



## Clean Water Ambassador Certificate Program: 2020 Report

Since 2016, the Greenway Trust has partnered with King County Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) to hire a cohort of high school interns each summer to learn about local environmental issues, solutions, and careers. This year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, we were unfortunately unable to hire a new cohort of interns. Instead, seven interns from the 2019 cohort stayed on to co-facilitate an online program that covered the main aspects of the internship. The Clean Water Ambassador Certificate Program is a four-week, virtual program that is open to all high school-aged teens in the King County region.

One reason we created this virtual platform is to offer one step on the lifelong journey for youth of color. This program works to disrupt the whiteness of the mainstream environmental movement and environmental careers by prioritizing outreach to racially diverse schools, inviting primarily Black and Indigenous people and



people of color (BIPOC) to be guest speakers, and highlighting inequitable impacts of climate change. Thirty-eight participants joined us to learn about water systems, salmon and watershed ecology, sustainability, and local issues. They practiced ways to take action in their own communities. They met with local environmental professionals to learn about careers in clean water. An overview video of the program, which includes topics and careers covered as well as comments from program leads and participants, can be found here: [youtu.be/Ot5z\\_8zW7zU](https://youtu.be/Ot5z_8zW7zU).

### Partnership with King County WTD

We believe this partnership with King County WTD enriches the program by adding a focus on human water systems and exposure to environmental careers with a government agency.

### Goals for participants:

- Understand wastewater treatment and stormwater solutions and their importance in protecting public and environmental health
- Understand the characteristics of healthy salmon streams and identify steps young people can take to protect them
- Learn about environmental career path options through job shadows and informational interviews of professionals
- Communicate to peers and community about clean water issues and actions they can take to protect clean water in our region

### Program Leads

Greenway Trust: Becca Kedenburg and Val Watson

King County WTD: Kristin Covey and Siena Ezekiel

Clean Water Ambassador Interns: David Castaneda, Nariman Elshamma, Moses Hernandez, Nha Khuc, Ben Kim, Angela Rosengreen, and Robin Ying

## Typical Week

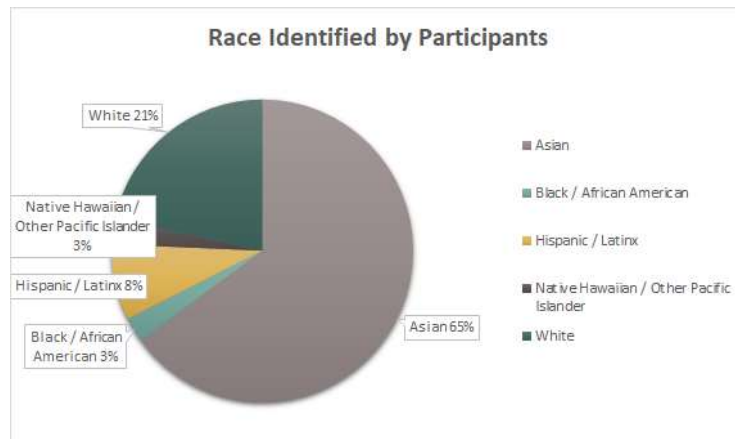
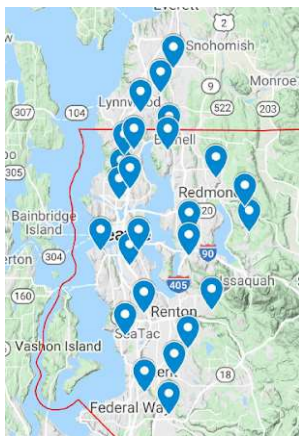
We held an orientation on July 6 and thereafter met on Tuesday-Friday from July 7-31, 2020. All sessions were from 1-3pm and on Zoom. Each week had a unique theme, starting with water systems, then watershed ecology, sustainability, and local issues and actions. Each day of the week also had a focus: knowledge building on Tuesdays, skill-building workshops on Wednesdays, career exploration on Thursdays, and a weekly debrief and socializing on Fridays.

Over the four weeks, participants learned from 26 professionals in addition to the program leads. We prioritized inviting Black or Indigenous people or people of color (BIPOC) who are experts in their fields to be guest speakers, career panelists, or workshop facilitators. External speakers were compensated for their role in the program. (See last page of this report for a list of guest speakers).

