



ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY & SUSTAINABILITY FOR K-12 SCHOOLS

CELF LEADERSHIP CIRCLE OVERVIEW

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TARA STAFFORD OCANSEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TARA@CELFEDUCATION.ORG

LISA GIANUKOS, TEXAS PROGRAM DIRECTOR
LISAGIANUKOS@CELFEDUCATION.ORG



MISSION & VISION

The mission of the Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation -CELf- is to establish sustainability as an integral part of every child's K-12 learning experience.

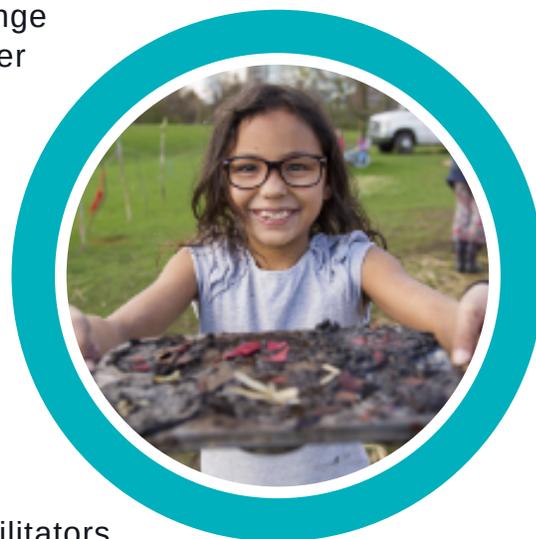
CELf was founded based on the vision of a citizenry with a deep understanding of the dynamic interdependencies between human and natural systems, and the critical role education plays in establishing a healthy and equitable future.

Education for Sustainability (EfS) is an innovative teaching methodology that develops critical thinking skills necessary to understand complex, interconnected social, economic and environmental issues. CELf engages teachers, administrators, students and community leaders through professional development, consulting services, and experiential programs that have reached more than 15,000 teachers and administrators and over 1.5 million students to date.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

We are in a pivotal moment in our history where the inextricable connections between public health, social equity, and the health of our shared environment have been made abundantly clear. As Covid-19 has wreaked havoc in low-income communities and communities of color, the need to educate youth on the interdependence of environmental and social factors that negatively impact our health has become more urgent now than ever before (Schwartz, M. & Rogers Cook, L, 2020; Forrest, A., 2020). CELF seeks to leverage this flash point as an opportunity to catalyze our forward momentum in the field of environmental literacy and K-12 education, and to support teachers as they reframe their teaching practice through a lens of sustainability and environmental justice.

CELf programs are designed to succeed in a wide range of settings and scope. These include multi-day Summer Institutes, school wide professional development workshops offered onsite and virtually, custom curriculum and instruction consulting projects for K-12 educators, and green career speaker series. Our approach is flexible enough to meet educators and school communities where they are on the environmental literacy spectrum of knowledge and implementation, while remaining aligned with state mandated curriculum standards. CELf's framework enables educators to seamlessly integrate sustainability tools, resources and projects into their curriculum with the support and guidance of CELf facilitators.



In the last five years, CELf has seen significant growth in its programmatic and educational partnerships, expanding our impact areas outside of New York to Houston, Texas and Los Angeles, CA. Aligned with an ambitious strategic plan, CELf is developing our Board of Directors and Education Team to support our organization's growth in the Houston-Galveston region by implementing our scalable, place- and project-based programs both in-person and online through new and robust virtual learning experiences, toolkits and resources. Accelerated by the impact Covid-19 has had on school communities and our education system, **we have developed our digital capacity to support our educator community - now national in scale - so they can thrive and are prepared to engage their students through a lens of sustainability, no matter where learning is taking place: at home, in school, or outside.**

CORE PROGRAMS

CELF’s programs are designed to succeed in a range of education settings, supporting teachers, school administrators, non-formal educators, and students on their journey toward whole-system change, and student empowerment. Our programs are continually evolving and improving based on educator feedback that is systematically collected as part of each program.



**SUMMER
INSTITUTES**

Annual CELF Summer Institutes are multi-day immersive training programs for K-12 educators that explore the concept of sustainability and how to bring it to life in the classroom and school community through hands-on activities, case studies, excursions and field work. Participants leave the Institute with resources for project-based learning that increase student engagement and agency



**CIVIC
SCIENCE**

Civic Science: Inquiry to Action is a professional learning program that equips teachers to engage students in hands-on learning to identify, analyze, and solve real-world environmental issues that impact their schools and communities. Exploring cross-curricular inquiry pathways such as air, water and soil quality, and biodiversity, students collect and analyze data, develop action plans, and share their findings and solutions with peers and policy makers.



