



## BACK TO SCHOOL: INQUIRY DRIVES ACTION

Today, as this newsletter lands in your inbox, large numbers of protesters all over the globe are gathering in the streets to participate in the global climate strike. The organizers of the student-led movement [have invited](#) people of all ages to join in Friday's protest, but they have a few words of counsel:

*"[R]emember – your role is to listen and amplify the call to action from young people, not step in and take over. Make sure you hear the concerns, hopes and beliefs of young people around you. Take them seriously. Be their ally in conversations you have with other adults: be explicit about your support, help bring the message of the striking students into spaces where they can't be present."*

As we think about cultivating skills of leadership, critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and civic engagement in our youth to help them tackle the immense challenges ahead, we can apply this advice to the way we teach. Best practices in place-based-education and project-based-learning encourage us to "listen and amplify" the guiding questions students ask about their world and community. "Take them seriously." "Be their ally" in their learning journey.

For this *Back to School Issue*, we worry not about the empty classrooms on Friday, but wonder what will transpire in the classroom on Monday morning if we are to succeed at building a sustainable future for all?

### This month:

- **Spotlight:** How to make a classroom nature walk so much more.
- **Fall Project:** *Citizen Science: Inquiry to Action* opportunities in NY and TX.
- **Get Inspired:** Going for the Green Ribbon in Warwick Valley.
- **CELf news:** Welcome, Houston! CELf launches a new outpost in Texas.
- **Board news:** CELf welcomes four new Board members in 2019.
- **Tools for Teachers:** Sustainability webinars from Columbia Teachers College.
- **#CELfInsight:** Take home tidbits from the CELf team.

## Spotlight:

### [How to make a nature walk so much more](#)

Robin Farrell is the STEAM Teacher at Hillside Elementary School in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY. Her first person account explains how she transformed a haphazard, flagging nature walk program at their school into a vibrant outdoor learning experience connected to NGSS.



## Fall Project:

### [Bring Citizen Science to your school community](#)

We are inviting a new round of teachers to register for our [CELF Citizen Science: Inquiry to Action program](#). Tailored to each school and community location, the semester- or year-long program engages educators and students in project-based STEAM learning outside of the classroom. Professional learning workshops for teachers are paired with on-site support to implement a project-based learning module that connects students to real-world challenges in their own neighborhoods.

## Get Inspired:

### [Warwick Valley Goes for the Green](#)

On September 25th, the most recent recipients of the Green Ribbon Award from the **Warwick Valley Central School District** will be honored in a ceremony by the U.S. Department of Education. All four schools in the District have now been recognized for the considerable strides they have made to instill a culture of sustainability across all grade levels. Learn how they cultivate a caring school community and enhance student motivation and learning through Education for Sustainability.



## CELF News:

### [Hello, Houston!](#)

We are thrilled to announce the launch of **CELF Houston**, the new Texas branch of our organization. [Meet Lisa Gianukos and](#)



Amanda Brown, the Houston-based educators who are infusing our CELF signature programming with a distinct Lone Star flair. Watch for their presentation at the Texas Association of Environmental Education on September 28th.

## Board News: *Teaming up*

This year, CELF welcomed four new Board members. **Melissa Platner, David Ross, Bill Davis and Karina Funk** are helping our team steer the organization toward bigger and better outcomes. Welcome to the team!



**MELISSA PLATNER**



**DAVID ROSS**



**BILL DAVIS**

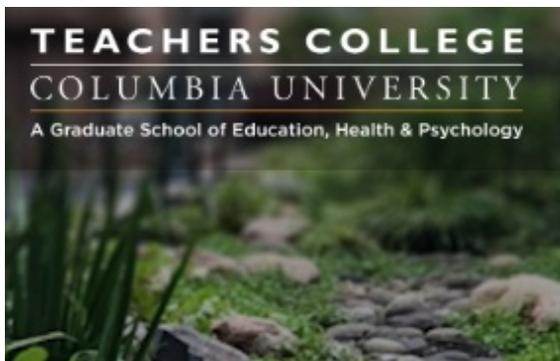
*Our children and grandchildren will be inheriting a world of challenges posed by climate change. It is critically important that they also inherit the knowledge and skills to cope with these challenges. In my day job at Stance Capital, I focus on creating sustainable investment products for our clients, and joining CELF's board has given me the opportunity to participate in advancing sustainability in our schools.*



**KARINA FUNK**

*As portfolio manager of an equity strategy at Brown Advisory, I seek to invest in the companies that are part of the solution to our most critical sustainability problems. My view as a long-term investor intersects with my personal belief that sustainability considerations will, and must, be primary in many more aspects of many more people's lives - from business strategies to consumer choices to educational curricula. CELF's work intersects wonderfully with these professional and personal beliefs. As a new Board member I am very pleased to support CELF's*

*mission to train and empower our next generation of sustainability problem-solvers.*



## Tools for Teachers

### *Free webinars!*

The Columbia Teachers College Initiative for Sustainable Futures has partnered with the NYC DOE Office of Sustainability on a series of **FREE sustainability education webinars** called, "Thinking Global, Educating Local." Check them out! And watch out for a CELF EfS webinar in the series later this year.



## #CELFIinsight

Do you know the difference between a cinnamon fern and a hay-scented fern? I do, now, thanks to our NYU partners at the Wallerstein Collaborative. This summer, Tania Goicoechea, introduced our team to the [iNaturalist app](#) and it has completely transformed our weekend family hikes with my two boys. As much as I love the nature guidebooks of my childhood, I would only rarely drag them out on our walks. The *iNaturalist* app allows you to snap a photo with your phone, identify the plant/insect/animal in question and share your observation with the wider iNaturalist community. If your identification is wrong, your fellow naturalists will definitely let you know! My children now rush to the woods to track down and share new observations. The app has encouraged us all to slow down and take a much closer look at our surroundings. We also enjoy the feedback from the iNaturalist community and the feeling that our observations could contribute to biodiversity science. A few of our butterfly sightings are now part of scientific data repositories. Love it!

*-Alissa Fasman, CELF Communications Manager*

## *Interested in supporting CELF's work?*

Want to help our schools teach students the skills they'll need to build a sustainable future?

- **\$250** provides a classroom with an AirBeam, which measures the presence of air particles that contribute to childhood asthma
- **\$100** provides a teacher with the CELF Sustainability Toolkit
- **\$50** contributes to the Scholarship Fund for teacher participation in the CELF

Summer Institute

- \$25 contributes to the Scholarship Fund for student participation in the CELF Citizen Science: Inquiry to Action program

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