

Environmental Health Matters Initiative

Committee

Jennifer E. Cross

Co-Chair

Jennifer E. Cross (Co-Chair) is the Director of Co-Creation at NSF Engines: Colorado-Wyoming Climate Resilience Engine and Professor Emerita at Colorado State University. She was the director of the Team Science Core for the Colorado Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute from 2018-2025, and was previously Professor of Sociology and Founding Director of the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRISS) at Colorado State University. As a community sociologist, Cross's research on applied social change has been published in journals and books spanning two dozen unique fields of science and she has created training, interventions, and assessments for transdisciplinary science teams since 2015. Her TED talk on behavior change has been viewed over 1.3 million times and adopted by dozens of courses from sociology to environmental science to energy engineering across the globe. She is regularly called on to provide coaching and expertise to large, international team science projects and institutes working on diverse subjects from public health to biology to machine learning to urban sustainability. Cross received a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California, Davis.

Paloma Beamer

Member

Paloma I. Beamer, Ph.D., is the interim associate dean for Community Engagement and professor in the College of Public Health at the University of Arizona. She holds joint appointments as a professor of Chemical & Environmental Engineering, Arid Lands, American Indian Studies and the Bio5 Institute and as a research scientist in the Asthma and Airway Disease Research Center. She is Director of the WEST Environmental Justice Center (EPA/DOE TCTAC) and is the Community Engagement Core Director for the Southwest Environmental Health Sciences Center (NIEHS P30). She is an environmental engineer by training her research focuses on understanding how individuals are exposed to environmental contaminants and the health risks of these exposures with a special focus on vulnerable populations. Dr. Beamer has received a Mentored Quantitative Research Award from NIH and a Scientific Technological Achievement Award (Level I) from the US EPA. She has served on the Board of Scientific Counselors for both US EPA and ATSDR. She previously served on the Standing Committee on the Use of Emerging Science for Environmental Health Decisions for the National Academies. Dr. Beamer earned her BS from the University of California Berkeley and her MS and PhD from Stanford University.

Tamma Carleton

Member

Tamma Carleton is an Assistant Professor of Agriculture and Resource Economics at University of California, Berkeley. Her research combines economics with remote sensing, data science, and climate science to quantify how environmental change and economic development shape one another. She focuses on climate change, water scarcity, and equity implications of environmental change, with an emphasis on physical and mental health. Carleton was a contributing author to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report and led the development of California's Climate Vulnerability Metric, an assessment of community-level climate vulnerability across the state. She is a member of the Climate Impact Lab, a research associate at the Environmental Markets Lab, a faculty research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research, an affiliate of the Center for Effective Global Action, a Beijer Young Scholar, and a Rhodes Scholar. Carleton received an M.Sc. in environmental change and management as well as economics for development from the University of Oxford, United Kingdom and a Ph.D. in agricultural and resource economics from the University of California, Berkeley. She completed postdoctoral training at the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago.

David C. Dorman

Member

David C. Dorman is a veterinary toxicologist and a professor of toxicology at North Carolina State University. Dorman's primary research interest focuses on toxicology and chemical risk assessment. He is an elected fellow of the Academy of Toxicological Sciences, a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences. Dr. Dorman is a National Associate of the US National Academies. He is also a recent recipient of the Fulbright-Saastamoinen Foundation Distinguished Chair in Health Sciences that was held at the University of Eastern Finland in 2022. Dorman completed his undergraduate training in chemistry at the University of San Diego, his veterinary training at Colorado State University, and completed a combined doctoral and veterinary toxicology residency program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Veterinary Toxicology and the American Board of Toxicology and is a European Registered Toxicologist. He has served on several International Agency for Research on Cancer Monograph Groups and has chaired or served on multiple U.S. National Academies committees. National Academy committees that he has chaired have examined emerging science on indoor chemistry, assessed hazards of organohalogen flame retardants, evaluated endocrine-related low dose toxicity, and developed a framework to guide the design and evaluation of safer chemical substitutions. Another committee chaired by Dorman recently organized a workshop on federal government human health PFAS research.

