

JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

The Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Sustainability Initiative (JEDSI) seeks to examine the relationship between social inequalities, lived experiences, and environmental outcomes. To this end, JEDSI currently focuses on six primary areas of research, teaching, and practice:

Environmental history We study environmental history and events from historical and contemporary perspectives. Our work analyzes the contributions of leading figures in the environmental sector. We also bring to the fore people whose voices are often ignored in conservation narratives.

Nature, outdoor experiences, attitudes, and perceptions Our research examines racial, ethnic, gender, and class differences in environmental behavior and nature and outdoor experiences. We also study environmental attitudes and perceptions.

Environmental inequalities, resilience, and sustainability We theorize about the environmental justice (EJ) movement, engage with EJ activists and communities, and conduct research about historical and contemporary EJ issues. We examine the occurrence of environmental hazards and discriminatory policies and practices, and we document the existence of open space and other amenities in EJ communities. We identify forms of community resilience that can help communities thrive and foster long-term sustainability.

Food and farming: access, sovereignty, and justice We research food systems, food insecurity, access to healthy and affordable foods, food sovereignty, and food justice. We probe discriminatory policies and practices faced by farmers of color and work with small farmers, urban farmers, and community gardeners. We collect data on the types of food outlets in cities and examine the roles that small farmers, farmers' markets, urban farmers, community gardeners, and emergency food assistance organizations play in reducing food insecurity. We also study mechanisms that communities and groups use to enhance food sovereignty.

Institutional diversity, transparency, and workforce dynamics We produce pathbreaking research and publications on diversity in the environmental sector. We study students in environmental programs; the staff, board, and members of environmental institutions; preference to work in green organizations; wages and equity in said organizations; recruitment and retention in the sector; the adoption of diversity measures, and the disclosure of diversity activities in enviros; and leadership in these institutions. Environmental professionals use our work to enhance diversity in environmental organizations and the broader environmental movement.

Diversity pathway programming We operate two pathway programs:

- *The Yale Conservation Scholars–Early Leadership Initiative* provides one to two summers of internship opportunities to undergraduates who are historically underrepresented in the conservation field. The scholars spend the summer interning in an environmental nonprofit. About a fourth of our program participants pursue graduate degrees. This program was previously the Doris

Duke Conservation Scholars Program at Yale School of the Environment and the University of Michigan. It was relaunched in 2021 with a new name and new funding.

- *The Environmental Fellows Program* provides a summer internship to master's and doctoral students who are historically underrepresented in the environmental sector. The fellows participate in internships at environmental grant-making foundations or environmental nonprofits around the country.

JEDSI also organizes the New Horizons in Conservation Conference. This annual national conference gathers students and professionals of color in the environmental field as well as others interested in learning more about and advancing diversity practices in their organizations. Almost 900 people from around the world participated in the 2021 conference. The first hybrid conference was held in New Haven in May 2023.

Additionally, JEDSI mentors the students and young professionals in its programs and lab. And it develops profiles of environmental professionals of color who have outstanding careers in the environmental sector. The database contains information on 200 individuals. The profiles, which are available to people seeking mentors, also help students and young professionals understand how senior professionals forge successful careers. For additional information, see <https://jedsi.yale.edu>.