



**SONOMA
STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL
INQUIRY**

2023

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Education into Action



This year we are celebrating connections.

CEI *builds connections* that give a new generation of leaders the knowledge, skills and experience to create a sustainable future. Through CEI, students across all disciplines connect with

community leaders to develop new solutions to local environmental challenges. When they enter the workforce, SSU graduates have practical experience bringing about *transformational change*.

Inside you will find stories about these connections - people finding *belonging and agency* working together to create critical new learning spaces, develop solutions to local water and fire challenges, and restore the ecosystems that support us.

We hope you will find inspiration in these stories and *connect with us!*

Let's get environmentally ready now.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Claudia Luke".

Dr. Claudia Luke, Director

CEI in Action

Our goal is an environmentally ready society, one with the knowledge, skills and experience to solve environmental challenges. With our programs and lands, CEI gives students of all ages and backgrounds:

Personal connections
to the ecosystems that support us

Hands-on skills
to work on environmental issues

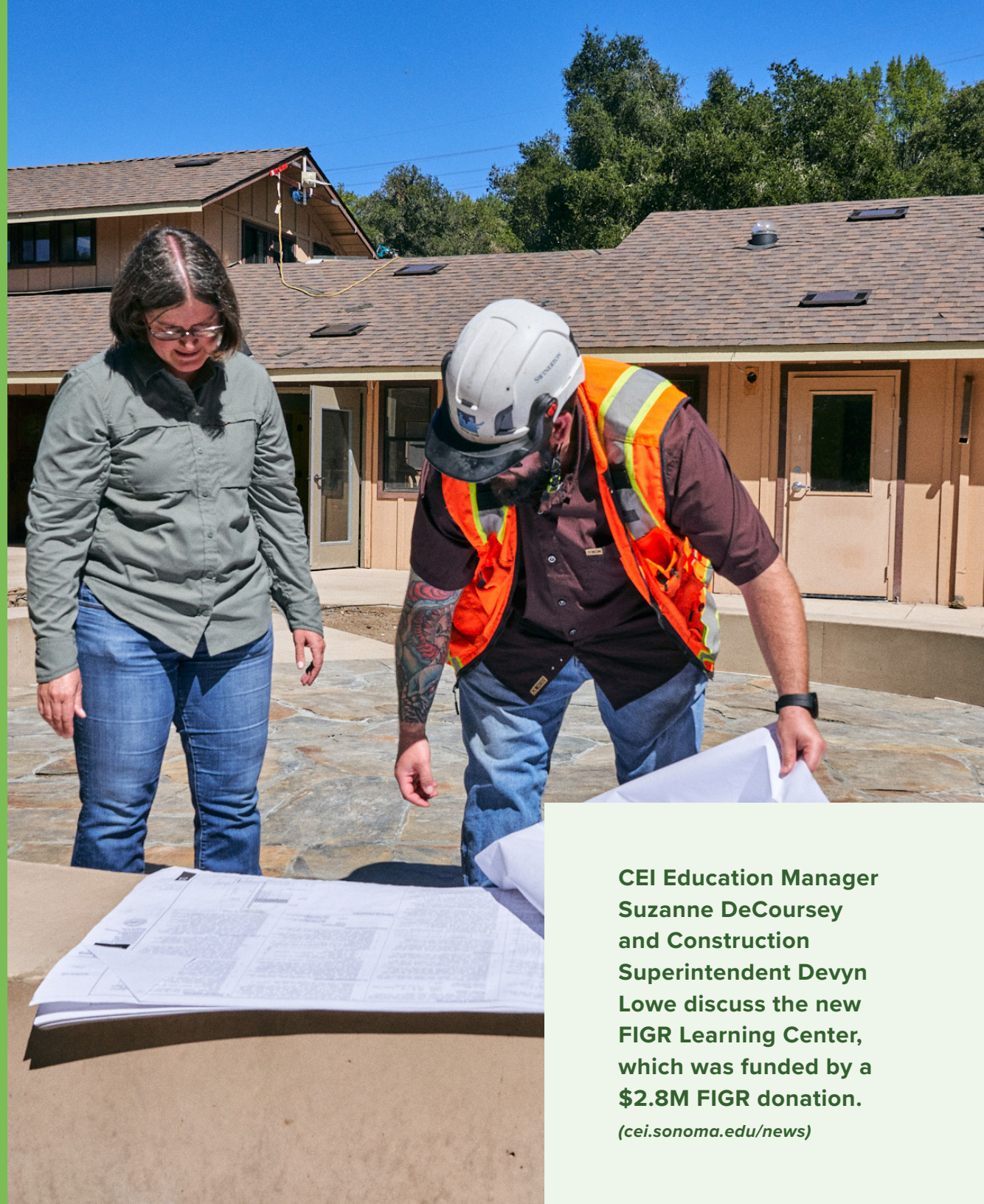
Real-world experiences
working collaboratively on priority regional challenges



MAKING SPACE for conversations

Natural environments significantly improve our ability to learn and willingness to exchange ideas.

