



### **Supporting Equitable Access to Funding for Adaptation Resources**

The Nature Conservancy has organized an Advisory Committee of community leaders, environmental justice advocates, policy professionals, and government officials to collaboratively identify and address inequities in state and federal funding systems. Members include:

#### **Bruna Attila**

Coastal Planner Baltimore Office of Sustainability

[bruna.attila@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:bruna.attila@baltimorecity.gov)

Bruna Attila is an accomplished environmental scientist with a strong passion for promoting environmental justice and advocating for policies that promote equity and sustainability. Throughout her career, Brunna has worked closely with community groups, government agencies, and non-profit and for-profit organizations to identify and address environmental injustices. Brunna's professional focus and experience also encompasses environmental compliance, coastal zone and floodplain management, project management and process optimization. She holds a Master's in Environmental Science from Towson University and a Master's in Environmental Planning and Management from Johns Hopkins University. Brunna is also a certified Project Management Professional, a Certified Floodplain Manager and is a LEED Accredited Professional in Neighborhood Development.

#### **Jo Birch**

Floodplain Manager, Baltimore Office of Sustainability

[Joanna.Birch@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Joanna.Birch@baltimorecity.gov)

Joanna Birch is Baltimore City's Floodplain Manager. Joanna was born and raised in Maryland. She's originally from St. Mary's County and grew up surrounded by water. She has more than a decade of experience working in data-driven mapping and environmental compliance in both the public and private sectors. Joanna holds a BS in Environmental Science from the University of Maryland, a Master of Arts in Teaching from Goucher College, and a Master's Certificate in Geographic Information Science from Penn State University. Her interests and hobbies include gardening and houseplants, spending time on the water, doing anything crafty, and making maps.

#### **Astrid Caldas**

Senior Climate Scientist for Community Resilience, Union of Concerned Scientists

[acaldas@ucsusa.org](mailto:acaldas@ucsusa.org)

Astrid Caldas is a senior climate scientist for community resilience with the Climate & Energy program at the Union of Concerned Scientists, working on climate change adaptation with practical policy implications for ecosystems, the economy, and society. Her work focuses on science communication, community resilience, and equitable and just adaptation and resilience policies. Hailing from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, after a successful academic career in field ecology, she left academia to bring word of the science behind climate change impacts to elected



officials, policy makers, communities, town halls, radio shows, student panels, retirement homes, faith communities, rallies, and anything in between. Astrid holds degrees in Entomology, Ecology and Environmental Management and has been quoted widely, including in The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Time Science, and People Magazine. She has appeared on numerous NPR stations, PBS, CBS, NBC, Fox, Univisión, and Telemundo. She tweets under the handle @climategeek.

### **Amber Doherty**

Conservation Community Director, National Aquarium  
[adoherty@aqua.org](mailto:adoherty@aqua.org)

### **Jay Monteverde**

US Environmental Justice Program Director, Mid Atlantic Justice Coalition  
[jaymonteverde@namati.org](mailto:jaymonteverde@namati.org)

### **Maria Payan**

Community Organizer, Socially Responsible Agriculture Project  
[payans@zoominternet.net](mailto:payans@zoominternet.net)

Maria has worked for over two decades to educate and advocate for socially responsible agriculture throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed states through forums, films, community events, and even after-school programs for children. Maria has been instrumental in working with communities to fight the expansion of industrial animal facilities throughout Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. She is committed to keeping independent farmers viable, while striving to preserve our natural resources and rural heritage for future generations. Through her organizing work, Maria has formed strong coalitions to empower rural communities, especially in underserved communities with little political power. Maria co-founded Sussex Health & Environmental Network and Sentinels of Eastern Shore Health, grassroots coalition groups focused on community empowerment and meaningful participation in the decision making processes.

### **Walkiria Pool**

President and Founder, Centro de Apoyo Familiar  
[wpool@mycaf.org](mailto:wpool@mycaf.org)

Walkiria Pool's professional career includes over 15 years in community development and the housing service industry with a focus on affordable housing and asset development. She earned her MA Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University and a graduate certificate in Women and Politics and Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts in Boston. As an undergraduate Ms. Pool earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts in Boston, majoring in Psychology and Sociology. Ms. Pool was responsible for developing and implementing the Project "Más a ti" for the National Council of La Raza, the first community-based financial institution for low-income families in the nation. Ms. Pool also served as Youth Program Director in the family Asset Building division of Lawrence



Community Works and as an AmeriCorps Vista member at the Allston Brighton Community Development Corporation. She has served on several boards of directors and advisory committees of community-based organizations.