Elizabeth Friedman

Member

Elizabeth Friedman is an environmental health and exposure medicine specialist. She is Director of the Region 7 MidAmerica-PEHSU and the medical director of the environmental health program at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, MO. She is a regional resource to public health and environmental agencies for community health assessments. Dr Friedman trained in a combined internal medicine and pediatrics residency at Michigan State (now Stryker School of Medicine), later in preventive medicine at UC San Diego. She completed training as a fellow in reproductive and pediatric environmental health at the University of Washington and in occupational and environmental medicine. Her primary scholarly interest is risk perception and risk communication in the applied context of environmental justice advocacy, community partnerships, with an emphasis on science translation and education. Much of her current scholarship and work in progress derives from a demonstration project, the Science and Community Action Network (SciCAN).

Bethany M. Gordon

Member

Bethany M. Gordon is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering at the University of Washington. She specializes in applications of behavioral science and psychology to improve design processes for a more equitable built environment. Her research focuses on climate justice and addressing designer positionality (i.e., framing assumptions, stakeholder perspective-taking) in large-scale infrastructure design. Dr. Gordon was awarded and completed the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship in 2019 and the Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellowship (NAE) in 2021. She received both her B.S. and Ph.D. in Civil Engineering from the University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Cynthia R. Harris

Member

Cynthia R. Harris is the director of Tribal Programs and the deputy director of the Center for State, Tribal, and Local Environmental Programs at the Environmental Law Institute (ELI). Her projects at ELI focus on Tribal and Indigenous issues, climate change adaptation and mitigation, water quality and conservation, product life-cycle management, green infrastructure, and forestry management and conservation. Harris is Co-Principal Investigator on a multi-year project analyzing Tribal consultation in the state of California through a health/wellness and Environmental Justice lens. She presently coordinates ELI's project team administering the Local Government Environmental Assistance Network (LGEAN) a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Compliance Assistance Center and is the managing editor of Law of Environmental Protection. Her background prior to ELI includes several years working in San Diego local government, where she advised on water, wastewater, and infrastructure policy, and served as community liaison to some of the city's most diverse neighborhoods. Harris is a vice chair and former chair of the American Bar Association's Native American Resources Committee and on the board of San Diego-based Run Women Run. Harris received a J.D. from the New York University School of Law.

Azizur R. Molla

Member

Azizur R. Molla is a Professor of Public Health at the School of Interdisciplinary Health, College of Health Professions of Grand Valley State University. Dr. Molla's expertise spans a wide range of topics, including climate change, drinking water, disease and culture, environmental health, health policy, community health, and social determinants of health. Dr. Molla has authored or co-authored books, chapters, and articles based on his research in public health. His professional work includes a significant role at the UNFPA. He trained public-sector health professionals and staff to enhance the quality of services at Mother and Child Welfare Centers. Dr. Molla is also an active member of the American Public Health Association, National Environmental Health Association, and Society for Public Health Education. Dr. Molla earned his dual Ph.D. in medical anthropology and demographics from Pennsylvania State University and his Master of Public Health from the University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill.

Anuli U. Njoku

Member

Anuli Uzoaru Njoku is an Associate Professor in the Department of Public Health at Southern Connecticut State University. Her research and teaching interests include social determinants of health, health equity, environmental health, health promotion and education, and rural health. She has over 16 years of teaching experience, including developing and teaching over 20 undergraduate and graduate public health courses, including on environmental health and safety. She has published on environmental health equity issues including the Flint Water Crisis, COVID-19 and environmental racism, and reducing pharmaceutical pollution to address disparities. She has been actively involved in the Environment Section of the American Public Health Association (APHA), including serving a 3-year term as Section Councilor, being an ongoing APHA abstract reviewer, moderating oral sessions at the annual meeting, and serving on the student scholarship review committee. Her service to the profession includes being an ongoing reviewer for various health-related journals, textbooks, and conferences. Njoku received a B.S. in public health from Rutgers University, an M.P.H. from Boston University, and a Dr.P.H. from Drexel University. She completed postdoctoral training at the Fox Chase Cancer Center.

