

# CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP CORPS

2021-2022  
Final  
Report



**PREPARED BY**  
*Stacy Ortego*  
for



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION



# WHERE WE ARE NOW



Louisiana Wildlife Federation has completed its fourth year of the Edgar Veillion Conservation Leadership Corps program.

Adjustments have been made over the years as we've made improvements through experience, student feedback, and making changes to allow the program's continuation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LWF is excited to see the continued enthusiasm for the program through the support of funders, colleagues, colleges and universities, students, LWF members, and our board of directors.

We are so encouraged by the growing interest in the program from tomorrow's leaders in conservation. Our current and future environmental challenges will require engagement not just from scientists and lawmakers, but from citizens of a wide range of backgrounds and professions, which is why we're thrilled to see the program gain interest from students at colleges and universities across Louisiana and from a diverse group of majors, including many outside of the typical STEM fields.

Louisiana is full of talented and passionate students who care about conserving our natural resources. LWF is honored to be part of their educational and professional journey. We are confident that tomorrow's leaders in conservation are up to the challenge.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Edgar Veillon Conservation Leadership Corps (CLC) program is designed to engage with and educate college students about conservation policy, advocacy and leadership to foster tomorrow's conservation leaders in Louisiana. The program allows students the opportunity to meet and interact with natural resource professionals from federal and state agencies, nonprofits, academia, and other professionals.

LWF recruited students for its fourth year class in the fall of 2021, selecting 22 students. The following 17 students successfully completed the program: Afia Boaitey, Faith Boutte, Mario Campo, Carly Carpenter, Chelsea Coleman, Eva Counts, Saidee Fonseca, Mia Foster, Lily Gleneck, Aaliyah Hameed, Madelyn Helm, Alexandra Himel, Nautica Jones, Katarina Perlsweig, Amanda Ross, Sarah Sargent, and Thomas Showers.

Four sessions were held from January-April 2022. Each month's session included meeting on Friday evenings and having a full meeting day on Saturdays. Sessions 1-3 were held via Zoom due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The final session (Session 4) was held in-person at Chicot State Park in Ville Platte, Louisiana.

A total of 12 speakers from various local, state, and federal agencies, organizations and institutions gave talks to students.

Our final meeting included a feedback discussion with students. Many students were eager to stay involved with the program and other

opportunities to stay engaged in advocacy. Students also showed an interest in receiving more information on opportunities to be active with the organization. LWF will continue to share engagement opportunities such as participating in public meetings, contacting decision-makers on conservation issues (which some students have already done), as well as other opportunities for their professional and personal development related to conservation. Students with a LinkedIn account have also been added to the LWF Conservation Leadership Corps group page, a designated page for current and former CLC students. This provides students an opportunity to share information amongst each other and expand their professional networks; LWF also shares information such as job and internship opportunities and other educational events.

Students received a \$200 scholarship check along with a certificate of achievement and letter of commendation for successfully completing the program. This may have been our most engaged group yet; we were very pleased with how involved students were and their interest in additional future advocacy opportunities.

LWF appreciates the support of the Stuller Family Foundation for its continued support of this program. In addition, LWF thanks our Conservation Education Committee for their volunteered time and guidance as well as all of our speakers for sharing their expertise. We look forward to the continued success and growth of the program.



# BY THE NUMBERS

LWF had a total of 94 applicants from 19 colleges and universities across Louisiana. Students that completed the 2022 program came from 8 universities including LSU, Loyola, McNeese, Nicholls, Northwestern, Southeastern, UL-Monroe, and Xavier.



