



## 2022-2023 Chesapeake Conservation Corps Class Announced

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Contact: Michaela Niles, 410-974-2941 ext. 129, [mniles@cbtrust.org](mailto:mniles@cbtrust.org)

(Annapolis, MD) August 16, 2022-The Chesapeake Bay Trust, with the support of the Maryland Chesapeake Bay license plate as well as other sources, proudly introduces a new class of Chesapeake Conservation Corps members. The Chesapeake Conservation Corps was created with the purpose of fostering onsite training and educational opportunities for young adults interested in exploring their environmental passions in a professional space. During their time in the Conservation Corps, members are matched with both non-profit and government host organizations and receive hands-on guidance aimed at improving local communities and protecting natural resources. Members of the Corps are given a one-year-stipend and other support by the Chesapeake Bay Trust during their time in the Corps.

“For more than a decade, the Chesapeake Conservation Corps has given young people the knowledge and skills they need to be the conservation leaders of tomorrow,” said **Senator Van Hollen**. “Congress has just taken a bold step to confront the accelerating harm of climate change and we are counting on graduates of the Corps to play a key role in implementing the provisions of this bill to better protect the Chesapeake Bay, our environment, and our planet. I want to congratulate this year’s graduates and the incoming class, and I look forward to seeing what they accomplish.”

The Corps has become a premier launching pad for green careers and a reliable resource for environmentally focused organizations who are recruiting the next generation of environmental professionals. Over 300 alums have become leaders in the environmental movement as well as engaged individuals bringing a stewardship ethic to non-environmental careers. Many of them are hired by their host organizations following their years of service.

“We applaud these young people embarking on this incredible journey today,” said **Senator Sarah Elfreth**, who has been appointed by the Maryland Senate President to serve on the Corps Advisory Board. “Their passion for protecting and restoring our region’s natural resources will affect so many communities and bring measurable improvements in our environment and neighborhoods.”

Today, 33 Corps members met their host organizations to learn more about their job responsibilities for the upcoming year. During their year of service, Corps members will gain valuable on-the-job experience as they work to advance environmental conservation, K-12 education, energy efficiency programs and other climate resiliency goals, sustainable agriculture practices, and a host of other environmentally focused initiatives.

“I am so honored to serve on the Corps Advisory Board with Senator Elfreth. I have been fortunate to see this program grow over time, and the legislature continue to invest in it, including just this last session,” said **Delegate Anne Healey**, referring to the expansion of the Corps to further focus on climate and environmental justice via the Climate Solutions Act of 2022.

Funds for the program are provided by the Chesapeake Bay Trust, which is supported by the Chesapeake Bay vehicular license plate program (the “bay plate”) and other sources; the Maryland Department of Natural Resources; the U.S. National Park Service; and Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE); among others.

“The Chesapeake Conservation Corps program is an important investment for us with our Chesapeake Gateways funding, helping accomplish our Chesapeake awareness, engagement, and access goals” said **Wendy O’Sullivan, Superintendent of the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office**. “The Corps members hard work and enthusiasm is a tremendous asset for our Chesapeake Gateways partner host sites.”

“BGE is committed to investing strategically to develop the workforce in our region. Successful and innovative programs like the Corps prepare our youth for meaningful jobs in many different sectors in ways that add long-term value for the participants, our communities, and companies like ours” said **Alex Núñez, Senior Vice President of BGE’s Governmental, Regulatory, and External Affairs and Chesapeake Bay Trust Trustee**.

During the year, Corps participants work directly with their host organizations while also receiving extensive job trainings hosted by the Chesapeake Bay Trust as well as other service-learning opportunities including grant writing and project management.

“We believe in ripple effects here at the Trust,” said **Dr. Jana Davis, president of the Chesapeake Bay Trust**. “These amazing Corps members will insert themselves in communities across our region, bringing awareness of natural resources and on-the-ground work that affect layers and layers of people, improving not just the environment, but local economies, neighborhoods, and even human health as people benefit from using the outdoors.”

