

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for The College of Wooster

This is what was found by the Department of Earth Sciences at The College of Wooster on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and/or needed resources.

- **Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:**

- *One faculty member works with The Training Rural Alaskan Youth Leaders and Stewards (TRAYLS) and Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) in rural Alaska. Getting young people (pre-college) interested in STEM. ~50 people involved across Forest Service, USGS, government agencies. The TRAYLS group in Hoonah Alaska (<https://www.hia-env.org/2020/07/08/fish-trapping-beach-asparagus-tree-coring-the-adventures-of-trayls/>) The Wooster portion of this collaboration is a NSF funded project with the University of Alaska – Fairbanks. Positive experiences during the summer of 2020 have prompted us to expand the reach of the project to two remote Tlingit communities in SE-Alaska. We are navigating the logistics of this collaboration and after a positive (remotely done) collaboration in the summer of 2020. Our collaborators in Alaska have been included as coauthors on student presentations at AGU and we aim to expand native participation in the coming summer.*
- *Other faculty members have work in SW Utah and have driven through Paiute reservation, but never stopped.*
- *One faculty member (working with another institution) experienced an incident in which geoscientists defaced a natural site and had to be “re-educated” by the local native communities. A senior student met with an elder of a tribe in south-central Utah.*
- *TreeCorps of Holden Arboretum (<https://holdenarb.org/tree-corps/>), a workforce development program in Northeast Ohio, is a paid opportunity to train arborists. The group visits The College of Wooster Tree Ring Lab and the campus grounds to learn about dendrochronology and dendroecology.*

- **What worked well in these interactions?**

- *Sharing different ways of knowing. Six summer students on the Wooster campus and remote interacted several times with the TRAYLS group and I.S. students got to see what the Tlingit group was doing in terms of research and approach to environment. Contrast for students who couldn't go there. Different ways of approaching science.*



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- **What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?**
 - *Collaborators seem overextended in terms of science projects. They didn't have enough time, we didn't want to push them.*
 - *Logistics can be challenging – FedEx, shipping, processing time, remote location.*
 - *Educate students at the beginning of a field experience. We are currently learning more about the native communities and how they interact and collaborate with longer-running projects with the US Forest Service.*
- **Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?**
 - *Re-establish and maintain contact with collaborators*
 - *Report back to communities*
 - *Apply to funding programs that place greater value on broader impacts to continue and expand on projects*
- **Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?**
 - *Find additional funding to bring a group of students to Wooster to see what we do and interact with our students.*
 - *Give a land acknowledgement at the start of every talk/paper*
 - *Education materials for faculty and students from the beginning of the project.*
 - *Make time to get involved in cultural events in the field, like a culture day every Saturday in the field.*
 - *Orientation with students on campus when external visitors (like TreeCorps) come to campus*