Dear friends and alumni,
In the midst of a glorious autumn, we pause to send you our hello and news of our activities. We enjoyed an exciting and busy year in 2018-2019. You’ll find more details within these pages, but here are a few especially important items:

You’re invited! Help us celebrate the 25th anniversary of our Adirondack Experience first-year learning community, now under the coordination of Dr. Donald McNutt. Please join us for a party on Dec. 6th (see details on page 5).

Hello! This fall we welcomed new secretary Sarah Carr and two new faculty members, Dr. Katherine Cleary and Dr. Claudia Ford, who epitomize the interdisciplinarity of our program and we are excited about the excellence in teaching and scholarship they are bringing to our students!

Stay in touch! We have recently wished a fond farewell to secretary Lynne Durant, Professor Bill Brown and Dr. Ashley Reis. All went on to other endeavors after serving our program with incredible passion and dedication. They are missed, but we do keep in touch.

We hope you will stay in touch with us, too! We love hearing from our alum and learning what wonderful things you are doing out there in the world. Please drop us a line and stay in touch (see contact info request on page 8).

Best wishes,
Heather Sullivan-Catlin, Ph.D., Chair
Dr. Claudia J. Ford teaches Environmental Studies, Environmental Justice & Literature, Environmental and Business Ethics, and Global Business Economics. Dr. Ford has had a career in women’s health and international development spanning three decades and all continents. Her research interests are in traditional ecological knowledge, agroecology, historical ethnobotany, medicinal plants, and reproductive health justice. Dr. Ford is also a midwife, writer, and visual artist, and has shared the joys and adventures of her global travel with her four children.

Dr. Heather Sullivan-Catlin joined the Sociology Department in 2000 and has been active in the Environmental Studies program since its inception. Her primary areas of work in environmental sociology center on sustainable communities (especially cohousing and ecovillages) and community food security. She is actively engaged in applied learning and incorporates service-learning activities into many of her courses, involves students in community-based research projects, serves as sponsor for student interns, and leads travel courses abroad and field trips closer to home— all in an effort to provide students with important opportunities to develop into engaged global citizens. Putting these ideas into practice in her own life, Dr. Sullivan-Catlin has been active in local sustainability efforts, chiefly through her long involvement with GardenShare, a non-profit community food security organization for which she served as president from 2008-2013. She is currently active with the North Country 350 Alliance, an organization working on global climate change and sustainability. In between teaching and marching, her favorite pastimes include reading eco-apocalyptic novels, canoe camping in the Adirondacks, hiking, biking, and having fun with her husband, two daughters.

Dr. Kate Cleary is a conservation biologist with experience working in diverse ecosystems in the Rocky Mountain west, Latin America, and most recently, the Adirondacks. She holds a PhD in Ecology and Conservation Genetics from the University of Idaho, and an MSc in Conservation Biology from Colorado State University. In between earning these degrees, Cleary served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Guatemala from 2007-2010, and conducted research as a Fulbright Student Scholar in Costa Rica in 2013. Her current research interests are relevant in both the tropics and the North Country: she is interested in conservation on private lands, wildlife habitat connectivity, and sustainable and biodiversity-friendly agricultural systems. Cleary moved to the North Country three years ago and is very happy to have landed at SUNY Potsdam—she values the campus’s small size, commitment to diversity, and appreciation for interdisciplinary teaching and research.

Dr. Jessica Rogers, a North Country native, has returned after receiving her undergraduate degree at Princeton University and her masters and PhD at Columbia University. She is currently an Assistant Professor in Biology and Environmental Studies at SUNY Potsdam. Her research interests look at landscape conservation: more traditionally through deforestation changes in protected areas using GIS (Geographic Information Systems), as well as examining practical methods of conservation in the North Country. More information about Dr. Roger’s research and teaching can be found at drjessicarogers.weebly.com.