**WHOLE
SCHOOL CHANGE**

Professional learning designed to meet teachers and school systems where they are on their journey to systems change. From half-day workshops to multi-year engagements, CELF’s tailored engagements help teachers and schools to embed sustainability across curriculum and instruction, administration, facilities, and community connection. to engage students in place-based learning opportunities and civic engagement.



**GREEN
CAREERS**

CELF’s Green Careers Speaker Series connects classrooms directly with industry professionals across sectors to explore opportunities for applying sustainability and systems thinking in their career planning and aspiration. Teachers are supported to connect the speaker engagements to classroom learning and curriculum standards.

MEASURING SUCCESS

The aim of CELF’s programs is to address the widespread need for *students* to:

- 1) understand the interconnections between health, social, economic & environmental issues;
- 2) develop a deep sense of agency through *authentic* opportunities for action; &
- 3) have equitable access to a continuum of high quality education for sustainability.

...and the need for *educators* to:

- 1) become trained in strategies that successfully integrate environmental literacy into existing curricula;
- 2) become proficient in using environmental contexts to improve STEM teaching & learning; &
- 3) facilitate student understanding & application of systems thinking.

By collecting pre- and post-survey data from participating teachers, CELF evaluates the success of our programs by measuring the following outcomes:

Short Term

- Increased teacher understanding of and access to CELF-curated ~~resources and digital~~ tools that support teaching for sustainability
- Increased teacher, student, and community participation in environmental stewardship and advocacy, including improved capacity for data collection and analysis including topics such as air, water, and soil quality, waste, and energy
- Increased teacher and student understanding of interconnections between human and environmental health
- Teachers’ increased capacity for connecting state learning standards, e.g., Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and other state science standards to outdoor and place-based learning
- Expanded learning opportunities for Title 1 schools and under-resourced communities for equitable access to training and nationwide school partnerships

Long Term

- Expanded community partner relationships between schools, community-based environmental organizations and CELF's private industry supporters.
- Increased student interest in careers in engineering, sustainable investment, renewable energy and research
- Enhanced student learning and engagement through teachers’ increased ability to create local, meaningful, real-world learning experiences connected to existing curriculum.
- Improved teacher instructional practice and content knowledge in sustainability principles and place/ problem/project-based teaching, particularly outdoor assets.
- Improved critical and systems thinking skills amongst students related to the decision-making process of individuals and the community.
- Program culminates in participation in an Annual Student Symposium, with the opportunity for CELF corporate partners to participate as a skills-based service opportunity.



TAKING ACTION TOGETHER: CELf LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

CELf formed the Leadership Circle (CLC) in 2020 to engage industry leaders at a local and national level in the sustainable growth and impact of our mission and programs. With the support of the CLC, CELf will help ensure the next generation is taught through a sustainability lens that underscores the connections between environmental integrity, social equity, human health, and economic vitality.

CLC Objectives

The CELf Leadership Circle aims to impact CELf's operations by helping us achieve the following milestones at the local and national levels:

- **Empower student leaders through Environmental Literacy**, with action plans created for waste reduction, energy efficiency and other mediation ideas aligned to school administration and local government initiatives (i.e.- Resilient Houston and Houston Climate Action Plan objectives in TX)
- Expand CELf's programs in school districts within our existing markets -with particular focus on underserved schools- leading the charge for embedding environmental awareness and conservation in **school culture, community and curricula**
- Identify schools with readiness to pursue the National Green Ribbon Award and support pursuit of the National Green Ribbon Award school.
- Track impact from student resilience actions and Whole School Change case study completed by Year 3
- Develop hyper local and broad use digital e-learning programs
- Engage parents, educators, local governments and local businesses at large to support systemic change for sustainable communities

Member Benefits

As partners in our mission and community, Leadership Circle Members are able to participate in the following opportunities:

- **Engage with CELf as a foundational partner in the transformation of our education system, helping to make an exponential impact on promoting systems thinking skills and environmental literacy among our future leaders and workforce**
- CLC high-level networking opportunities throughout the year with other committed sustainability leaders in the business community
- Attend and participate in CELf-led workshops, trainings and Student Symposiums
- Employee Service Days to benefit CELf partner schools
- Local nature outings led by CELf educators and student leaders
- Exclusive CELf Lunch & Learn Workshops about key sustainability concepts for your employees or sustainability activities during "Take Your Child to Work" Day
- Featured partner in CELf Newsletter, social channels and Annual Report
- Gain broader recognition of your company's leadership on sustainability related to local and national environmental and resilient community initiatives

TAKING ACTION TOGETHER: REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

The future health of our world will depend on developing a well-educated and empowered generation of student leaders and local residents who are both environmentally aware and motivated to take action to address real problems. K-12 schools can serve as the incubators for change that we need to shift our planet's trajectory to a more sustainable future.