The 33 selected participants will work in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George’s, Talbot, Worcester Counties and Baltimore City.

#### About the Chesapeake Bay Trust

The Chesapeake Bay Trust ([www.cbtrust.org](http://www.cbtrust.org)) envisions a restored and protected Chesapeake Bay watershed and other natural resources in our area, from the Coastal Bays to the Chesapeake to the Youghiogheny River. We uniquely empower local community-based groups on the ground with the resources they need to take on a meaningful and measurable role in restoring forests, streams, rivers, bays, wildlife, and more in their own communities. Every year, the Trust empowers about 400 groups by providing grants and technical assistance to accomplish environmental education, community outreach, and local watershed restoration projects. The Trust is supported by the sale of the Chesapeake Bay license plate; donations to the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund on the Maryland State income tax form; donations made by hunters, fishers, and boaters in the Maryland online natural resource licensing system; donations from individuals and corporations; and partnerships with private foundations and federal, state, and local governments. The Trust has received the highest rating from Charity Navigator for over two decades. On average, 90% of the Trust’s expenditures are directed to its restoration and education programs.



## Chesapeake Conservation Corps 2022-23 Corps Member Placements

### **Ashley Barnes, ECO City Farms *Riverdale, Prince George's County***

Ashley will serve her year at ECO City Farms where she will cultivate sustainably grown food; educate local youth and families about food, health, and the environment; and engage in hands-on trainings and permaculture projects on the farm. Ashley has a degree in Environmental Studies from Winthrop University. She wants to help serve underrepresented communities and advocate for environmental experiences in these communities. Ashley is also interested in sustainable food, nutrition, and food diversity practices and their impacts on minority communities.

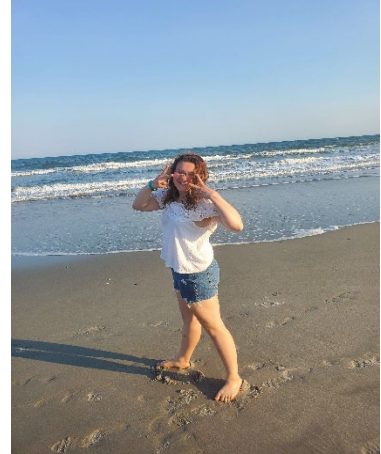


### **Jack Bayne, National Park Service Fort McHenry *Baltimore City***

Jack graduated from McDaniel College with a degree in Environmental Studies. He is passionate about researching the effects of biodiversity loss in our ecosystems. He finds great pride in creating and restoring habitats for wildlife in his local area. During his placement at Fort McHenry, Jack will be assisting in energy conscious restoration and renovation, practicing organic lawn care and landscaping, and planning a 25- acre meadow restoration at the Hampton National Historic site.

**Margaret “Maggie” Bennett, NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

During her placement at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Chesapeake Bay Office, Maggie will support efforts in K-12 education and early career development to develop and implement comprehensive environmental literacy programs. She will be curating career-oriented programming that provides students with an awareness of career opportunities, career training and the articulation of that programming into green jobs. Maggie brings her experience in providing youth environmental education through summer camp leadership experiences. She also has an interest in GIS mapping and has created an interactive mushroom map as one of her projects.



**Eva Blockstein, Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation  
and Parks Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary  
Lothian, Anne Arundel County**

Eva graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University with a degree in Zoology and a minor in Environmental Studies. Eva is a natural nature lover and aspires to have a career as a naturalist. She has conducted ecological field work in Alaska, where she gained a new perspective and adapted new ways to reduce her environmental footprint. During her year with Jug Bay Wetlands, Eva will be planning, coordinating, and implementing projects to further their outdoor education and stewardship goals. Eva will also develop programs to address climate change.



**Michael Bonnell, Chesapeake Conservancy  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Michael first developed a love for nature as a kid doing frequent camping trips. Since then, Michael has nurtured his passion for biology and the natural world through his studies at Rowan University. His desire for service shines through him becoming an Eagle Scout and serving his local community. Michael will be with the Chesapeake Conservancy this year, serving the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership. He will contribute to many cutting-edge policies and programs to attract investments in environmental restoration and address historic needs to provide various types of open space in disadvantaged communities.