Dr. Matthew LaVine received his MA and PhD in Philosophy from the University at Buffalo, earned a BA in Philosophy and Mathematics, as well as an MA in Mathematics, from SUNY Potsdam before earning an MA and PhD in Philosophy from the University at Buffalo. His interest in the environment was solidified by his experiences working on a small organic farm just outside of Utica, NY as a teenager. Since becoming a member of the Environmental Studies department, Matt has taught upper-division courses on Environmental Ethics and Environmental Justice, as well as a new critical thinking seminar on residential segregation. His approach to the environment is largely driven by the idea that we cannot hope to have a significant impact on the rampant environmental degradation all around us without our world moving in a more just direction and vice versa!

Dr. Cleary’s research includes "the effects of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem function in the Rocky Mountains." Her work focuses on the impacts of climate change on the diversity and functioning of mountain ecosystems, which are expected to experience significant changes as a result of warming temperatures. She has conducted field studies in both the Rocky Mountains and the Adirondacks, using a combination of field observations, laboratory experiments, and modeling approaches to understand the processes that drive changes in species diversity and ecosystem processes. Her work has implications for conservation and management strategies in a rapidly changing world.
Dr. Rogers Performs Geographic Information Systems Research with Students

Fresh out of college with a degree from Princeton University in 2001, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies Dr. Jessica Rogers was offered a job in Kenya to conduct research on zebras in a remote region four hours north of Nairobi. Her task? Photograph hundreds of zebras, in order to determine their migration patterns.

“That was at the dawn of GIS [Geographic Information Systems] and digital cameras. I had a three-pound digital camera that I’d take out into the field with a GPS unit. I photographed probably 1,500 zebras facing left and barcoded them up the neck,” Rogers said. “It was a really cool way of proving a spatial issue that actually linked to conservation. How do we conserve them if we don’t know if they actually live here all the time?”

Her work in Africa set up a long-term connection with global conservation efforts. She first moved back to New York City where she landed a job with the Wildlife Conservation Society at the Bronx Zoo. “I was the intern for their program in Asia and Africa. So, I communicated with conservationists who were in all of those countries, 53 countries at the time. I would correspond with the people who were running their programs in these other countries and build websites for them,” she said.

From there, she entered a graduate program at Columbia University, which culminated with a return trip to Africa for her Ph.D. research. She spent time looking at the forests in Central Africa and Gabon, their new national parks system and the conservation decisions being made there. “In literally the snap of a finger, they went from zero national parks to 13—and 10 percent of the country protected in one day—when President Bongo made the announcement at the World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa in 2002.”

Rogers started analyzing satellite photographs and creating GIS maps to examine and document the human impact on these newly designated national parks. “That was my Ph.D. research, looking at how we know protected areas do anything. Is there less deforestation inside them? I could use satellite photographs and GIS technology to really analyze how that worked,” she said. “I wanted to see how science informed our conservation policy decisions.”

After finishing her Ph.D. in 2011 she moved back to her childhood home—Potsdam, N.Y. where she is now helping to lead SUNY Potsdam’s Department of Environmental Studies. “The nice thing is that environmental studies is still a growing discipline. It’s been a growing major and department here for 15 years. We only became a department six months after I was hired,” she said.

In the process, she has created unique research opportunities for her students, including an in-depth GIS project with three of her seniors last semester. Rogers and her students looked at satellite images from 1990, 2000 and 2013 to determine how the national parks have changed over time. “They worked with me on recreating my Ph.D.—looking at more data of how deforestation affected protected areas in Central Africa. They got to do an entire semester of project-based learning,” Rogers said. “That will be research I will be working with my students going forward for the next couple of years I hope.”

Another project revolves around the purple loosestrife, an invasive plant species in Northern New York. Rogers is into her third summer of research with her environmental studies students to map the infestation. This summer her team has gone one step further—trying to determine the most economically efficient technique for eradicating purple loosestrife. Through funding from the Nature Conservancy, they examined different methods including cutting off the flowering tops, digging up the plants and introducing the Galerucella beetle to eat the purple loosestrife.