With your support of a multi-year gift, CELf will deepen and expand engagement in our environmental literacy programs in schools throughout our existing markets, prioritizing Title 1 schools serving environmental justice communities, positioning our teachers as leaders within a growing community of CELf-trained sustainability educators nationwide. This general operating support will go towards NY & TX staffing and associated costs, program delivery, technology and product development, marketing and office operations.

In supporting this work, you will be aligned with an educational program that meets national and state learning standards, and become connected to a nationwide network of educators, schools, thought leaders, and scholars as well as private industry leaders in STEM, energy and conservation fields.

Projected Growth and Impact

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Organizational Budget (projected)	\$800,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,500,000
Projected Reach & Outputs: Scaling across TX; expanding to NJ and MA, and CA; national Reach via Digital Learning & Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100+ schools in NY, TX, CA, Ghana, and beyond participate in CELf Civic Science: Inquiry to Action and the Annual CELf Summer Institute programs 650+ teachers are reached through all CELf programs Through all CELf programs, 50,000 students worldwide are reached through virtual and in-person programming CELf Membership Platform develops to increase access to resources and increase fee-based revenue CELf Leadership Circle grows to 5 Founding Members CELf adds MA and additional Region 4 Texas school districts to its roster of large district vendor status (incl Houston ISD, NYC, NYS, LAUSD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CELf Master Teacher Program is launched to deepen impact and expand reach CELf Membership increases to 10+ schools and districts CELf Leadership Circle adds 3-4 new members Expand programming across existing markets to additional 50+ schools 100,000 students worldwide are reached through virtual and in-person programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 CELf Master Teachers in key markets facilitate turnkey training and EfS ambassadorship in local school communities CELf Membership increases 50% CELf Leadership Circle adds 2-3 new members CELf reaches 5M students worldwide through virtual and in-person programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statewide TX and NY partnerships support adoption of Environmental Literacy across K-12 schools 1,000 teachers complete CELf Environmental Literacy and Civic Science training CELf Leadership Circle adds 2-3 new members Globally, CELf Membership increases 200% CELf reaches 7.5MM students worldwide since inception



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

CEL F will create authentic opportunities throughout the duration of the partnership that would engage corporate employees and leverage their unique professional experience for a skills-based service day or related activity aligned with educating for sustainability, such as:

Buffalo Bayou Partnership's Pontoon Boat Experience

(similar experiences available in other CEL F markets)

Experience outdoor learning like a civic science student and join the CEL F Educator Team in a pontoon boat tour along Houston's historic waterway through downtown and into the industrial side of the city. Employees will collect air quality data on the Buffalo Bayou and experience the impact CEL F's approach to learning can have! *(in person only)*

Family Nature Challenge

CEL F leads families in engaging place-based challenges through our dynamic program, the Family Nature Challenge (FNC). This event focuses on emphasizing skills to cultivate community, build family bonds, and develop leadership characteristics through acts connected to the Big Ideas of Sustainability. Employee families will participate in a variety of fun hands-on challenges focusing on inspiring future leaders and supporting sustainable habits as Earth Citizens. *(virtual or in person)*

Guest Speaker Series

Inspire students in the local community by sharing your Green Career journey to connect with and inform the upcoming generation of leaders. In this opportunity, the CEL F Educator Team will virtually connect corporate volunteers with students for a 20-30 minute guest speaker event. Students will get to draw from the Volunteer's professional trajectory as well as ask clarifying questions. *(virtual or in person)*

Beautification Day

Invest time with the CEL F Educator Team in cleaning up and beautifying a local green space. CEL F will provide the tools and structure for this day of stewardship, beautifying the community's outdoor learning spaces. *(in person only)*

Lunch and Learn Sustainability Workshop

Employees will get a crash course in CEL F's Big Ideas of Sustainability: our approach that emphasizes the interdependence of social, economic and environmental systems. We will draw parallels to the application of systems-thinking in education to the workplace and ESG goals, and explore sustainability through the context of place. *(virtual or in person)*

CELF'S INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTERS

FIRSTRESERVE



TRICON

Worley
energy | chemicals | resources

National
Geographic
Society

FLUOR

WCF WESTCHESTER
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
A DIVISION OF THE NEW YORK COMMUNITY TRUST

NEUBERGER BERMAN

**Howard
Family
Foundation
Inc.**

McMac Cx

**BLUE BEAR
CAPITAL**

[4THBIN]

conEdison, inc.

plume labs



"If you want to make a sustainable impact investment, you need to know CELF. CELF focuses on perhaps the most important audience for sustainability and systems thinking, K-12 students, and the smartest way to reach them: their teachers. I think CELF has a tried and tested model to make enduring change towards sustainability that is ready for replication and taking to scale."

Riva Krut, PhD

VP and Chief Sustainability Officer **Linde PLC** (retired),
CELF Advisory Board