8

*colleges & universities*



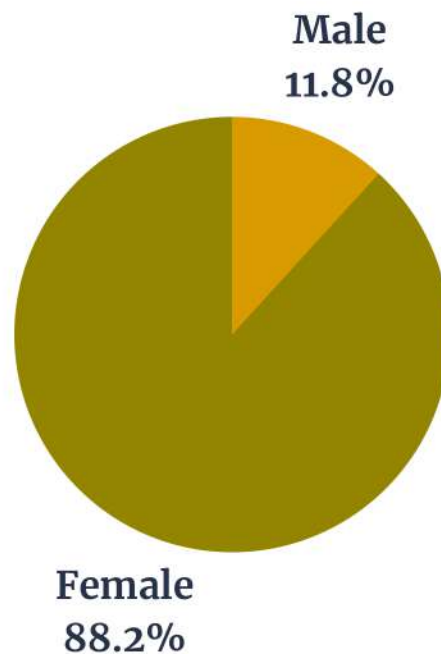
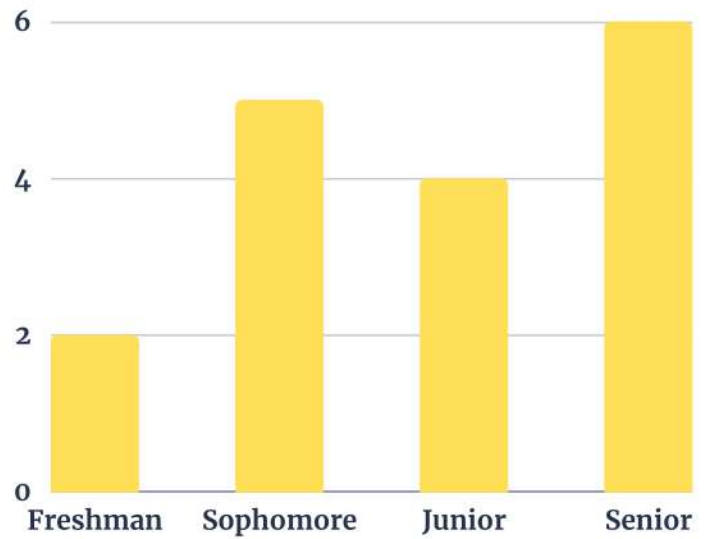
11

*areas of study*





## STUDENT DISTRIBUTION



**77%**

Students accepted  
that completed the  
program

**94**

Total applications  
received for the 2022  
program

**12**

Experts that gave  
presentations to  
students



# 2021-2022 CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP CORPS STUDENTS



AFIA  
BOAITEY



FAITH  
BOUTTE



MARIO  
CAMPO



CARLY  
CARPENTER



CHELSEA  
COLEMAN



EVA  
COUNTS



SAIDEE  
FONSECA



MIA  
FOSTER



LILY  
GLENECK



AALIYAH  
HAMEED



MADELYN  
HELM



ALEXANDRA  
HIMEL



NAUTICA  
JONES



KATARINA  
PERLSWEIG



AMANDA  
ROSS



SARAH  
SARGENT



THOMAS  
SHOWERS



# 2021-2022 CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP CORPS STUDENTS



Carly Carpenter  
Eva Counts  
Saidee Fonseca  
Mia Foster  
Lily Gleneck  
Aaliyah Hameed  
Madelyn Helm  
Amanda Ross

Sophomore, Environ. Mgmt Systems-Policy Analysis  
Sophomore, Biological & Agricultural Engineering  
Freshman, Natural Resource Ecology & Management  
Sophomore, Biology  
Senior, Coastal Environmental Science  
Junior, Marine Biology  
Sophomore, Renewable Natural Resources  
Junior, Chemical Engineering



Katarina Perlsweig

Senior, Environmental Science



Chelsea Coleman

Senior, Animal Science



Faith Boutte  
Alexandra Himel

Junior, Biology  
Sophomore, Marine Biology



Sarah Sargent

Senior, Biology



Mario Campo

Junior, Biology-Wetlands Ecology



Nautica Jones  
Thomas Showers

Senior, Biology  
Senior, Biology



Afia Boaitey

Freshman, Neuroscience



# PROGRAM SESSIONS

Students met once per month from January–April 2022. Each month's session included meeting on Friday evenings (approx. 2 hrs) and having a full meeting day on Saturdays (approx. 6 hrs). Sessions in January, February, and March were held via Zoom due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The final session was held in person at Chicot State Park in Ville Platte, La. The overarching theme for the 2022 program was *Habitat Conservation in Louisiana*.