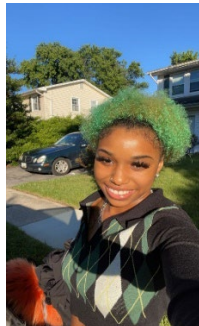
**Julia Boswell, Chesapeake Bay Foundation**  
**Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Julia will be spending her service year at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. She will be working in habitat restoration, regenerative agriculture, environmental education, and oyster restoration. Last year, Julia took a week-long trip to the Florida Everglades with a conservation field research expedition. She fell in love with fieldwork and immersing herself in nature. The inspiration provided on this expedition lead her to fully pursue a career in conservation.



**Mollie Boyd, National Aquarium in Baltimore**  
**Baltimore City**

Mollie grew up in Elkridge, MD and attended school at UNC Wilmington where she majored in Marine Biology and Environmental Science. Mollie says that growing up in the Chesapeake Bay watershed has shaped her love of the outdoors. She brings her experience working in youth environmental education and is also a certified diving instructor. While at the National Aquarium, Mollie will participate in Aquarium conservation efforts including habitat restoration, data collection on urban biodiversity and water quality of Baltimore's Inner Harbor, community engagement and stewardship activities, and youth education.



**Chakya Browning, Towson University Center for STEM Excellence**  
**Baltimore City**

Chakya will be working at Towson University Center for STEM Excellence supporting a variety of environmental education initiatives by developing activities and facilitating programs designed to foster a sense of stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland's K-12 students. Chakya is very passionate about recycling and mitigating the problem that is single-use plastics. She plans to continue to explore environmental stewardship opportunities through her service year with the Corps.

**Morgan Buchanan, Shorerivers**  
**Easton, Talbot County**

Morgan grew up in Florida, where she became passionate about water, water quality, and science. Those passions led her to John Hopkins University where she studied Environmental Science, Molecular and Cellular Biology. Morgan's connection with the Chesapeake Bay strengthened her desire to become a Corps Member. Now with ShoreRivers, she will be doing SAV and water quality monitoring along the Eastern Shore and supporting environmental education programs.





**Natalie Buscemi, Howard County Office of Community Sustainability  
*Ellicott City, Howard County***

Natalie will be working with the Howard County Office of Sustainability to develop new ideas, programs, and strategies to advance climate action and energy conservation. She will be conducting outreach and engaging the public at events and workshops. Natalie enjoys working with communities to improve environmental impacts and influence behavioral change. She is also keen on biodiversity and how its loss impacts our ecosystem. Natalie holds a

degree in Wildlife and Fisheries from Frostburg State University.

**Madeline Daugherty, Howard County Office of  
Community Sustainability  
*Ellicott City, Howard County***

Madeline came into environmental studies more than halfway through her college career. Even still, she instantly knew this was the best choice for her. Madeline has interests in stormwater management, green infrastructure, and urban greening. She deeply believes in the influence our environment has on our lives and health. Madeline will be at the Howard County Office of Community Sustainability working on innovative options and solutions for stormwater management in vulnerable communities.

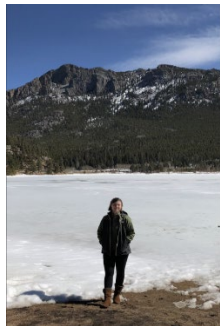


**Wanita David, Maryland Environmental Service  
*Millersville, Anne Arundel County***

Wanita has had a broad and diverse range of experiences in environmental sustainability including research, urban gardening, and solar energy. Ultimately, it was the topic of water pollution that had the deepest impact and sparked her interest in the environment at an early age. Wanita now holds a degree in Biological Engineering from North Carolina A&T State University. She will be working with the Maryland Environmental Service this year, focusing on projects associated with stormwater planning, design, and compliance.