“...the snap of a finger, they went from zero national parks to 13—and 10 percent of the country protected in one day—when President Bongo made the announcement at the World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa in 2002.”

Rogers’ team is also in its third and final summer of collecting GIS data on the wild purple loosestrife growing throughout the North Country. Using GIS receivers—purchased through a Lougheed Applied Learning Grant—her students have been able to boost their signal in remote areas while collecting GIS data points. Starting on Route 56 just north of the entrance to the Adirondacks, they have been mapping the purple loosestrife along an 88-mile section of state highway from Colton to Ogdensburg, and from Waddington to Alexandria Bay.

These research opportunities are unique at the undergraduate level and give students a chance to take what they’ve learned in the classroom and apply it in the field. “All of the core classes that the Department of Environmental Studies offers require some level of activism, service learning or project-based learning,” she said.

Whether she’s teaching her introduction to GIS class, a senior seminar in environmental studies or an environmental futures class, Rogers truly cares about her students on both an academic and personal level. “I want them to be the best version of themselves,” she said. “My favorite part of teaching is that moment when something I say or something I connect to, blows their mind. If I’m teaching intro students, it’s usually figuring out that pineapples grow out of the ground and not a tree. It just changes how they think about everything.”
Andre Bruno Turcotte ’17

“I’ve spent most of my life in the Adirondacks and always wanted to be a part of protecting it. As the Fire Tower Steward on Hadley Mountain I was able to live in a log cabin on top of a mountain with my dog and do just that. I was living a part of my dream. Moving forward this opportunity provided the inspiration and experience to pursue a career in the environmental field.”

2019 Student Internship Placements

**Summer**
Andrew Bender ’20: NRC East Environmental Inc.
Craig Kuhnert ’19: Massawepie Conservation Intern
Eric Fleury ’20: St. Lawrence Land Trust
Alexandra Hamilton ’20: Blue Mountain Fire Tower Steward
Bailey LaBarge ’20: St. Lawrence Land Trust
Owen Maskell ’19: Invasive Species Research Intern, SUNY Research Foundation
Eric Rotila ’20: WISER Center Intern
Brendon Smith ’21: Fort Drum Invasive Species Intern
Juliana Spinella ’21: Adirondack Watershed Institute Boat Steward
Chynna Tomastyk ’21: Animal care intern, Center for Science Teaching & Learning
Jason Zembek ’20: Perras Companies/Environmental Control

**Spring**
Christian Hamilton ’19: GIS & Remotely Sensed Date Gathering Central African Protected Areas
Michael Nicoletti ’19: GIS & Remotely Sensed Date Gathering Central African Protected Areas
Nolan Rishe ’20: Connection of Road Culverts to Invasive Species Research
Takema Sakei: GIS & Remotely Sensed Date Gathering Central African Protected Areas
Kacey Shackleton ’19: WISER Center Intern and Sustainable Food

**Fall**
Julia Biondi ’20: WISER Center Intern

Student Spotlight: Amber Rudolph ’20

Whether she’s visiting an ecovillage in Ireland, conducting a research project on a community garden, or cleaning a boa constrictor tank in the Department of Biology, Amber Rudolph ’20 has been gaining a cornucopia of applied learning experiences, while pursuing a double major in Environmental Studies and Biology at SUNY Potsdam.

Now she’s back at SUNY Potsdam, in her senior year. She’s taking on a leadership role as the new vice president of the Student Government Association and she lined up two internships: one with working in the WISER Greenhouse and one focused on launching sustainability initiatives on campus. Rudolph will be researching best practices for student engagement in higher education sustainability efforts, working with the Student Government Association to establish a fund for campus sustainability projects, and attending the AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education) conference in October, 2019 where she will be leading a workshop with Dr. Heather Sullivan-Catlin on sustainable communities.

