

2023 Environmental Justice Fellowship with the Anacostia Community Museum, Smithsonian Institution

OVERVIEW

By placing environmental advocacy in the contexts of community life and larger ongoing justice movements, the Environmental Justice Fellow at the Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum (ACM) will explore and engage models of community-led environmental justice action. This fellowship aligns with the museum's decades-long environmental justice research and programming which will culminate in April 2023 with the launch of ACM's Center for Environmental Justice (CEJ). The CEJ is organized in four pathways of inquiry: cultural practice, faith, public policy, and inclusive leadership. Central to the museum's practice is the investigation of societal inequities impacting those furthest from justice in urban communities, particularly in places where people "live, work, learn, play, and pray." This phrase was coined by women of color environmental justice activists and advocates to center the impacts of environmental issues on everyday people.

IMPORTANCE

The geographic scope of the museum's work and collections centers on the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and includes urban communities in other parts of the United States. Core to the work of the museum is the belief that active citizen participation in the recovery and preservation of community historical assets, in cultural and arts activities, and in community advocacy are important and powerful instruments in creating and maintaining a sense of community and civic ownership.

POTENTIAL RESEARCH THEMES

Using a community-based research approach that ties environmental science to the everyday lives of communities, the fellow will explore:

- How does community-led environmental justice action contribute to healthy communal spaces in urban landscapes?

In alignment with the CEJ's four pathways of inquiry and community-focused environmental justice work, communal spaces in this context refer to housing, schools, workplaces, and places of worship. The fellow will engage with the expertise of those who have worked to shape environmental justice efforts locally and nationally, including ACM's Women in Environmental Leadership (WEL) network and other community members. The fellow will work to place community-led environmental activism in the larger narrative of ongoing justice movements, highlighting the practice of civic obligation and agency as essential tools in the equitable reshaping of communal spaces.

RESOURCES

The permanent collection supports the museum's investigation of contemporary community life, and of issues and themes that shape and resonate within urban communities. An important goal of museum collections is the development of strategies to engage public audiences with the artifacts and other materials in the museum's collections.

ADVISORS

The fellow must identify an advisor at the Anacostia Community Museum and a second advisor from a Smithsonian science museum or research center (e.g. National Museum of Natural History, National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Smithsonian Tropic Research Institute, etc.).

Lashley, Katrina, Program Coordinator (Urban Waterways). Research specialties: urban waterways; Anacostia River; urban ecology; environmental justice; women and the environmental movement; public history. Contact: LashleyK@si.edu

Meghelli, Samir, Supervisory Museum Curator. Research Specialties: U.S. urban history; twentieth-century African American and African diaspora history; hip hop and youth cultures; social movements; community history and oral history. Contact: MeghelliS@si.edu

Seidman, Rachel, Museum Curator. Research specialties: U.S. women's history, environmental justice, social movements, the Civil War, oral history methodology and community engaged research models. Contact: SeidmanR@si.edu

To assist with locating potential advisors at Smithsonian science museum or research center go to: [Smithsonian Opportunities for Research and Study](#).