



EARTHECHO
INTERNATIONAL

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



Message from Philippe Cousteau, Jr.

Founder, EarthEcho International



If there is anything we can glean from 2020, it is that we are all connected and resilient. And while we would have preferred to celebrate EarthEcho's 15th anniversary under better circumstances, we take comfort in the fact we have been able to work with youth, teachers, families, and partners all around the world—to pivot our work and demonstrate impact throughout the pandemic. As schools closed their doors to in-person instruction, the EarthEcho team got busy adapting our existing, digital content and creating new support for educators and parents as we all learned to navigate the new, virtual landscape together. And the incredible young people that work with EarthEcho found themselves ready and able to engage more deeply with EarthEcho's mission.

As we welcomed our largest class of 47 young leaders to EarthEcho's dynamic youth programs, the focus began to shift as the voices of youth and adults across the U.S. and indeed the world called for justice following the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmed Aubrey, and so many others. Along with our young leaders we were called to examine our role as an environmental organization in the social justice movement understanding that diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice are core to our mission. The Black Lives Matter movement, indigenous land rights, and justice for frontline communities are essential to a thriving ocean planet. And both EarthEcho and our youth leaders committed to learning, listening, and building equity to work with leaders in these communities because frontline and historically excluded communities **are** resilient and we **are** all connected.

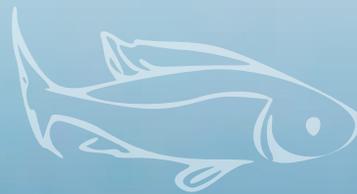
This new class of youth leaders brought passion, vision, diverse perspectives, and an unwavering dedication to positive change for everyone. They ranged in age from 14-22 and represented countries from around the globe, including: Argentina, Ecuador, Peru, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, and the United States. This diverse group immediately went to work alongside staff to build global support to protect 30% of the world's ocean by 2030 (30x30), plan the annual Youth Leadership Summit, facilitate our STEMExplore program, and were instrumental in the launch of the OurEcho Challenge. Despite the pandemic, our incredibly resilient group of youth leaders maintained connection and continued to work alongside our staff and Board as we executed new and existing programs with excellence, keeping equity front of mind.

Our ocean planet continues to face unprecedented challenges, from COVID-19 to climate change; but just as the ocean provides a resilient buffer for our planet, so do the diverse voices of our next generation of environmental and ocean innovators. At EarthEcho we are leading the charge to build a global youth movement that will help chart an inclusive and resilient course for the future that connects us all. Thank you for your support and for making what we do possible.

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EarthEcho Donors, Board, and Staff



EarthEcho International 2020 Donors

The following donors supported EarthEcho International with a minimum gift of \$2500.

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David Sontag

The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment

Joelle Fletcher

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Ocean Defense Initiative, a project of Resources Legacy Fund

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Strada Education Network

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Wesley Wallace Professor of Communication Studies and director of the Writing for the Screen and Stage Program, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Retired)

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Partner, Fairlight Consulting

Carleen Beste
Director, Corporate Citizenship, Northrop Grumman Corporation and Manager, Northrop Grumman Foundation

Nicolás Chesta
Student, Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María and Member, EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council

Jan Cousteau
Co-Founder, EarthEcho International

Heiko Henning
Chief Revenue Officer, Vision 2 Systems

Letise LaFeir
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Alex Morrison
SVP, Business Development, Strada Education Network

Jon Wentzel
Vice President of Communications, Nuclear Energy Institute

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Alexandra Cousteau
Co-Founder, EarthEcho International; Founder, Blue Legacy

Philippe Cousteau
Founder, EarthEcho International

EarthEcho International Staff

Philippe Cousteau, *Founder*

Mia DeMezza, *Executive Director*

Scott Webb, *Chief Financial Officer*

Stacey Rafalowski, *Senior Director of Programs*

Sean Russell, *Associate Director of Youth Engagement & Partnerships*

Jaclyn Gerakios, *EarthEcho Expeditions Manager*

Kasey Gaylord-Opalewski, *Programs Manager*

Susan Tate, *EarthEcho Water Challenge Manager*

Porsche Ray, *EarthEcho Water Challenge Manager*

Katie Murray, *Communications Coordinator*

Jimmy Marino, *Water Challenge Kit Specialist*

2020 At A Glance



Youth Leadership

- 27** new Youth Leadership Council members of the 2020 class from **8** countries
- 48** Water Challenge Ambassadors
- 390** Youth Leadership Summit participants from **32** countries and territories
- 2,000+** people engaged in protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030 through youth-led events
- 2,400** community members engaged in water quality monitoring and conservation initiatives through Water Challenge Ambassador-led events



EarthEcho Water Challenge

- 16,062** EarthEcho Water Challenge participants
- 6,294** participants taking action beyond monitoring to protect water resources
- 1,000+** youth and community members reached through Xylem Watermark employee-led programs
- 4,087** kits distributed



OurEcho Challenge

- 19** submissions
- 15** expert judges
- 46** youth contestants
- 1,900** audience members in Facebook Live event
- 8,873** people engaged with the OurEcho Challenge
- \$17,000** grant prizes awarded to the top three teams
- \$22,000** put into the hands of young change makers



STEMExplore

- 558** youth participants in afterschool partner programs
- 23** professional STEM mentors
- 25** live Virtual Career Connections
- 1,500** live attendees at Virtual Career Connections
- 8,856** unique views of career spotlight videos and virtual event playbacks



EarthEcho Expeditions

- 12** virtual field trips connecting to **5** different EarthEcho Expeditions series
- 5,047** student attendees at live events
- 69,434** people engaged with EarthEcho Expeditions resources

EarthEcho Academy

Developed and launched an **online course** for teachers to learn EarthEcho Expeditions virtual learning modules

Developed and launched **2** online courses for teachers based on EarthEcho Expeditions virtual learning modules.



Philippe presents OurEcho Challenge Grand Prize Winners, Team Crayfish, with their award.