“This semester I am delighted to continue working with Amber in her role as a campus sustainability program assistant,” said Sullivan-Catlin. “Amber is completing this project as a bridge between her Environmental Studies and Biology majors and her strong interest in sustainability.”

Rudolph’s passion for environmental studies and biology stemmed from her love for the outdoors. “I was drawn to environmental studies because being in nature and being outside have been a huge part of my life. I keep myself busy, but I always try to factor in time to just go outside and go hiking,” she said.

After Commencement next spring, Rudolph has her sights set on being a wildlife technician. “They work more in the field with conservation, whether it’s tracking or doing research with animals. I want to do that for a little bit, and then maybe long term become a park ranger. With my sustainability internship and a trip to Ireland, I’m not opposed to broadening my horizons more,” Rudolph said.
Students and faculty dig in deep to understand people’s relationships with nature, integrating journal writing, projects, class discussion and hands on fieldwork.

The Department of Environmental Studies places a high value on experiential education and applied learning.

We strongly encourage students to engage in internships, service learning, field research, or study abroad as an integral part of their undergraduate education.

The Adirondack Experience is a coordinated program for first-year students who are concerned about environmental issues and want to get outdoors to learn about the region.

Established in 1994, the program includes courses from different disciplines that share a common environmental studies emphasis and use the six million acre Adirondack Park as case study and classroom for applied learning and includes a variety of engaging field trips.

Celebrating 25 years of our beloved Adirondack first-year learning community!

It has had a variety of names over the years - Adirondack Coordinated Studies, Adirondack FIG, Adirondack Experience - but it is all the same great program! Come help us celebrate!

Friday, December 6th
5:00-7:00pm
PAC (Performing Arts Center) Lobby

RSVP and/or send a message, share a memory, or give a shout out to a fellow student or faculty member for us to include in the celebration: https://forms.gle/LNDtUs5EzsdP9jss7
Where Are They Now?

**Elisa Drazek ’17**
**Majors/Minors:** Environmental Studies major, Environmental Science and Wilderness Education minor
**Employment:** United States Air Force
**Favorite ES Memory:** The FIG field trip to the bogs!

**Kevin Chlad ’08**
**Majors/Minors:** Environmental Studies/ Wilderness Education
**Employment:** I serve as the Director of Government Relations for the Adirondack Council, the largest environmental non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the ecological integrity and wild character of our Adirondack Park.
**Favorite ES Memory:** I have fond memories of the “Freshmen Adirondack semester,” when I took a package of Adirondack-focused courses with 16 students. My fellow classmates were all fantastic people. We took two field trips into the Adirondacks every week for the entire semester and were entirely immersed in a deeply rewarding experience. In that semester I learned a great deal about the global and historical significance of the Adirondacks and decided that I wanted to dedicate my life to preserving this very special place for current and future generations.

**Kelly Deshaies ’17**
**Majors/Minors:** Environmental Studies major, Geology minor
**Employment:** Academic Counselor/ Tutor Coordinator for TRIO Student Support Services at SUNY Potsdam
**Favorite ES Memory:** When we went to Hart’s Falls for Senior Seminar and I got to play lumberjack and chop down a tree with an ax.

**Nathan Carr ’18**
**Majors/Minors:** Environmental Studies major, Communications minor
**Employed:** Energy Manager & Sustainability Coordinator at SUNY Potsdam
**Favorite ES Memory:** Trips into the Adirondacks
Christina Cranwell ’18

Majors/Minors: environmental studies minor – biology

Employment: I’ve been jumping around a bit this past year rounding out my skill set. In fall of 2018, I moved to Alachua, FL to apprentice at Swallowtail Farm to experience my first production farm. In the winter/spring of 2019 I moved back to NY where I worked as a naturalist at the Nature of Things. Surprisingly I worked alongside another Potsdam Alumni. In the Summer of 2019, I found my way to Obercreek Farm where I currently work. Now that I have some fundamental farming skills under my belt, I’m beginning to shift my focus to learning how to run and manage organic and sustainable operations.