**Laura Dennison, Audubon Naturalist Society  
Chevy Chase, Montgomery County**

Laura was born in Australia and moved to the Eastern Shore of Maryland at an early age. Laura said being a child of two marine scientist led to her love of nature and traveling. She has a degree in Environmental Studies from St Mary's College of Maryland. Laura hopes that the Corps will help channel her broad environmental interests into a focused career. While working with the Audubon Naturalist Society Laura will be supporting restoration efforts, conducting habitat surveys, and wildlife monitoring. She will also be engaging the public on issues of conservation and environmental quality in the region.

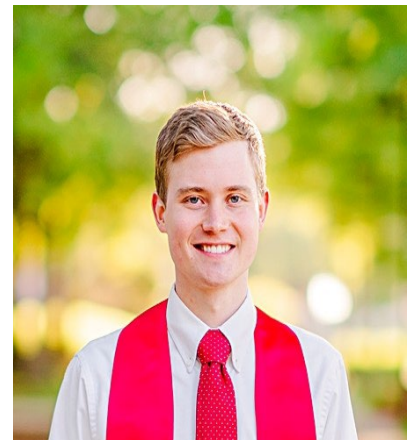


**Caroline Emeric, National Park Service Fort McHenry  
Baltimore City**

Caroline will be spending her service year working with the National Park Service at Fort McHenry. She will be implementing climate change education, developing interpretative signage, and experimenting with mapping and GIS. Caroline is an avid outdoorswoman with extensive experience hiking, backpacking, and rock climbing. She studied Biology at College of William and Mary and frequently draws inspiration from the rich local habitat and diversity of species in the Chesapeake Bay region.

**Peter Fath, The Community Ecology Institute  
Columbia, Howard County**

Peter holds degrees in Geographical Sciences from University of Maryland College Park. While in school, Peter took classes focused on the Chesapeake Bay's ecosystem where he learned about the interactions between science and public policy. This experience brought him closer to his passion to work in outreach and education programming, specifically, food and waste behavior. Peter will be serving at The Community Ecology Institute. Here he will support community-based programs that weave together educational, health, equity, and environmental practices and outcomes. He will also be engaging the public through community garden and restoration initiatives.





**Johanna Guardadoo, Maryland Department of Natural Resources: Chesapeake & Coastal Service  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Johanna graduated from Roger Williams University with a degree in International Relations. Being a first-generation student and college graduate led her to think about environmental issues on a global scale. As a result, Johanna developed a passion for studying the impacts of climate change on ice caps and glaciers and that influence on rising sea levels across the world. This year she will be working with Maryland DNR to support science communication, engagement, and outreach. She will also be involved in direct community engagement on complex issues supporting environmental education and climate communications.



**Sushanth Gupta, Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Sushanth found a passion for sustainable agriculture volunteering at the University of Maryland Terp Farm after changing his major to Agricultural and Resource Economics. Since his studies, Sushanth has decided to focus his efforts on helping to execute local change. He believes small scale work can be very impactful and often easier to implement and make a difference. Sushanth will be serving with Maryland DNR assisting with mussel restoration initiatives. He will conduct field surveys, collect data, help with the operation of hatchery facilities, and develop new outreach material to highlight conservation efforts for stakeholders.

**Owen Keys, Anne Arundel Community College  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Owen will be completing his service year at Anne Arundel Community College working at the Environmental Center. He will be conducting water quality monitoring; participating in field and laboratory work measuring bacteria and nutrient levels; and conducting horseshoe crab surveys and molecular studies. Owen traces his passion for the natural world to his early childhood interests in crabs, oysters, fishes, and jellyfishes. These early immersions carried Owen to Stevenson University where he studied Environmental Science and Chesapeake Bay Ecology.