OurEcho Challenge



OurEcho Challenge

Recognizing that half of the world's biodiversity has been destroyed since 1970, the OurEcho Challenge engages U.S. middle school students (grades 5 - 9) in understanding, respecting, and protecting the important diversity of species essential to life. In this STEM innovation competition, student teams, guided by a teacher or mentor, are challenged to address the decline in biodiversity by identifying threats to natural resources in their communities and developing innovative solutions.

In 2020, in the midst of a global pandemic disrupting schools across the world, more than 50 students and their teachers committed to the inaugural OurEcho Challenge. In August, the 10 finalist teams presented to 1,900 people—including a panel of expert judges—via Facebook Live as part of the EarthEcho International Youth Leadership Summit. The top three teams were awarded grants of \$2,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000 to pilot their winning projects in the real world.



In 2020, the OurEcho Challenge engaged **8,873** participants through events and digital content, including **3,491** downloads of biodiversity education resources.

OurEcho Challenge



Top Three Teams

1st Place - Team Crayfish - Medea Creek Middle School (Oak Park, CA)

2nd Place - Team Super Plants - Proof School (San Francisco, CA)

3rd Place - Team Aquabotics - Bednarcik Junior High School (Aurora, IL)



“Students were able to experience working with the community and were excited to see that people cared about what they were doing and they felt like their projects really mattered. Being able to have a project that they control, made the teams dedicated to completing their work. They were able to develop scientific reasoning skills and problem solving skills throughout the process.”

- Amy Truemper, Team Pollinator Paper & Team Prairie Protectors Mentor

OurEcho Challenge



Ten Finalist Teams

Team International Bird Hotel Developers - Brooks Middle School (Oak Park, IL)

Proposed project: Creating a variety of innovative habitats to attract native, migratory bird species to their local area.

Team Invasive Ivy Squad - Montessori Children's House (Redmond, WA)

Proposed project: Developing an invasive ivy removal plan, which will allow native plant species to thrive.

Team California Native Bees - Medea Creek Middle School (Oak Park, CA)

Proposed project: Restoring native bee populations by planting gardens that will attract the bees back to the community.

Team Prairie Protectors - Bednarcik Junior High School (Aurora, IL)

Proposed project: Developing plans for rain gardens to mitigate flooding problems while creating important habitats for a variety of plant and animal species.

Team Pollinator Paper - Bednarcik Junior High School (Aurora, IL)

Proposed project: Creating habitats for pollinators (e.g., bees, butterflies) by planting gardens in their community using specially designed seed paper greeting cards.

Team Swamp Stompers - Coventry Middle School (Akron, OH)

Proposed project: Propagating native plant species to replace the invasive species that threaten the native plants within critical bog habitats in Ohio.

Plastic Free NC's Green Team - Love A Sea Turtle (Greenville, NC)

Proposed project: Designing "floating islands" to help increase habitats and biodiversity in local ponds, lakes, and streams.

Team Crayfish - Medea Creek Middle School (Oak Park, CA)

Proposed project: Creating sustainable fishing practices for the removal of an invasive crayfish species.

Team Super Plants - Proof School (San Francisco, CA)

Proposed project: Creating community gardens filled with plants with "supercharged" roots to help sequester carbon dioxide to combat climate change.

Team Aquabotics - Bednarcik Junior High School (Aurora, IL)

Proposed project: Designing a robot to locate and collect debris in a local pond, with the ultimate goal of creating a network of autonomous, self-sustaining robots to keep water systems and oceans clean.

OurEcho Challenge



"It was great being a part of this competition and it was so great to be part of something so positive and inspiring with these middle school students who give us hope for the future."

- Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, President & CEO, Celebrity Cruises Inc.

OurEcho Challenge Sponsor

Aramco Americas provides new thinking, new approaches, and new solutions for the future of energy. We operate as a vital link between people and partners in the Americas and our parent company, Saudi Aramco, the world's leading energy company. We strive to have a positive impact on our communities by investing in the arts and sciences, and by supporting environmental initiatives and sustainability. Our volunteer events and sponsorships are selected based on their ability to make a meaningful difference. From partnering with civic associations and community organizations to outreach events designed to improve green space and public education, we are actively involved in improving the communities in which we live and work.

aramco



2020 OurEcho Challenge Expert Judges

Shavonti Archer - Transmission Line Engineer, Engineered Design Services LLC; CEO and Founder, Systematic Motivation

Cathryn Berger Kaye, M.A. - President, CBK Associates; Author, ABCD Books

Olivia Blondheim - Integrative Biology Ph.D. Student, University of South Florida; Youth Leadership Council and Board of Directors Member, EarthEcho International

Juan Carascal - Retired Middle School Earth & Space and General Science Teacher, Gifted Teacher Endorsement

Cary Elwes - Actor

Aditi Jayarajan - Bat Biologist & Ph.D. Student, University of Florida

Andres Jimenez - Executive Director, Green 2.0

Ronald Loughland, Ph.D. - Environmental Consultant, Environment Protection Department, Saudi Aramco

Lisa Lutoff-Perlo - President & CEO, Celebrity Cruises Inc.

Deb McMullen - Coordinator, K-12 Science & Planetarium, School District U-46

Brandi Nicholson - Curriculum Project Manager, Accelerate Learning

Janis Searles Jones - CEO, Ocean Conservancy

Julie Vecchio, Ph.D. - University of South Florida College of Marine Science

Danni Washington - TV Host; Co-founder, The Big Blue & You

Victor Ye - Youth Leadership Council Member, EarthEcho International



FAU Pine Jog students learn how to use SCUBA gear during a 2019 field trip to the R/V Angari.