Favorite ES Memory: My favorite Potsdam memory was a spring break trip to the Eco-Village in Ithaca. While I considered myself an environmentalist professionally, it wasn’t until this moment that I felt like an environmentalist in my personal life as well. I learned how to ferment and preserve foods which is something I do quite often now.

Emily Gugliotta ’17 & ’18

Majors/Minors: Environmental Studies/ Political Science. Master of Science in Childhood Education.

Employment: Currently a second year 3rd grade teacher in Glens Falls, NY. I won a grant to purchase a tower garden for my elementary school which will be used as a teaching tool for a garden club I have begun with 2 other educators. We hope to send food grown home with students in need. The picture I am sending is from my recent travels to Banff, Alberta where I saw amazing wildlife and hikes the most beautiful trails!

Favorite ES Memory: Working on my Presidential Scholar project with Dr. Jess Rogers.

Nick Grippe ’17

Majors/Minors: Environmental Studies major, Wilderness Education and Therapeutic recreation minor

Employment: Senior Field Instructor for Evoke @ Entrada Therapy Programs.

Upon graduating from SUNY Potsdam I worked for True North Wilderness Therapy based out of Waitsfield VT. Spring of 2018 I traveled to St. George UT to begin working at Evoke @ Entrada wilderness programs. Since moving to Utah, I have had the ability to attend the wilderness therapy symposium based out park city Utah. With my position I have been able to travel for extended periods of time. Coming up in November I will going to Vietnam.

Favorite ES Memory: Visiting Massawepie Mire with Bill Browns Biodiversity conservation course.
Please Keep in Touch!

We would love to know where you are and what you are doing. Please visit potsdam.edu/alumni/services/update to update the Alumni Association about yourself, and your contact information.

You can also email our department secretary, Sarah Carr, at carrsl@potsdam.edu with any updates to your contact information.

Please consider supporting the students, faculty, and programs in the Environmental Studies Department by visiting secure.potsdam.edu/giving/ or by mailing the form below with your check (made payable to The Potsdam College Foundation-Environmental Studies Department) to: 44 Pierrepont Avenue, Potsdam NY 13676.

Yes, I (we) will support SUNY Potsdam! Please use my (our) gift for:

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- ☐ SUNY Potsdam’s Greatest Needs
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My gift will be: $ ________________

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   Card # ____________________________ Exp. Date ___________
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☐ My check payable to Potsdam College Foundation is enclosed.
   I pledge to make this gift this fiscal year. Send me reminders before June 30 in
   _____ 2 installments _____ 4 installments

☐ I am enclosing a matching gift form from my or my spouse’s employer.
   Company Name: _______________________
   Check www.potsdam.edu/matchinggift to see if your employer matches gifts.

If you are receiving this in print form, we do not have an email address for you. To go paperless, please email your contact information to Sarah Carr: carrsl@potsdam.edu
Nine Students Visit Ecovillage in Ireland

**SOCI 395: Sustainable Communities: The Ecovillage Experience**

In Spring 2019, Dr. Sullivan-Catlin led a short-term travel course where nine students studied sustainable communities through immersion experiences at two thriving ecovillages – one in Ithaca, NY, and the other in Cloughjordan, Ireland! They experienced community life through social and service-learning activities, workshops with community residents and educators, field trips to nearby sustainability projects and explored the natural surroundings at each location. Dr. Sullivan-Catlin plans to offer this course in the spring of odd years. Next one: 2021!
On September 20, 2019, students, faculty, and staff walked out of class in support of the Global Climate Strike. At the event, which was organized by SUNY Potsdam’s Environmental Club, campus members met in Minerva plaza and called for immediate action regarding the current global crisis. Students chanted, “What we stand for is what we stand on,” and signed petitions to advocate for action on climate change.