**Kacie Larsen, Lower Shore Land Trust  
*Snow Hill, Worcester County***

During her placement at Lower Shore Land Trust, Kacie will serve as an Outreach Coordinator and support education, outreach and communications for restoration and land protection activities. She will participate in various restoration activities, including pollinator meadows and rain barrel workshops. Kacie holds a degree in Environmental and Sustainability Studies from University of Utah. She is particularly interested in marine conservation and has spent time in Greece conducting marine mammal research. Kacie is also a certified open water SCUBA instructor.

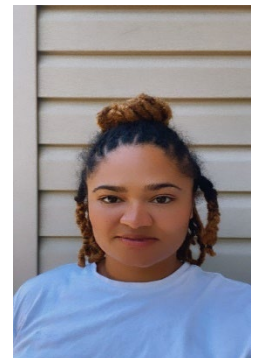


**James Oliver Lee, University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center  
*College Park, Prince George's County***

James is a well-traveled individual who loves backpacking. Throughout his youth he has spent time in Bulgaria, Switzerland, Colombia, and France. He holds a degree in Political Science and Anthropology from University College Utrecht in the Netherlands. At the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, James will work with communities on actions that will contribute to their increased sustainability. He will also develop online course materials and real-world case studies.

**Imani Makell, Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center *Millersville, Anne Arundel County***

Imani will be working at Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center where she will be teaching students and adults about the environment, developing activities and materials to support curriculum, and engaging in ongoing restoration projects while networking with other environmental organizations. Imani is a strong believer in community engagement and its impact on youth. She also has interest in watershed restoration projects.



**Grace Mayer, American Chestnut Land Trust  
*Prince Frederick, Calvert County***



Grace holds two degrees in Dance and Geographic Science from James Madison University. During her time in college, Grace was able to find ways to combine her love for creativity with her love for the environment when she involved herself in GIS and cartography. She will spend her year with American Chestnut Land Trust leading volunteer groups in various land management activities including invasive species removal, meadow establishment, hiking trail maintenance, property monitoring, and forest and wildlife diversity surveys.

**Emily O'Connell, Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center  
Millersville, Anne Arundel County**

Emily grew up with nature in the mountains of North Carolina. After moving near Baltimore, Emily gained a new perspective on the ecosystem and the effects of human development, climate change, and habitat loss. This perspective led her to pursue a career in wildlife rehabilitation and restoration. During her time at Arlington Echo, she will be teaching students and adults about the environment, developing activities and materials to support curriculum, and engaging in ongoing restoration projects while networking with other environmental organizations



**Kassandra Patrick, American Chestnut Land Trust  
Prince Frederick, Calvert County**

During her year Kassandra will manage the daily operations of a one-acre sustainable agriculture farm and support farm-related community outreach at the American Chestnut Land Trust. She will also help organize community conservation action groups. Kassandra grew up in rural Pennsylvania, where she developed an early love for the outdoor recreation. She studied Environmental and Sustainability at Cornell University. Kassandra recalls witnessing a catastrophic oil spill on the news and using that experience to drive her into getting involved in water quality research and water pollution mitigation.

**Rachel Pitsenberger, The Nature Conservancy  
Bethesda, Montgomery County**

Rachel's passion for the environment culminated at Georgetown University, where she received her degree in Biology and minored in Environmental Studies and welcomed the opportunity to explore classes in ecology, plant biology, and conservation biology. Rachel is also an advocate for equitable access to clean, healthy, and safe environments and outdoor spaces for underserved communities. She will be serving her year at The Nature Conservancy, helping with native plantings, invasive species control, trail maintenance, forest management, and ecological restoration.





**Simon Sauvageau, The Community Ecology Institute  
*Columbia, Howard County***

During his year in the Corps Simon will work with The Community Ecology to develop community-based programs that weave together educational, health, equity, and environmental practices and outcomes. He will also help to support community gardening initiatives. Simon is interested in urban ecology and studied Environmental Science at Franklin & Marshall College in Pennsylvania. Simon served in a leadership role in his sustainable housing community where he learned sustainability reaches far beyond just environmental considerations and must intersect with social and emotional aspects of life to be successful.