Jonathan A. Patz

Member

Jonathan Patz (NAM) is the Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor and John P. Holton Chair of Health and the Environment and, from 2011-2022, served as the inaugural director of the Global Health Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His faculty appointments are in the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment, and the Department of Population Health Sciences in the School of Medicine and Public Health. Patz co-chaired the health report for the first Congressionally mandated U.S. National Assessment on Climate Change and for 15 years, served as a lead author for the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change—the organization that shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. Some of his other awards include: the Aldo Leopold Leadership Fellows Award; the shared Zayed International Prize for the Environment; the Fulbright Scholarship; the American Public Health Association's Homer Calver Award for environmental health leadership; Case Western School of Medicine Alumni Special Recognition award; Johns Hopkins Society of Scholars; Chanchlani Global Health Research Award; and he is an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine. Patz earned medical boards in both Environmental & Occupational Medicine and in Family Medicine. He received his M.D. from Case Western Reserve University and his M.P.H. from Johns Hopkins University. Patz has served on numerous National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Committees, including the Committee on Accelerating Decarbonization in the United States: Technology, Policy, and Societal Dimensions.

Jennifer J. Tabanico

Member

Jennifer Tabanico is the President and owner of Action Research, where she and her team leverage behavioral and social science research to develop behavior change programs that contribute to safe, healthy, and sustainable communities. She is also an instructor for the Behavior Change and Sustainability and the Sustainable Business Practices Certificate Programs at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) Extended Studies. Jennifer has over 20 years of experience applying the community-based social marketing (CBSM) framework to foster a wide range of environmental behavior changes, particularly those impacting water quality, air quality, biodiversity, and climate. She has worked with dozens of federal, state, and local government agencies, private companies, and community organizations across the globe. Jennifer's work has been published in diverse outlets, including the Journal of Environmental Psychology, Social Influence, Energy, Criminology, and Social Marketing Quarterly. She has also contributed book chapters to the Handbook on Household Hazardous Waste, the Handbook on Persuasion and Social Marketing, and Producer Responsibility in Practice. Currently, she is co-authoring the 4th edition of Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing with the founder of CBSM, Dr. Doug McKenzie-Mohr. Jennifer has an MA in Experimental Psychology from California State University San Marcos.

Dorceta E. Taylor

Member

Dorceta E. Taylor, the Wangari Mathaai Professor of Environmental Justice at the Yale School of the Environment (YSE), is the founder and Director of the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Sustainability Initiative at the Yale School of the Environment. She was the Senior Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from 2021 to 2023. Before that, she was a professor of environmental sociology at the University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability (SEAS) for 27 years. She was SEAS's James E. Crowfoot Collegiate Chair and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director. She also held a joint appointment with the Program in the Environment. Dr. Taylor is the former Field of Studies Coordinator for SEAS' Environmental Justice Program and a past Chair of the American Sociological Association's Environment and Technology Section. Dr. Taylor is the recipient of several prestigious awards, including the National Audubon Society Women in Conservation Award, the National Science Foundation Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring, the Burton V. Barnes Award for Academic Excellence from the Michigan Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Charles Horton Cooley Award for Distinguished Scholarship from the Michigan Sociological Association, and the Frederick B. Buttel Distinguished Contribution Award from the Environment and Technology Section of the American Sociological Association. Professor Taylor received a Ph.D. and master's degrees from the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and the Department of Sociology at Yale University.

Chris J. Wiant

Member

Chris J. Wiant served as the Founding President and CEO at the Caring for Colorado Foundation until his retirement in 2020. Prior, he held positions as the Director of Environmental Health and the Executive Director at Tri-County Health Department in Colorado. He began his career as Chief of the Environmental Chemistry Section at the Illinois Department of Public Health. Dr. Wiant is experienced in environmental policy, community public health, risk assessment and communication, community engagement in response to health risks, and the development and implementation of state and local public health programs. He has served on several federal advisory committees, the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission, the Colorado Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Commission, the Colorado Pollution Prevention Advisory Board and others. He served on the NASEM Committee on the Guidance on PFAS Testing and Health Outcomes in 2022. Dr. Wiant was awarded the National Environmental Health Association Walter F. Snyder and Walter Mangold Awards, the Commander's Medal for Public Service from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) Auxiliary Mission Support Award, among others. Wiant received his B.S. in Chemistry from Illinois State University, M.A. in Health Services Administration and M.P.H with a concentration in occupational and environmental health from the University of Illinois and his Ph.D. in public policy with an environmental policy concentration from the University of Colorado.