The new Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR) Learning Center, opening January 2024 at the Osborn Preserve, creates outdoor spaces designed to enhance cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural communication about the environment.



**CEI Education Manager
Suzanne DeCoursey
and Construction
Superintendent Devyn
Lowe discuss the new
FIGR Learning Center,
which was funded by a
\$2.8M FIGR donation.**

(cei.sonoma.edu/news)

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS to solutions

Innovation is sparked by communication among people of different backgrounds and perspectives.

CEI brings together people of all ages and backgrounds to develop new ideas and find new ways forward on existing challenges.



Donor Barbara Mackenzie works with SSU student Kyla Deocampo to re-imagine the SSU Native Plant Gardens as a place for visitors to discover their connections to ecosystems.

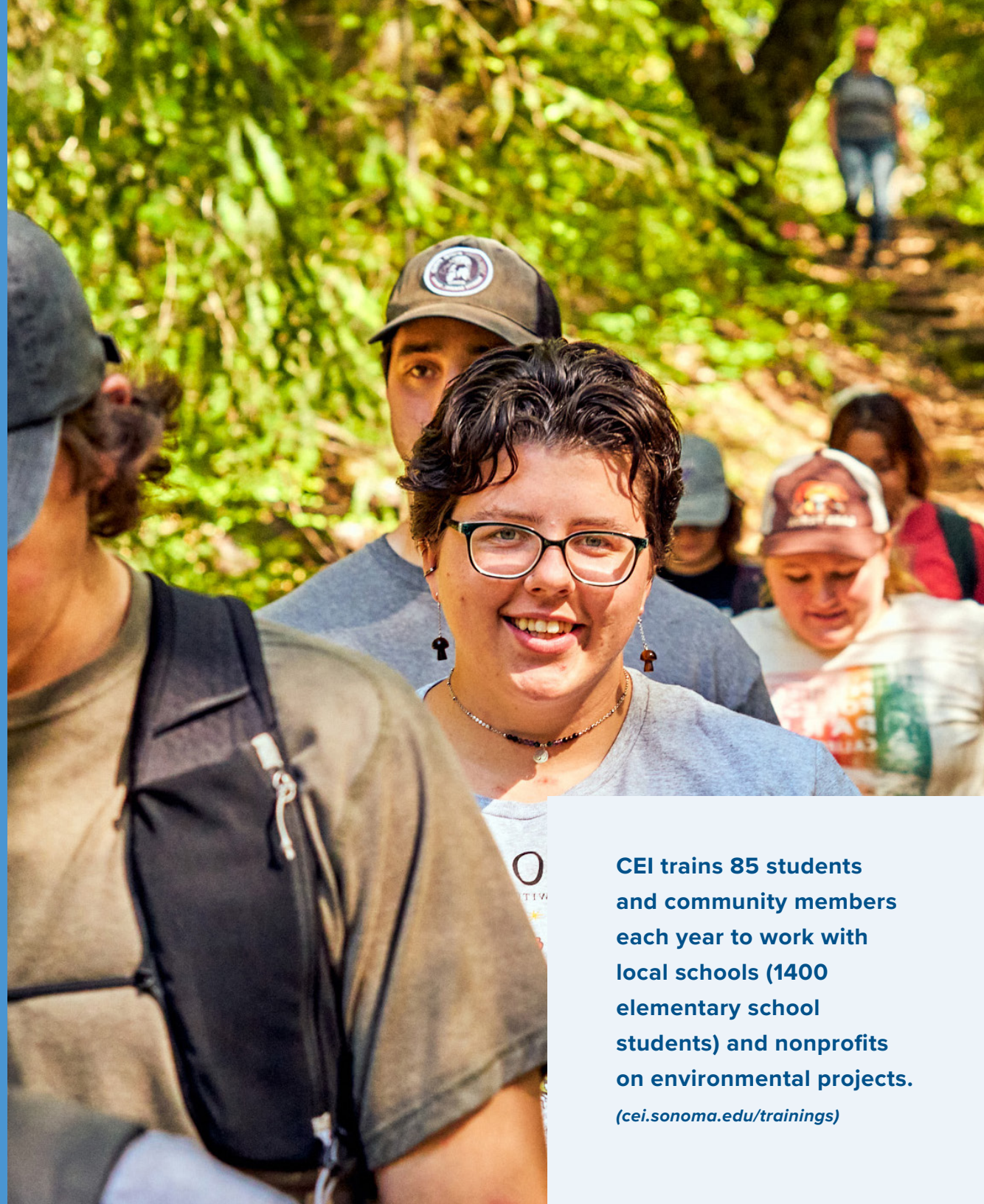
(cei.sonoma.edu/preserves/garden)