### **Shannon Sprague**

Environmental Literacy and Partnerships Manager National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Chesapeake Bay Office

[shannon.sprague@noaa.gov](mailto:shannon.sprague@noaa.gov)

Shannon Sprague manages environmental literacy and community partnerships for the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. Since 2003, Shannon has helped to build and strengthen the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Education & Training (B-WET) program and worked with the Education Workgroup to advance environmental literacy through cross-jurisdictional coordination. Shannon has also been actively engaged in building community partnerships to support restoration, including standing up both Envision the Choptank and Virginia's Middle Peninsula Habitat Focus Area. With a Master of Public Affairs in Environmental Policy from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from the University of Delaware, Shannon has a solid background for translating science into sound public engagement and policy.

### **Thom Stroschein**

Coordination Committee Member, Deal Island Peninsula Partnership

[tstroschein@gmail.com](mailto:tstroschein@gmail.com)

Thom Stroschein has years of experience in education and school leadership. A resident of Dames Quarter in Somerset County, Maryland, he was director of Job Network at The Community College of Baltimore County. This partnership with Baltimore County provided career training and employment opportunities for 2000+ recipients of TANF (Temporary Aide to Needy Families), SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly food stamps), refugees and returning citizens. He worked in education as a principal, turning a failing school into a National Distinguished Title 1 school, one of 19 in the county. He served as Academic Director for Maryland's New Leaders for New Schools providing instruction and coaching to new principals creating the only non-university based principal certification program in Maryland. He was the academic part of the team that started one of the first charter schools in Baltimore City, Midtown Academy. Thom holds a bachelor's degree in Communication from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, a Masters of Arts in Teaching from Sacred Heart University and a certificate in School Administration from Johns Hopkins University and a Master Gardener Certification from the University of Maryland – Extension.

### **Fred Tutman**

Founder, Patuxent Riverkeeper

[fred@paxriverkeeper.org](mailto:fred@paxriverkeeper.org)



Fred Tutman is a grassroots community advocate for clean water in Maryland's longest and deepest intrastate waterway and holds the title of Patuxent Riverkeeper, which is also the name of a non-profit organization that he founded in 2004. Some of the lessons learned on the Appalachian Trail has inspired Fred's work on Water Trails as well.

Prior to Riverkeeping, Fred spent over 25 years working as a media producer and consultant on telecommunications assignments on four continents, including a stint covering the Falkland War in Argentina for the BBC; managing a Ford Foundation funded project to help African traditional healers tell their stories to the world; and nine years of intensive media productions for with Fire and Emergency Management organizations. Fred has won several awards for both radio and television production writing and production.

In recent years, Fred has taught courses in Environmental Law and Policy at Historic St. Mary's College of Maryland; and Goddard College in Plainfield, Vt. He splits his time between Maryland and North Carolina where he maintains busy Blacksmith forges in both places. He is the recipient of numerous regional and State awards for his various environmental works, is the longest serving Waterkeeper in the Chesapeake Bay region, and the only African-American Waterkeeper in the nation. He also lives and works on an active farm located near the Patuxent River that has been his family's ancestral home for nearly a century.

### **Kate Vogel**

Coastal Resilience Planner, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

[kate.vogel@maryland.gov](mailto:kate.vogel@maryland.gov)

Kate Vogel is the Coastal Resilience Planner for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. She is advancing community capacity to understand, plan for and increase preparedness related to flood hazards including nuisance flooding and sea level change. She promotes resiliency planning at a community and regional scale and delivers technical assistance for coastal management projects. Kate manages the [MyCoast](#) Maryland application and website which are used to document flooding in the state. After graduating with a Master's degree from the University of Michigan, Kate worked as a NOAA Coastal Management Fellow writing climate change adaptation and resilience plans for state lands with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

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