The CLC program allows students the opportunity to meet and interact with natural resource professionals from federal and state agencies, nonprofits, academia, etc. In total, 12 experts from the various local, state, and federal organizations, agencies, and institutions gave talks to students.





# PROGRAM SESSIONS

## GUEST SPEAKERS

Andrew Barron	Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program
Katie Brasted	Woodlands Conservancy
Dr. Virginia Burkett	U.S. Geological Survey
Charles Caillouet	Friends of the Atchafalaya/LWF
Jim Caldwell	U.S. Forest Service
Karen Gautreaux	The Nature Conservancy
Greg Grandy	Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority
Brianne Hendricks	Parish Proud
Chad Kacir	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Caitlin Lill	Audubon Delta
Dr. Brady Skaggs	Pontchartrain Conservancy
Rebecca Triche	Louisiana Wildlife Federation





I admire the passion of everyone I had the privilege to meet and hear from. It is encouraging to see others who dedicate their lives to the improvement of the environment in so many ways, and I hope to one day be able to make such an impact.

- Chelsea Coleman

## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING...

Through Conservation Leadership Corps I have learned how to advocate for habitat conservation and have met some amazing individuals who are making a difference for Louisiana's environment.

- Sarah Sargent

It was truly an inspiring and enlightening experience. I was able to engage with so many great people, and will be able to use the lessons learned a connections developed for years to come!

- Faith Boutte

This program was an amazing experience and truly helped to facilitate my growth as an environmental advocate.

- Carly Carpenter

It has been such a privilege to be able to engage with leaders in the field of conservation. I'm inspired by their knowledge, experience, and passion. I applied to CLC to make sure that I am in the right field for me, and now I am more sure than ever that this what I want to pursue. My favorite part of CLC was bonding with other young environmentalists like me - I really feel like we all connected.

- Madelyn Helm

It has not only been great to learn so much about the environment and the organizations that are working to advocate for it, but it has also been a pleasure getting to meet other amazing people.

- Eva Counts

I met amazing people, learned so much, and gained valuable insight into the world of conservation. I will use this knowledge throughout the rest of my life to fight for environmental improvement.