## Participants

During initial outreach efforts in the spring, we prioritized schools and organizations serving youth who are underrepresented in environmental careers – this resulted in over 50 registered youth, with ½ joining from low income schools. Approximately 30-40 youth joined us for every session!

We learned more about the participants who attended regularly from a survey that they completed at the end of the program. Most participants heard of the program through their school (55%) or by word of mouth (27%). Nearly 1/3 of participants attended Newport High School. Most participants were 16- or 17-years old (70%) and most identified as Asian (70%).



*Map: The 26 schools represented by the participants.*

## Budget

- Compensation for guest speakers: \$1,050
  - Printing/mailing certificates: \$75
  - Greenway Trust staff time: \$9,550
  - Greenway Trust AmeriCorps Member Sponsorship: \$3,000
  - King County staff time (approx.): \$26,250
- Total: \$39,925

## Quotes from Participants

*"Every day was filled with insight and passion, and each lesson was focused and clear. The most memorable topic for me was water systems; I was able to track where my water came from, treatments used, the people it supplies, the cost, and where it flows from the drains of my house." (Julia Ollestad)*

*"I've learned a lot from this program. I've gained new perspectives on jobs that I didn't even know were jobs before, and I've learned so much about our local environment, and especially how we are living on native land." (Megan Yi)*

*"This program definitely changed my perspective of the importance and complexity of the current water system. The best part of this experience was learning from the program leads. On top of the overall benefit of gaining so much amazing information about water, climate change, water life, and sustainability, I also increased my public speaking skills during this workshop. I feel more connected to the environment now that I have participated in this program." (Yubi Mamiya)*

*"The main thing I've taken away is the focus on the local--yeah you can devote yourself to changing national laws and cleaning up after corporations on a global scale, but you can also know where your water comes from and work to save the kokanee. I think a lot of young people are convinced they have to save the world, and we do, because the world is falling apart a little bit, but you don't have to save the ENTIRE world. You can focus on your little area and make a bigger, more focused impact." (Lily Baldwin)*

*"This program helped emphasize how environmentalism is so integrated with social justice issues, especially in recognizing the impacts of settlers on indigenous land." (Katrina Li)*

*"This program has helped me understand that everyone needs to contribute in helping the earth become less polluted. It motivates me to do better and speak out that what they are doing may harm our water systems. This program educated me, especially the microfibers that I had absolutely didn't know it existed, to find ways to not throw away clothes that look 90% untouched or only worn once." (Kyle Wang)*

*"I have so much more knowledge and understanding on how important our environment really is. What changed most about my perspective is that the world needs a lot of help and as a student I can also help not just adults can change what's going on. The best part of this experience is seeing so many teens wanting to make a change like me and working together to develop our own plans on how to make that change for our future and the futures to come. I've developed more confidence, understanding, knowledge, and so much more from this program and I wish I was able to meet all of you wonderful people in person." (Chloe Trujillo)*

## Guest Speakers

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency/Organization</b>
Aleta Eng	US Forest Service Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
Allison Kirste	King County
Amelia Bahr	King County Wastewater Treatment Division
Ashley Song	King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci's Office
Dayana Friedman	King County Wastewater Treatment Division
Erika Kinno	King County Wastewater Treatment Division
Helen Lau	US Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest
James Jenkins	King County Wastewater Treatment Division
James Rasmussen	Duwamish Tribe; Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition (DRCC)
Jamie Stroble	King County
Jekeva Phillips	Consultant
Jon Polka	King County Water and Land Resources Division
Jose Chi	Environmental Coalition of South Seattle (ECOSS)
Katy Yeh	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust
KayLani Siplin	IslandWood
Ken Workman	Duwamish Tribe
Mahathi Mangipudi	Youth climate activist
Mikhaila Gonzales	Spark Northwest
Pardi Sukapanpotharam	King County Wastewater Treatment Division
Ria Mehra	Youth climate activist
Saba Rahman	King County
Sam Smiley	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust
Shachi Thakur	King County Wastewater Treatment Division
Shai Malone	King County Wastewater Treatment Division
Victoria Hsieh	Youth climate activist