STEM Explore

STEMExplore

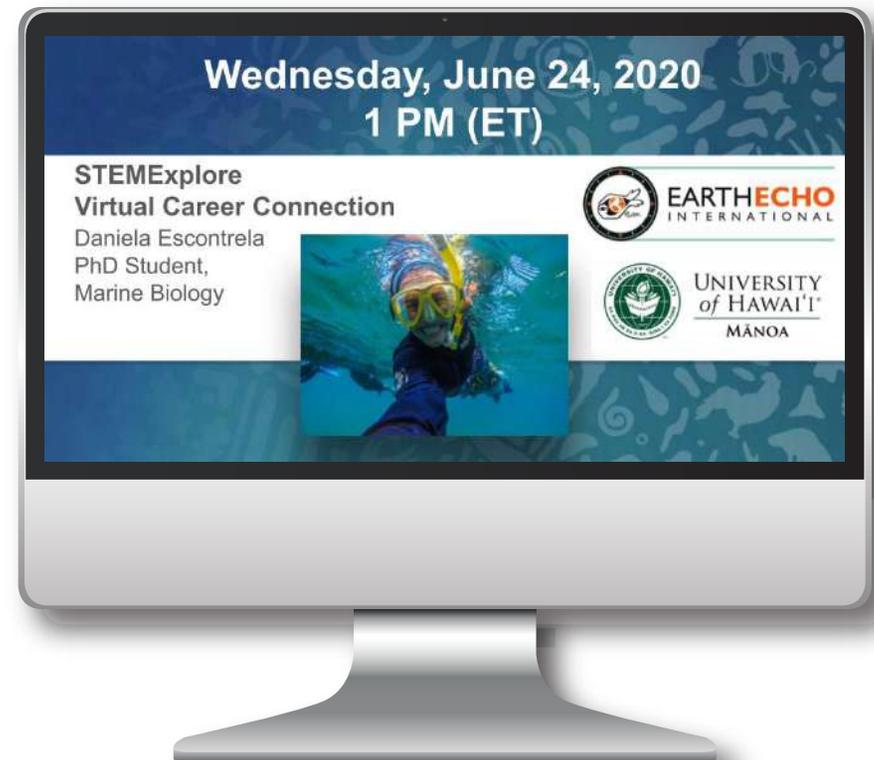


Launched in early 2017 with Raytheon Technologies (previously known as United Technologies) as the founding sponsor, EarthEcho STEMExplore highlights relatable voices and life experiences to make STEM careers come alive through interactive videos, resources, and live events. The program is designed to connect young people to the variety of career opportunities in the STEM field and help them explore professions that can ignite their passions and make a positive impact on the future of our planet. STEMExplore began as a digital library of 30 short videos presented in an adventure-themed web platform by TV host, explorer, and EarthEcho founder Philippe Cousteau, and has expanded to feature diverse mentors working in a range of STEM professions who provide first-hand insights and inspiration during live STEMExplore events, called Virtual Career Connections (VCCs).

While in previous years EarthEcho partnered directly with afterschool providers, we pivoted at the onset of the global pandemic and offered year-round VCCs. Events were delivered twice monthly during the 2020 calendar year to accommodate virtual afterschool and summer programming. STEMExplore engaged 1,500 youth during the live VCCs in 2020. A total of 10,400 participants utilized the various program elements in 2020, including the new STEMExplore Mentor Reflection Guide, created by the EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council.

"I liked being able to connect with kids and tell them about my career in marine biology. One of my favorite parts is all the questions I get and I'm glad we leave a lot of time for that. I love to encourage young [students] to look into science as a career possibility, and being able to tell them about what I do along with some of the challenges is important so they know what different science fields are like."

- STEMExplore Mentor Daniela Escontrela, Mesoamerican Reef Program Associate, PhD Student, Summit Foundation & University of Hawaii





"Dr Martin was a good choice of scientists to highlight as a role model - she did a nice job giving an overview of her job, as well as impressing students with the importance of working hard, learning skills like writing in order to write grants, and considering schools that might not be one's first choice in order to stay out of debt."

- STEMExplore Virtual Career Connection, Youth Participant

2020 STEMExplore Mentors

Dr. Violeta Anaya - Sustainability Development Superintendent, Minera Media Luna-Torexgold Resources, Inc.*

Shavonti Archer - Transmission Line Engineer, Engineered Design Services LLC & CEO and Founder, Systematic Motivation LLC*

Shilpa Botu - Associate Director, Structural Engineering & PSP Signatory, Raytheon Technologies**

Dr. Karlisa Callwood - Director, Community Conservation Action Program, Perry Institute for Marine Science**

Karin Clarkson - Professional Engineer and Program Manager, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Tyrah Cobb-Davis - Chesapeake Conservation Corps Member, Frederick County Office of Sustainability and Environmental Resources

Jaida Elcock - Elasmobranch Research Student, University of Washington

Daniela Escontrela - Mesoamerican Reef Program Associate, PhD Student, Summit Foundation & University of Hawaii*

Jasmin Graham - MarSci-LACE Coordinator, Mote Marine Laboratory**

Aalayna Green - Conservation Criminologist Student, Michigan State University

Dr. Theresa Guillette - Postdoctoral Research Scholar, North Carolina State University*

Carlee Jackson - Marine Turtle Specialist and Shark Biologist, Gumbo Limbo Nature Center & Post-Graduate Student, Nova Southeastern University**



2020 STEMExplore Mentors (Continued)

Aditi Jayarajan - Bat Biologist, PhD Student,
University of Florida - Florida Museum* **

Dr. Morgan Martin - Marine Scientist - Cetacean Echolocation
and Communication, University of Southern Denmark**

Dr. Tiara Moore - Environmental Ecologist,
University of Washington and The Nature Conservancy

Brittany Novick - Marine Conservation Biologist,
National Marine Mammal Foundation

Dr. Diana Oviedo-Vargas - Watershed Biogeochemist and
Assistant Research Scientist, Stroud Water Research Center

Dr. Ashley R. Smyth - Assistant Professor of Biogeochemistry,
University of Florida - IFAS