- Thomas Showers



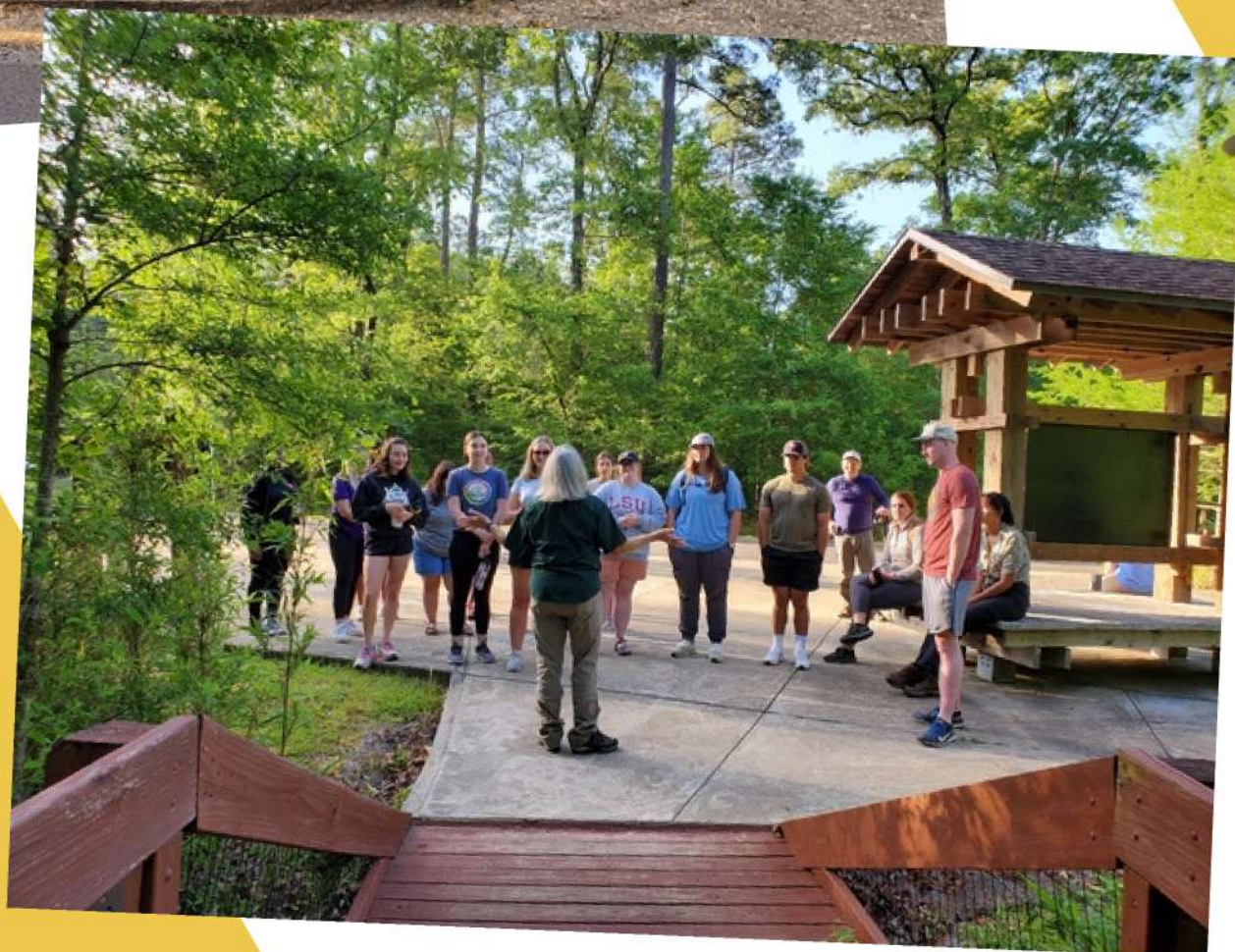


The opportunity to discuss matters with fellow peers, as well as learn from fantastic guest speakers made for an amazing experience of learning. Opportunities like this help increase the possibility of a better future by shaping and molding today's students into future leaders of change.

- Mario Campo











This has truly been a wonderful and unforgettable experience for me. I can honestly say I have become even more passionate about saving our Earth and advocating for the environment. I am so fortunate to have been a participant in CLC and to have the opportunity to meet such incredible role models in conservation.

- Amanda Ross





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Louisiana Wildlife Federation is grateful for the support of the Stuller Family Foundation for its financial support of this year's program. The Stuller Family Foundation makes grants and investments to support organizations and people who think greater and think differently about solutions to problems in their communities where they live, work and play. LWF is honored to be one of over 400 organizations supported by the foundation to date.

The CLC program is also supported by a committee of dedicated volunteers - the LWF Conservation Education Committee - whose time and guidance continue to help shape and improve the program:

- Zac Burson
- Charles Caillouet (Committee Chair)
- Barney Callahan
- Marty Floyd
- Keonshae Freeman
- Larry Reynolds
- Bob Stewart

Finally, LWF would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our speakers for taking the time out of their weekend to join us and share their expertise with our students.



# CONTACT

To learn more about the Conservation Leadership Corps program, visit [www.lawildlifefed.org](http://www.lawildlifefed.org). Sign up for our e-newsletter to stay updated on this and other programs by Louisiana Wildlife Federation.

Applications for our next cohort will be announced in October 2022.

If you have specific questions about the program, please contact:

Stacy Ortego  
[stacy@lawildlifefed.org](mailto:stacy@lawildlifefed.org)

## Stay Connected

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