**Juliana Schifferes, Global Health and Education Projects, Inc.  
*Riverdale, Prince George's County***

Working with the Global Health and Education Projects this year, Juliana will serve as the Digital Environment Fellow. She will be responsible for digitalizing the outreach, engagement, and education of residents through digital story telling engaging a cross-generation of signature program participants. Juliana is especially interested in community engagement work within environmental restoration practices. She studied Political Science at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. She hopes the Corps experience will help to propel her into a future Master of Public Administration.



**Fana Scott, Washington College Center for Environment & Society  
*Chestertown, Kent County***

Fana grew her passion for adventure and the outdoors by joining the Student Conservation Association in high school and has since been to several locations across the U.S., involving herself in conservation field work. She expanded on this in college, earning a bachelor's in Biology and Environmental Studies. Fana is also a certified EMT. During her time at Washington College Center for the Environment & Society, she will be conducting migratory bird field studies and planning environmental education programs for students and local community members.



**Morgan Shippy, Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Morgan earned her bachelor's degree from Bowie State University in Biology. During her time in college, Morgan learned about how important wetlands are to our local ecosystem in Maryland. This knowledge fuels her passion to preserve wetlands and mitigate destruction of this habitat. She will spend her year with Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park supporting the environmental education department. She will deliver programs to local school-aged youth to establish a sense of stewardship and encourage environmental literacy.



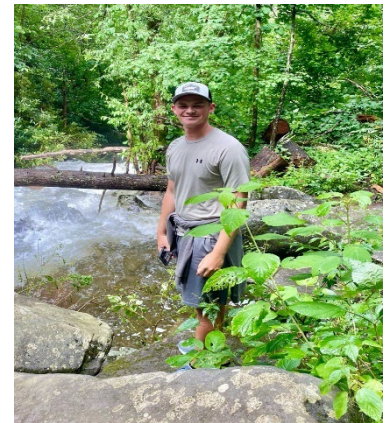
**Matthew Swanton, Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Matthew will spend his year in the Corps with Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park. He will be involved in grade school classroom visits, environmental education curricula development, and work with a suite of hands-on, experiential programs. Matthew earned his degree in Environmental Studies at Washington College. He is passionate about combating litter and completed his Senior Capstone Experience project on the impact of microplastics on soil ecosystems.

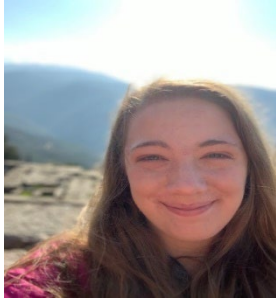
**Brady Waters, Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works**

**Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Brady grew up near the Chesapeake Bay in Deal, Maryland and learned to value and appreciate the natural resources presented to him at an early age. This early appreciation propelled him into an Environmental Studies degree from St. Mary's College and pursuit of a career in preservation and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland's natural resources. Brady started a fishing club in college furthering his interest in water quality. He will be working with Anne Arundel County Public Works on Education & Outreach, and participate in grants management, restoration project development, water quality monitoring, and watershed modeling and analysis.







**Danielle Wendt, National Wildlife Federation  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

During her year at the National Wildlife Federation, Danielle will help develop and execute new and existing nature-based projects through a combination of environmental restoration, climate resiliency, community engagement and education work—all with an equity lens. Danielle is a graduate of McDaniel College and earned degrees in English and Environmental Studies. She has found ways to combine the two interests through environmental storytelling and community engagement. Danielle sees her skillset as one that can help her uplift underrepresented voices.

**Katerina Whitman, Lower Shore Land Trust  
Annapolis, Anne Arundel County**

Katerina studied Environmental and Natural Resources with a concentration in Conservation Biology at Clemson University. She is particularly passionate about climate change and its impact on wildlife behavior and habitats. While at Lower Shore Land Trust this year, Katerina will serve as the Restoration Coordinator. She will work on habitat and water quality projects ranging from residential scale, congregation lands, and larger landscape-scale projects. She will also be involved in tree planting and coordinating maintenance and management activities of current LSLT projects.