Ratna Suthar - Postharvest Scientist, PhD Student,
University of Florida

Dr. Julie Vecchio - Marine Biologist - Fisheries Management,
University of South Florida

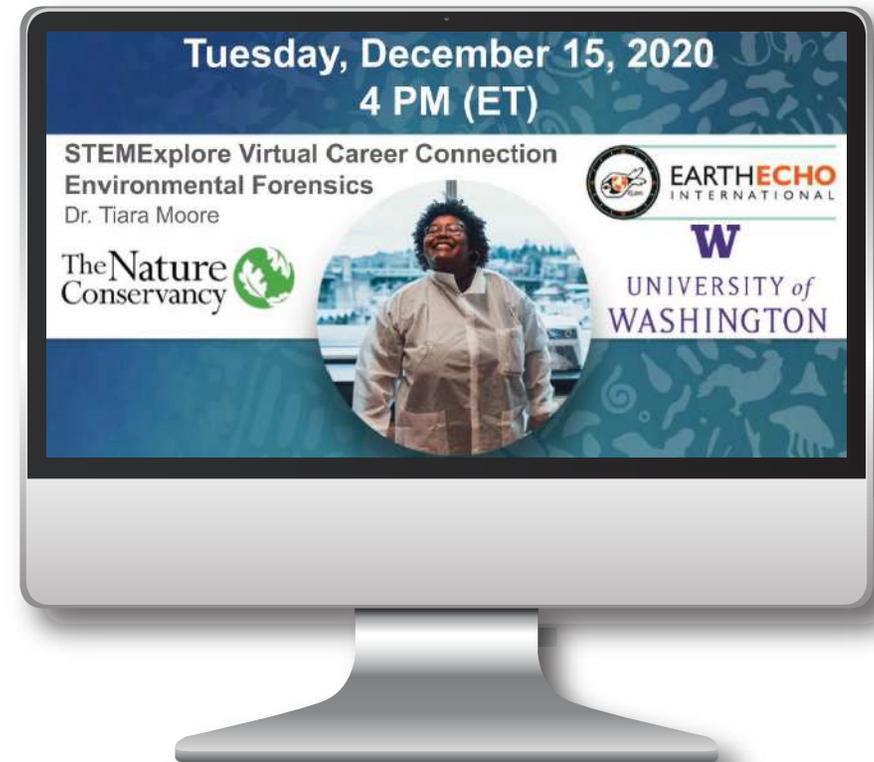
Dr. Amanda Waite - Director of Science Education &
Advancement, ANGARI Foundation

Amani Webber-Schultz - Elasmobranch Research Fellow,
Field School

Marissa Wyrick - Professional Civil Engineer,
WGI & Society of Women Engineers*

*Previous STEMExplore Mentor

**Participated in more than one event in 2020



STEMExplore Sponsor



Raytheon Technologies Corporation, formed in 2020 through the combination of Raytheon Company and United Technologies, is an aerospace and defense company that provides advanced systems and services for commercial, military and government customers worldwide. The company delivers solutions that push the boundaries in avionics, cybersecurity, directed energy, electric propulsion, hypersonics, and quantum physics. Headquartered in Waltham, Massachusetts, Raytheon Technologies believes that the future of aerospace and defense begins with shaping the next generation of purpose-driven innovators. By investing in education programs that cultivate STEM skills, diverse thinking, and leadership abilities, we're inspiring students of every age to build a safer, more connected world.



EarthEcho Expeditions

EarthEcho Expeditions

After a week-long teacher professional development experience in Plymouth, England, in 2019, the *EarthEcho Expedition: What's the Catch?* Fellows worked with EarthEcho program staff to develop a module comprising educational videos, traditional lesson plans, and related, supplemental STEM design challenges produced by teachers for teachers. We shared these resources with the public in early 2020 as we geared up for our next year's Expedition.

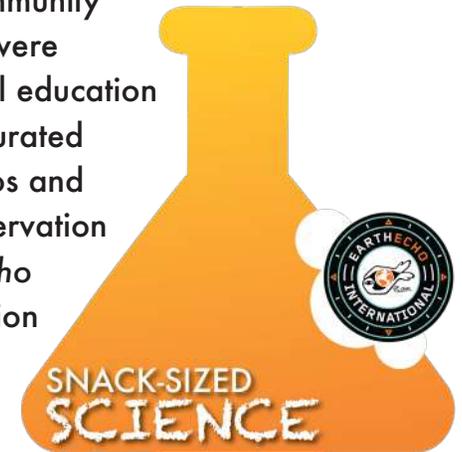
Reimagining EarthEcho Expeditions

In early 2020, EarthEcho was planning the seventh EarthEcho Expedition in Puerto Rico when it became obvious that the program would need to be reimagined. As a result, EarthEcho launched two new virtual options built on existing EarthEcho Expeditions resources for teachers, parents, and students.



EarthEcho Expedition: At Home

In an effort to support our community of teachers and families who were suddenly navigating the virtual education landscape, we developed a curated collection of our favorite videos and activities for science and conservation at home called, aptly, *EarthEcho Expedition: At Home*. In addition to the EarthEcho Expedition resources that are used in classrooms across the globe, this Expedition features resources from EarthEcho's Water Planet Challenge, a new board game-inspired, self-guided summer activity challenge called the Passport to Adventure, as well as our Snack-Sized Science series of videos. Snack-Sized Science are short, virtual demonstrations/activities shared via EarthEcho's YouTube channel by teachers and EarthEcho's education team to support high-quality experiential learning for families.



Despite the challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic placed on our UK fellows, in 2020:



What's the Catch? Expedition resources were downloaded **426** times, reaching nearly **500** classrooms around the world.



Video resources from *What's the Catch?* were played **1,015** times, indicating that approximately **25,375** students have engaged in this content.



