether by including Duke in your will or through a life-income gift that provides you with quarterly payments — can provide lasting support for the School while achieving your own personal and financial goals.
Kurt Hupé’s years as a student at Duke University’s Trinity College and the Nicholas School were among the richest and happiest of his life. So after the talented wood artist, a 1994 master of environmental management graduate, passed away in 2014, his family decided to donate one of his sculptures to the place that nurtured his connection to the environment.

Duke is where Hupé found a purpose for his passion: helping people appreciate the value of our world’s forests. He balanced his creative endeavors with a career dedicated to sustainability, permaculture, trees and wood, and applied his expertise in forest policy, management and conservation by working with land trusts and championing ethical trade.

Hupé was known for creating beautiful wood sculptures out of reclaimed timber. His six-foot-tall work of art, now on display at Duke Environment Hall, was crafted from a salvaged tree otherwise destined for a fire pile or landfill. Thanks to his family’s generosity, Hupé’s legacy will live on at Duke as his work nurtures others’ connections to the woods he loved so much.

To learn more about supporting the future of the Nicholas School through a planned or memorial gift, please visit nicholas.duke.edu/giving/waystogive
As the University’s Duke Forward campaign begins its final year, we are proud of the reputation the Nicholas School has earned for the extraordinary strength and generosity of the Nicholas community. To date, alumni and friends, faculty, staff and students have contributed over $90 million.

**In whatever way you have chosen to allocate your support, we are grateful for your generosity.**

Between now and the campaign’s close on June 30, 2017, we will continue to raise funds toward many underfunded priorities, with a particular emphasis on increasing support for student financial aid and endowed professorships. **Let’s finish strong!**

Duke Forward has given the Nicholas School some exciting opportunities to leverage matching gift challenges to make our donors’ gifts go even further. This past year, for example, **we were able to secure matching funds for two new faculty positions that will strengthen our expertise and impact in critical areas of environmental thought and action.**

- Nicholas and the Duke Global Health Institute have established a joint Professor in Global Environmental Health, thanks to a dollar-for-dollar match of our donor’s contribution provided through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Global Health Challenge Grant.

- A new Assistant Professorship in the field of Energy, joint between Nicholas and the Duke University Energy Initiative, is the result of a generous match of our donor’s gift by the Bass Connections matching gift challenge.

We also received a leadership gift for a third endowed professorship within the Nicholas School this year, further securing our talented faculty ranks and strengthening our capacity to provide exceptional educational programs, pursue groundbreaking research, and inform and impact environmental policy throughout the world.
That's the three-fold mission of the Nicholas School's new Alumni Engagement program: to provide valuable, meaningful opportunities for our School's nearly 5,000 alumni graduates throughout the world to:

- **GO** to events and activities to connect with your fellow alumni;
- **GROW** your connection to the Nicholas School and today's amazing students and faculty through volunteering time and expertise; and
- **GIVE** back to the Nicholas community by contributing your philanthropic support.

Thanks to an active Nicholas School Alumni Council, the School's alumni engagement opportunities are stronger than ever!
Our second annual Alumni Reunion Weekend drew more than 100 Nicholas alumni and their family members to campus in April. The weekend kicked off with an update and social hosted by the dean, and continued with the annual Pine Cone Pacer 5K, a lab crawl led by faculty, and our signature event, the Reunion Picnic.

In addition to events officially hosted by the School, Nicholas alumni have been known to create their own reunions with former classmates and lifelong friends. In April, for instance, six MEM alumni reunited on Jeju Island off the coast of Korea. Local host Namhee Kim MEM’08 was joined by fellow graduates Akiko Ishii F’07 and Man Lee F’07 (traveling from Japan), Thidavisuth Chunkrua F’07 (Thailand), Muhan Cheng F’08 (Taiwan) and Yi Chin Fang F’07 (California). While some had met in smaller groups since graduating, this was the first time they all came together, along with families and significant others, to recall memories of Duke and share updates on their lives since.

Have you reunited with your fellow Nicholas School alumni? If so, we’d love to hear about it! Send us your photos and stay in touch by visiting: nicholas.duke.edu/eventattendance
Alumni Engagement

Grow

Over the past year, we have continued to add ways for Nicholas School alumni to stay connected to the School, in particular to share their own wisdom and experience with today’s Nicholas students to prepare them for professional leadership. Whether addressing a Nicholas class as a guest speaker, providing career advice to current students, or hosting an event in their own communities, participating alumni tell us they get as much, or more, out of the experience as the people they meet.

Each winter, the Nicholas School’s Career and Professional Development Center hosts a two-day Capitol Hill Career Trek in Washington, DC to give master’s students a chance to learn firsthand about a variety of career paths from alumni and others and to make contacts for the future.

For this year’s Trek, which is funded through an endowment created by friends of the School, students met with alumni and their colleagues working in environmental policy, government affairs and related fields, and got insiders’ views of the Library of Congress, the White House Council on Environmental Quality, General Accounting Office (GAO) and several other federal agencies and environmental advocacy organizations.

Although she is now based in Boston, Carmen Yeung MEM’10, generously arranged the students’ visit with former colleagues at the General Accounting Office.

“I participated in a Nicholas School trip to a federal agency as a student, and it helped me understand how I wanted to develop my career. So when [NSOE Assistant Dean of Career & Professional Development] Karen Kirchof contacted me about developing a similar opportunity for current students, it felt rewarding to be able to contribute to and strengthen a community that I value so much, and to donate time to an institution that has helped shape who I am today!”

— Carmen Yeung MEM’10
On this year’s Trek, David Chen MEM’17 connected with Nicholas alumni Peter Hansel MEM’14 and Drew McConville MEM’09 on the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). As a result, Chen secured an internship at CEQ. Says David: “I chose the Nicholas School in part for the chance to connect and network with environmental policymakers. When the Career Trek to DC was offered, I recognized the opportunity to forge my own connections and become immersed in the field of environmental policy. I was pleasantly surprised to find Nicholas and Duke alumni exceptionally prevalent in high-level leadership positions throughout DC and easily accessible for current students to reach out to.”

Says Drew, who arranged David’s internship: “There are a lot of really talented and motivated students like David coming out of the Nicholas School right now, and I encourage folks to consider how the alumni family can help launch them into the most impactful careers possible. The world needs them.”

Says Peter: “I want to remind alumni that your charitable support is even more influential than you may think. It not only provides current students the chance to network and learn, but also opens opportunities for other alumni to support the Nicholas School through lending their time, experience and career wisdom to motivated students who are preparing themselves to join you in the workforce.”

Alumni giving to the Nicholas School takes a variety of forms. From providing unrestricted support through the Annual Fund, to gifts to the Student Enrichment Fund or scholarship endowments, gifts from our graduates are essential to help ensure that those following in your footsteps will enjoy the same level of educational opportunities that you found so valuable at Duke.

Ready to make a gift? You can make a gift today online by visiting gifts.duke.edu/nsoe

This past year, 11% of Nicholas School alumni gave back to the School through a philanthropic gift.
Everything we do is made possible by you.

Thank you for being part of our generous community of alumni, friends and partners who support the important work of the Nicholas School of the Environment.

go·grow·give

For more information on any of the alumni giving or engagement opportunities highlighted in this report, or to learn how you can make a difference at the Nicholas School, contact:

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