CULTIVATING BELONGING for new leaders

Diversity in environmental leadership leads to new ideas and innovative solutions, yet expanding representation and inclusivity requires more than an invitation.

CEI programs create belonging, particularly for students at risk.

“This community has kept me from dropping out. It has been a transformative experience.... You changed my life!”



CEI trains 85 students and community members each year to work with local schools (1400 elementary school students) and nonprofits on environmental projects.
(cei.sonoma.edu/trainings)

ENCOURAGING CONTRIBUTION from community

Most of us care deeply about the natural world, but are unsure what we can do to help.

CEI's Dig-into-Nature public workshops teach hands-on skills and how to get involved in regional projects.



**Kerry Winger (left)
designs 30 public
workshops each year
- most free of charge -
that explore the culture,
economy and science
of the environment.**

(cei.sonoma.edu/calendar)

MAKING CONNECTIONS

restoring ecosystems

Building a sustainable future is dependent on our ability to establish a healthy reciprocal relationship with ecosystems.

Demonstration projects at SSU Preserves and Gardens teach participants about human-environment interactions and how to restore healthy relationships.



SSU students Melia Zimmerman (left) and Bethany Vidamo gather data to assess forest resilience to wildfire at the Galbreath Preserve. The project is part of an \$890K collaborative grant from the State Coastal Conservancy.

(cei.sonoma.edu/news)

2023 IMPACT

Academic Engagement

1,385 Students + **6,320** virtually

104 Faculty + **1,304** virtually (cei.sonoma.edu/about)

41 Disciplines: Performing Arts, Social Sciences, Education, Ethnic Studies, Music, Tech, Natural Sciences, Anthropology...

Community Connections

320 Project Partners (cei.sonoma.edu/about/partners)

1,497 K-12 Students and Teachers

1,281 Community Participants + **1,397** virtually

For all projects, see cei.sonoma.edu/projects/search

CENTER RESTORATION PROJECTS

Fairfield Osborn Preserve - 450 acres

Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria Learning Center
Effects of fuel reduction under transmission lines on pollinator diversity
Grassland fuel reduction and restoration

Galbreath Wildlands Preserve - 3,670 acres

In-stream habitat improvements for salmon populations
Prescribed burn permitting and public outreach
Fuel reduction for safety and oak woodland conservation

Los Guillicos Preserve - 40 acres

Forest fuel reduction after the Glass Fire

SSU Campus

Native Plant Garden restoration
Copeland Creek riparian restoration

54 SUPPORTED PROJECTS

Fire - 7 projects

Coordinating wildfire preparedness in rural communities
Dr. Roxanne Ezzet, SSU Sociology, Upper Mark West Fire Safe Council

Quantification of fuel loads in oak-bay woodland
Dr. Lisa Bentley, SSU Biology

Water - 15 projects

Links between homelessness and water quality
Dr. Jacquelyn Guilford, SSU Geography, Environment & Planning (GEP)

A rapid screening tool for microplastics in the Russian River Watershed
Dr. Manza Atkinson, SSU Chemistry

Restoration needs in urban Copeland Creek
Dr. Nick Geist, SSU Biology

Air & Climate - 4 projects

Resilience of underserved communities to air quality declines
Dr. Daniel Soto, SSU GEP

Alternate climate futures through creative writing
Dr. Fawn Canady, SSU Curriculum Studies and Secondary Education

Biodiversity - 19 projects

Reducing impacts of bullfrogs on native species
Dr. Derek Girman, SSU Biology

Maintaining biodiversity through mountain lion conservation
Jake Harvey, University of Nebraska

Environmental Learning - 9 projects

Using virtual field trips to boost science skills for underserved students
Drs. Angelica Patterson, Sara Kassis and Lisa Bentley, Mount Holyoke College, SSU Engineering, SSU Biology

Increasing awareness of ecological processes on the SSU campus
Dr. Justine Law, SSU Hutchins School

2024 GOALS

With your help, we are turning an SSU education into environmental action. Our goal is to give every student an unforgettable leadership experience studying the environment before they graduate!