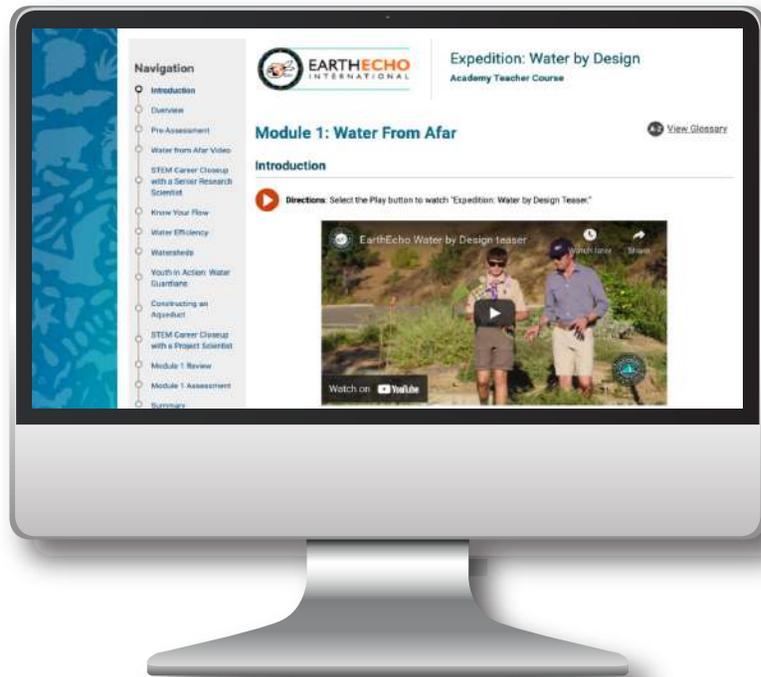
Six virtual events hosted around *What's the Catch?* content engaged **68,425** students live. These events have also been played back **505** times on YouTube.



EarthEcho Expeditions

EarthEcho Academy

Building on the success of *EarthEcho Expedition: At Home*, we launched EarthEcho Academy, a new virtual learning space for educators, and the natural extension of the EarthEcho Expeditions program. The platform provides online courses for teacher professional learning with access to fully remote, asynchronous environmental education modules. The courses (launching in early 2021) are based on EarthEcho's most popular NGSS-aligned classroom resources from past Expeditions, such as [EarthEcho Expedition: Into the Dead Zone](#), and offered at no charge to any public middle school teacher.



As part of our efforts to continue to engage teachers and students in EarthEcho Expeditions content, we hosted **12** virtual field trips based on five previous Expeditions. **5,047** middle school students participated in these live virtual events, with recorded playbacks accessed **2,913** times.

"While the month of April is Earth month, we, at CourseArc believe that focusing on the health and sustainability of our planet should happen year-round. When we had the opportunity to partner with EarthEcho – an organization that has a tremendous global impact – we knew it was imperative to do so. Our platform makes it simple for nonprofits to meet their mission goals, and we are beyond excited that EarthEcho Academy will be available to more people."

-Katie Egan, CEO, CourseArc

EarthEcho Expeditions Sponsor

**NORTHROP
GRUMMAN**
FOUNDATION

Northrop Grumman and the Northrop Grumman Foundation are committed to expanding and enhancing the pipeline of diverse, talented STEM students globally. The organizations support sustainable STEM programs that span from preschool to high school and through collegiate levels, with an emphasis on middle school students and teachers.



EarthEcho Water Challenge



EarthEcho Water Challenge

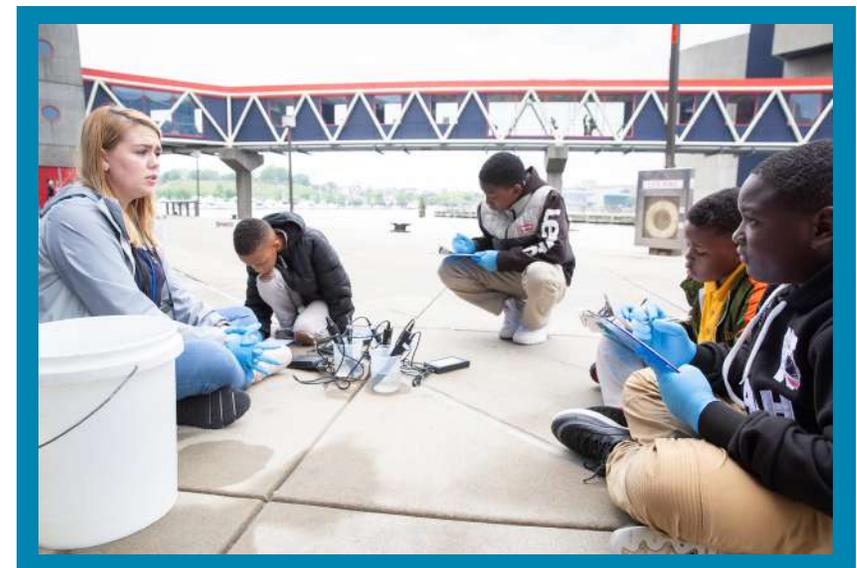
The EarthEcho Water Challenge equips young people and community members around the world with the tools to connect to their local waterways, while collecting critically important water quality data. Participants share this data with a global audience through the EarthEcho Water Challenge online database, and take action to improve water health in their local communities.

In 2020, 16,062 participants engaged in the EarthEcho Water Challenge, collecting and sharing water quality data from 25 countries. Water Challenge participants were given the opportunity to share their waterway conservation actions when logging their data through the EarthEcho Water Challenge database, allowing us to highlight the impact of this work. Inspired by their water quality monitoring, 6,294 EarthEcho Water Challenge participants took action beyond monitoring this year, leading a variety of projects and campaigns designed to protect water resources in their local communities. Actions included planting native plants along stream banks to prevent erosion, leading in depth water education programs for students, removing invasive aquatic plant species, organizing waterway cleanups and plastic pollution prevention programs, and incorporating water quality data into student science fair projects.

Throughout the course of the year, employee volunteers from EarthEcho Water Challenge sponsor Xylem led impactful water monitoring and education programs across the globe, involving 255 employees.

In 2020, 12 new organizations were welcomed as EarthEcho Water Challenge partners, playing a key role in growing and sustaining program participation around the world as they guide young people and community members through water monitoring and education programs. In addition, under the guidance of EarthEcho's Youth Leadership Council, 48 EarthEcho Water Challenge Ambassadors were trained from across the United States and equipped with resources to carry out ongoing water monitoring efforts in their communities.

The work of these partners, and EarthEcho Water Challenge participants globally, was highlighted through EarthEcho's online communication platforms and traditional media outreach. EarthEcho is grateful to all Water Challenge participants for their commitment to monitoring and protecting water resources around the world.



EarthEcho Water Challenge



EarthEcho Water Challenge Sponsor



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Because Every Drop Counts

Xylem, Inc. is a leading global water technology company with operations in more than 150 countries. Xylem is committed to delivering on its tagline, “Let’s solve water,” through both its business and corporate citizenship and social investment program, Xylem Watermark. As part of Watermark’s holistic approach to deliver sustainable water solutions, Xylem is proud to support the EarthEcho Water Challenge.

World Water Monitoring Day Virtual Events

Due to restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic, all programming for September’s World Water Monitoring Day shifted to a virtual format. Through a collaboration with Xylem and the Water Environment Federation, teachers, students, and community members around the world celebrated World Water Monitoring Day throughout the week of September 14th. Opportunities for engagement included a link to screen the film *Brave Blue World*, and three virtual events connected by the theme of “Solving Water Together:”

“**Diving Into Water Quality**” featured Xylem Watermark Champion Michelle Muller

“**Careers in the Water Industry**” included Tori Epperson of DC Water; and Xylem employees Benay Akyon, Donna Laviolette, and Jens Scheideler

“**Leadership for a Clean Water Future**” included Joe Vesey of Xylem; Ifetayo Venner of Arcadis NA and WEF; and Gitanjali Rao, Young Inventor, Tethys lead detection device

These virtual events engaged **260** registrants from **23** countries and territories, including **29** Xylem employees. Teachers who registered reported engagement of **3,537** students. Additionally, the virtual events were recorded and added to the Water Challenge playlist on EarthEcho’s Youtube channel, where they have continued to see traction.

“I really enjoyed this testing project, it was a lot fun. It felt like I was a scientist.”

- SciStarter Youth Participant



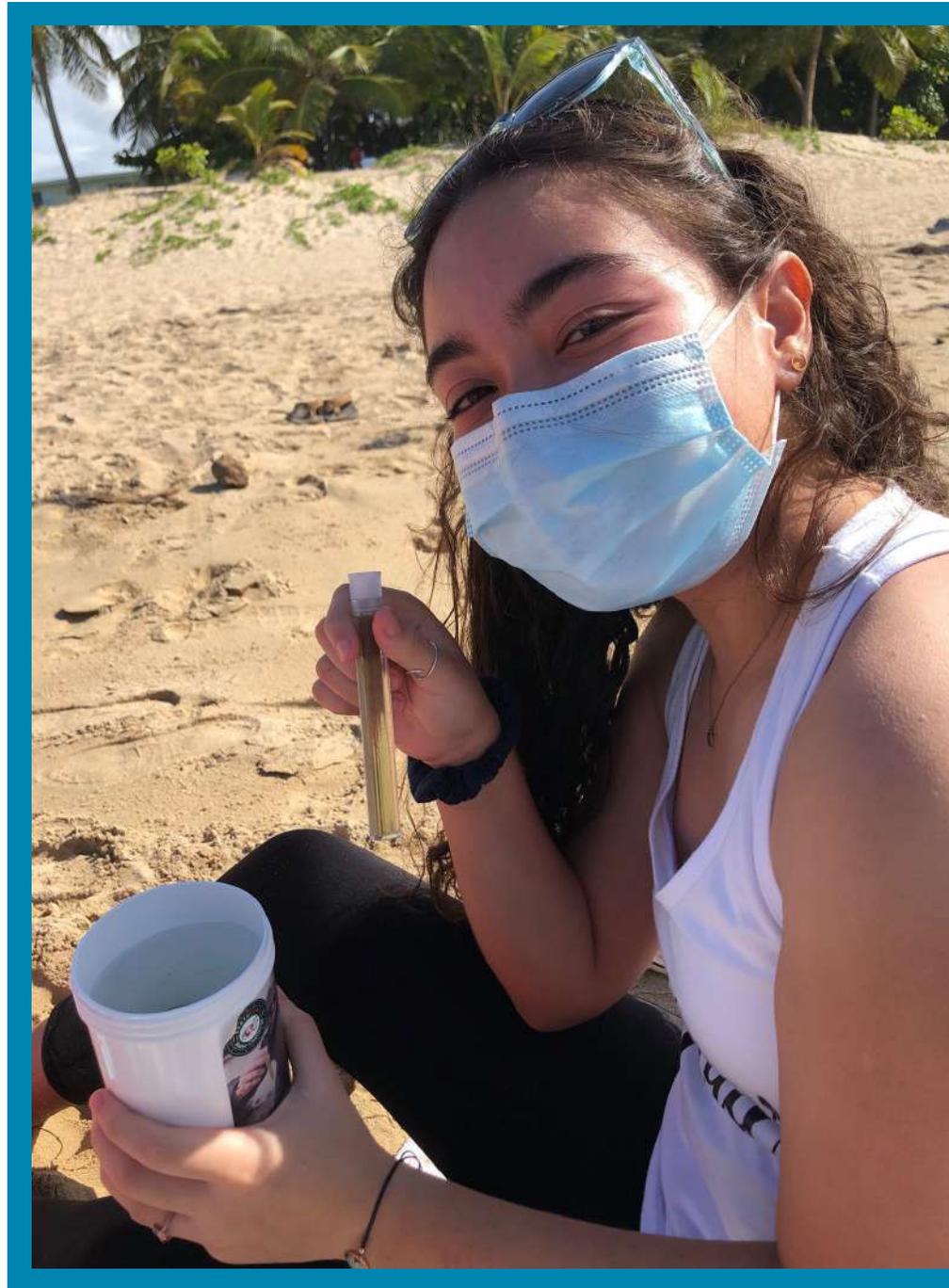
EarthEcho Water Challenge

Developing Community Water Conservation Leaders with the EarthEcho Water Challenge Ambassadors