This year we need your help to:

Connect all incoming SSU students to local ecosystems

Launch a cross-cultural series on the environment at the new FIGR Learning Center

Increase the number of student teams working with community leaders on environmental challenges

Please join us by volunteering, participating or donating!



Donors & Volunteers

Thank you to all of our supporters for investing in an environmentally-ready generation. (cei.sonoma.edu/about/supporters)

VISIONARIES (Lifetime)

\$100,000 & above

The Federated Indians
of Graton Rancheria
Tribal Council

City of Rohnert Park

Cotati/Rohnert Park
Unified School District

Fred & Jean Galbreath

Robert & Sue Johnson

Marthe & Stephen
Norwick

Joan & William Roth

Daphne W. Smith

Michelle & Robert
Friend

Susan Norwick
Horrocks & Keith
Horrocks

Daniel & Quincey
Imhoff

Richard & Johanna
Luke

Santa Rosa Garden
Club

Jean F. Schulz

Cathy & Chuck
Williamson

Terri & David Yost

GUIDES

\$25–\$999

Stacey Bosick

John Branscome

Annemarie & Matt
Brown

Ruth Burke

Gwendolyn P. Dhesi

Douglas R. Emery

Judith Ochs Giampaoli
& Mark Giampaoli

Natasha Giannini

Susan & Joseph Gorin

Paula Hammett &
Robert Hope, III

Sharon & A.J. Janulaw

Sachiko & Michael
Knappman

Laguna De Santa Rosa
Foundation

Charlene Lennon

Edward Culberson &
Elizabeth E. Lotz

Elizabeth A. Manwaring

Geoffrey Marcy

Michael R. Murphy

Lance & Christina Plaza

Mark & Margot Rawlins

Bruce W. Reinik

Robbie Johnson
Rhodes & Dan Rhodes

Jacques & Barbara
Schlumberger

John Sheehy & Laurie
Szujevska

Mamoru Shimokochi

Hugh Stevenson
& Diane Paleczny-
Stevenson

Kirsten & Steve Tellez

Raye L. Thomas

Julie Ward

Warren & Janis Watkins

Richard Whitkus

Dan Whitton & Kerry E.
Winingar

Ella Wong

Jacob Yarrow

LEGACY & ENDOWED GIFTS

Anonymous

Fred & Jean Galbreath

Marthe Norwick

Georgette Skellenger

Daphne W. Smith

IN-KIND

Alexandra McDonald

Operations

Revenue

- 47% SSU/CSU
- 37% Corporate
Partners & Agencies
- 8% Individual Donations
- 8% Endowments

Total: \$755,876

Expenditures

- 74% Programs
- 11% Operations
- 10% Lands & Facilities
- 5% Communications

Total: \$778,850

Staff

Gina Baleria, EdD, Strategic
Communications

Andy Balestracci, Galbreath Logistics
Lead

Suzanne DeCoursey, MS, Education
Manager

Chris Halle, PhD, Project Development
Lead

Claudia Luke, PhD, Director

Margot Rawlins, Galbreath Program
Coordinator

Kerry Winingar, MS, Outreach Lead

Julie Wittmann, MS, Community Naturalist
Coordinator

Heidi Herrmann, MA, Native Plant Garden
Coordinator

Project Employees

The Virtual Field Project: Sara Kassis, Nizar Kassis, Adrian Feener, Mika Di Lello, Amara Del Prato

Student Assistants: Christine Anderson, Jesse Block, Patrick Campbell, Aaron Carr, Riley Cheda, James Cutino, Kyla Deocampo, GA Hale Garcia-Dean, Danielle Gulseth, Claudia Mayo, Mayce Newcomb, Tristan Niles, Lily Roberts, Owen Bianchini Stults, Senay Taskin, Chloe Winsemiuth, Melia Zimmerman

Photographers: Kieran Friedman, Scott Gibson, Kerry Winingar, James Wirth

Turning Education into Action

All program funding comes from your contributions