Under the guidance of the EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council, we welcomed 30 new EarthEcho Water Challenge Ambassadors; these included 11 Ambassadors from Puerto Rico through a pilot program made possible with support from the North American Association of Environmental Education and the San Juan Bay Estuary Program. These youth leaders joined 18 returning senior Ambassadors to learn more about water quality monitoring and conservation, while leading the EarthEcho Water Challenge program in their communities. This team overcame a variety of challenges associated with COVID-19 to host an innovative and impactful series of virtual and socially distant, in-person community events in honor of World Water Monitoring Day, and have collectively reached over 2,400 peers and community members with their water monitoring and education efforts.

"Through the Water Challenge, I have been able to learn more about the importance of water quality and have been able to teach others about it. It has been really impressive to see how so many people are interested in helping the environment one step at a time."

- Gianna Tomassini, Water Challenge Ambassador
Puerto Rico



EarthEcho Water Challenge



2020 EarthEcho Water Challenge by the Numbers

2,582 events in 25 countries



- Albania
- Algeria
- Australia
- Burkina Faso
- Canada
- China
- Ecuador
- Guinea
- Honduras
- India
- Indonesia
- Ireland
- Japan
- Liberia
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Singapore
- Taiwan
- United Kingdom
- United States
- U.S. Virgin Islands

Top 5 Locations by Participation

Country	# of Participants
United States	8,941
Taiwan	3,749
Puerto Rico	1,663
Australia	543
Indonesia	116

Top 5 Countries by Number of Events

Country	# of Events
United States	1,130
Taiwan	777
Australia	152
Puerto Rico	21
Indonesia	11

Top 5 User Groups by Participation

User	# of Participants
Taipei Water Patrol	9,183
Peter Modreski	6,494
TVA Science Kids	4,608
Love A Sea Turtle	4,467
Salmontracks	4,250



EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council

EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council



Youth Leadership Programs

Central to our mission at EarthEcho International is our work to build the capacity of the youth-led environmental movement. In 2020, we built on our core youth leadership programs to provide increased opportunities for engagement to a growing global community of young environmental changemakers.

Growing the Youth Leadership Council

The Youth Leadership Council (YLC) is the guiding youth voice driving the development and implementation of EarthEcho's programs designed to inspire young people worldwide to create a sustainable future. In 2020, with a record number of YLC applications from young leaders around the world, we [expanded the size and global reach of the YLC](#) by welcoming 16 new members. This brought total YLC membership to 27 youth from Argentina, Australia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The expanded scope of the YLC was critical to building the infrastructure of our growing, global youth leadership programs.

The YLC played a key role in the success of our core EarthEcho programs in 2020. Members hosted virtual events reaching over 3,000 participants globally, supported the development of new digital learning resources, served as peer mentors to the inaugural OurEcho Challenge finalist teams, and supported a new cohort of EarthEcho Water Challenge Ambassadors. Members also represented EarthEcho as speakers at a global series of events, including the March for Science Youth Forum, Ocean Heroes Bootcamp, World Oceans Day Youth-a-Thon, The Ocean Race Summit, and the North American Association of Environmental Education Conference. Beyond their work guiding our programs and representing EarthEcho in the community, the YLC played a central role developing new opportunities to exponentially increase our ability to engage young environmental leaders worldwide.



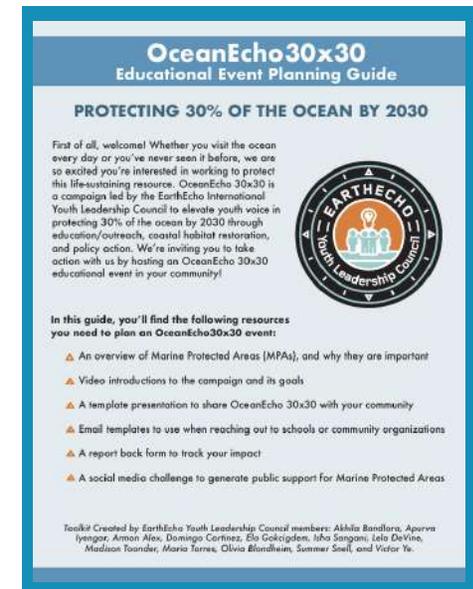
EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council



Mobilizing Youth Leaders to Protect 30% of the Ocean by 2030

In 2020, the EarthEcho YLC launched OceanEcho 30x30, a new initiative designed to elevate youth voice and leadership in support of global efforts to protect 30% of the ocean by 2030. This is a key goal identified by scientists to help preserve what remains of ocean biodiversity, restore the ocean to abundance, and address the impacts of climate change. Through OceanEcho 30x30, YLC members are mobilizing their peers worldwide in support of the 30x30 goal through education and outreach, youth-driven coastal habitat restoration projects, and policy and advocacy efforts. Highlights of this work in 2020 include:

- ▶ Launch of OceanEcho 30x30 during the EarthEcho Youth Leadership Summit, during which 390 participants worldwide learned about marine protected areas and strategies/tactics for taking action to support the 30x30 goal.
- ▶ Creation of the YLC's OceanEcho 30x30 Educational Event Planning Guide and subsequent virtual trainings, providing youth leaders with tools to educate their communities on the importance of this issue.
- ▶ Youth-led community presentations/events on 30x30 reaching over 2,000 community members.
- ▶ [#MyOceanEcho social media challenge](#) engaged a global audience in sharing the importance of 30x30 along with photos of the people that inspire them to take action. Participants included youth leaders around the world, partner organizations, and social media influencers, including [@mrdrewscott](#), [@petehalvorsen](#), and [@chefmarialoi](#).
- ▶ Through social media amplification, the creation of media pieces and Op-Eds, and virtual events, EarthEcho youth leaders engaged in advocating for policies to support the 30x30 goal – including efforts to expand marine protected areas in Antarctica, legislation focused on ocean climate action, and mobilization of youth voters with the ocean and climate in mind.



EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council



Expanding Access and Opportunities through the Youth Action Network

This year, EarthEcho expanded our direct youth leadership programming opportunities through the launch of the EarthEcho Youth Action Network. Driven by guidance from our YLC and the strong interest in year-round engagement opportunities for young environmental leaders, the Youth Action Network is a growing global community that provides young people with a platform to take collective action to address environmental challenges, access to young environmental changemakers around the world, and ongoing opportunities to learn from and connect with the EarthEcho team and our partner organizations. Through bi-weekly e-mail alerts, our Youth Action Network receives the latest updates and opportunities for engagement in our ocean conservation efforts and the OceanEcho 30x30 campaign.

In November 2020, we hosted [our first Youth Action Network virtual meet-up](#), which provided an opportunity for over 100 participants to learn from experts and their peers about the importance of marine protected areas while using tools created by the YLC to develop plans for their own community-based presentations on 30x30. This Meet-Up kicks off a series of quarterly Youth Action Network events for youth ages 13-25.

"By being part of the EarthEcho Youth Action Network, I've had the opportunity to meet more like-minded young people concerned about the climate crisis and willing to fight for a bluer and greener future. All of their inspiring stories have made me realize that youth have the power to lead change in the world of conservation and that if we all want to achieve the same goal, we should get along because the ocean levels are rising and so should we."

- Ibrahi Rodriguez, Youth Action Network Member



EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council



Youth Leadership Summit

EarthEcho's 5th annual Youth Leadership Summit virtually united 390 participants from 32 countries and territories for three days of learning, collaboration, and action to launch OceanEcho 30x30. Participants collectively engaged in over 2,240 hours of live programming, featuring 21 interactive breakout sessions and 18 panel discussions/workshops allowing participants to learn more about marine protected areas and strategies for mobilizing to support the expansion of these key regions of the ocean.



Youth Leadership Council member Nicolás Chesta began 2020 with quite an adventure! In early January, Nicolás joined EarthEcho staff as we embarked on a joint initiative with Celebrity Cruises to empower a new generation of environmental leaders and advocates in the Galapagos Islands. Nicolás's input and peer-to-peer connection with local youth demonstrated the importance of including youth at the table for all conservation initiatives. While on the island of Santa Cruz, we met with key stakeholders at the Charles Darwin Research Station, Galapagos National Park, and young leaders at Ecology Project International, including Julian Alvarez, Priscilla Bonilla, and Sergio Alvarez Gomez, who later joined the EarthEcho Youth Leadership Council.



2020 Youth Leadership Council

Armon Alex • Corpus Christi, TX
Sergio Alvarez • Santa Cruz, Galápagos
Julián Álvarez • Santa Cruz, Galápagos
Ugo Angeletti • Miami, FL
Mary Ann Arizaga • Piura, Perú
Akhila Bandlora • Phoenix, AZ
Kehkashan Basu • Toronto, Canada
Sadie Blancaflor • Baltimore, MD
Olivia Blondheim* • Tampa, FL
Priscila Bonilla • Santa Cruz, Galápagos
Hayley Summer Charlton • Melbourne, Australia
Nicolás Chesta* • Concon, Chile
Domingo Cortinez • Miami, FL
Lela DeVine • Hilo, HI
Samhita Gattupalli • Dhahran, Saudi Arabia
Ela Gokcigdem • Arlington, VA
Florencia Gonzalez • Chubut, Argentina
Greyson Graham • Winterville, NC

Laura Hampton • Armagh, Northern Ireland
Apurva Iyengar • Belle Mead, NJ
Rayan Krishnan • Sammamish, WA
Jackson Madden • Copley, OH
Laura Park • Flintshire, Wales
Isha Sangani • Seattle, WA
Demetri Sedita • Tampa, FL
Lucy Skelton • Melbourne, Australia
Summer Snell • Plymouth, England
Madison Toonder • St. Augustine, FL
Maria Torres • Miramar, FL
Victor Ye • Hacienda Heights, CA
Lili Zebluim • Downingtown, PA

[READ YLC BIOS](#)

* Member of the EarthEcho Board of Directors

Youth Leadership Council Sponsor



EarthEcho is proud to work with the La Mer Blue Heart Oceans Fund on #OceanEcho30x30. La Mer Blue Heart Oceans Fund supports ocean conservation efforts around the world. This year, they are funding organizations that focus on educating future generations by empowering them to become change agents in their local communities. EarthEcho is honored to be among their grantees.

Financials



EarthEcho International entered 2020 in nearly the best financial position of its history. We were working with existing funders on improving our core programs and engaging in conversations with new potential partners who were excited by the work we were doing with young environmental leaders around the world. And then we reached March. The COVID-19 pandemic stopped progress on many of these conversations, and instead we were suddenly working up various financial contingency plans and worst-case scenarios. As you've read throughout this report, however, EarthEcho not only survived but thrived in many areas. At the start of the pandemic, we connected with all of our existing funding partners to discuss the outlook for the remainder of 2020 and early 2021. We also received an SBA Payroll Protection Program loan, strictly managed expenses (a bit easier to do when no staff members were traveling), and ended the year with all of our salaried employees in place. EarthEcho's 2020 financial achievement is a testament to the dedication of the Board of Directors, staff, youth leaders, and partners who work tirelessly to ensure the success and continued growth of our programs, and to earn the continuing support of our donors, without whom our work is not possible.

