

## EDUCATION

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- **M.A.—Education: Equity & Social Justice:** San Francisco State University, 2007
- **B.A.— English: Creative Writing:** San Francisco State University, 1998

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION EXPERIENCE

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### **Director** (2016-present), **Stepping Stone Diversity Consulting** (*Arcata, California*)

- Provide consulting services on a range of topics, including racial equity, organizational diversity, strategic planning, implicit bias, institutional change, leadership, and program development.
- Guide long-term strategic planning processes for increasing organizational diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Facilitate interactive workshops and conversations on topics including diversity, racism, equity, inclusion, implicit bias, power, and privilege for leadership teams, board members, and staff.

### **Associate Director** (2014-2016)/**Assistant Director** (2011-2014), **Office of Diversity and Inclusion**, Humboldt State University (*Arcata, California*)

- Led development and delivery of diversity-related educational and professional development programming for the campus community, including the Institute for Student Success (staff/faculty), Campus Dialogue on Race (students/staff/faculty), Humboldt Orientation Program (students), as well as other customized workshops and trainings.
- Provided leadership and direction (in collaboration with Human Resources) in the implementation of HSU's *Plan for Workplace Diversity*, including developing and facilitating monthly *Avoiding Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process* workshops, completed by 1,500 staff, faculty, students, and community members.
- Implemented ongoing annual cross-campus diversity reporting process (including coordinating focus groups for students, staff, and faculty), as well as other processes for tracking, monitoring, and reporting institution-wide diversity-related data, and which influenced structural and cultural campus change efforts.
- Designed and provided direction for various student outreach initiatives and community-building efforts, including forums and methods for campus-wide dialogues around diversity topics, as well as a semesterly *Student Opportunity Newsletter* and the *HSU Diversity Resource Guide*.
- Chaired the Diversity Program Funding Committee, which provided students/staff/faculty with grants to support diversity programming, research, and curriculum development projects.
- Working closely with an HSU faculty member, oversaw the ongoing development and implementation of the Bias Education Initiative, which aimed to support those who experienced or witnessed an act of bias, and to create learning opportunities across the university to help prevent, and proactively address, experiences of bias, exclusion, and hate.

### **Director of Education**, 2007-2011, NatureBridge Golden Gate (formerly Headlands Institute) (*Golden Gate National Park, California*)

- Responsible for educational integrity, strategic planning, leadership, and evaluation of five science-based education programs serving 10,000 youth and 2,000 adults annually.
- Led strategic planning efforts around diversity and inclusion, and championed these efforts across a multi-campus, national organization with more than 200 staff.
- Designed and facilitated workshops and trainings on a range of diversity, equity, and inclusion topics for leadership, staff, and teachers.
- Oversaw and supervised a unit that included five education programs and 34 full-time staff.
- Collaborated with NatureBridge Education Advisory Council to re-design the Core Educational Framework, which incorporated equity/social justice and guided program development organization-wide.
- Oversaw coordination of 10 days of professional development training annually for 25 science education staff on topics ranging from inquiry-based learning to climate change to thematic teaching.

## M E L I S S A M E I R I S

- Designed curriculum and programming for continuing education and professional development courses (accredited through a local community college) focused on interactive, science-based environmental education and serving 125 K-12 classroom teachers annually.
- Developed relationships and co-designed science-based programming with community partners, including schools and non-profit organizations.
- Wrote and edited grant proposals, reports, and program budgets for foundation fundraising.
- Developed and managed annual program budgets totaling more than \$2.5 million.
- Served on the four-member Leadership Team, which oversaw all organizational operations.

**Enrichment Educator**, 2006-2007, Crissy Field Center & Literacy for Environmental Justice (*San Francisco, California*)

- Developed partnerships and provided research support for community-based youth development programs focused on leadership, social justice, and the environment in San Francisco.
- Designed curriculum and presented professional development workshop for youth/staff.

### **CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, AND PRESENTATIONS (A SELECTION)**

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**“Flipping the Script: Power and Privilege in Organizations – A Four-Part Series.”** Northern California Association of Nonprofits (scheduled for Spring 2018)

**“Racial Equity Workshop for Trainers & Facilitators.”** (workshop coordination) Equity Alliance of the North Coast (2017)

**“Avoiding Implicit Bias to Promote Equity & Diversity.”** Changing Tides Family Services (2017); City of Arcata (2017)

**“Building Boards Where We All Belong – A Three-Part Series.”** Humboldt Area Foundation (2017)

**“A Workplace Where We All Belong: Avoiding Implicit Bias & Diversifying Our Teams.”** HSU Extended Education (2017)

**“Strategies for Avoiding Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process.”** Humboldt State University (2013-2016)

**“Diversity, Identity, and Strategies for Change: Foundations for the Year Ahead.”** HSU Counseling and Psychological Services (2015)

**“Leveraging Diversity Metrics as a Tool for Institutional Change.”** Association of American Colleges and Universities, Diversity, Learning and Student Success Conference (2015)

**“Creating Inclusive Learning Environments.”** Humboldt State University, New Faculty Orientation (2013)

**“Examining Privilege (I, II, III).”** NatureBridge Golden Gate (2008-2011)

**“Empowerment Evaluation: Lessons Learned Across Three NatureBridge Campuses.”** North American Association for Environmental Education (2010)

**“Communicating Across Cultures.”** NatureBridge Annual Education Summit (2010)

**“Multicultural Environmental Education.”** Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education Conference (2009)

**“Developing Multicultural and Community Outreach.”** National Park Service Centennial Conference (2008)

**“Redefining Environmentalism.”** Crissy Field Center (2006)

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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**Annual Diversity Metrics Reports – “Campus Diversity Update”** (2015); **“Cultivating Diversity at HSU: enriching our educational community”** (2013, 2014); **“Dissecting Diversity at HSU”** (2012)

**“HSU Diversity Resource Guide: A Guide to Campus and Community Resources at Humboldt State”** (2013, 2014, 2015)

## **ADDITIONAL EDUCATION AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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**Coordinator, Institute for Student Success**, 2011-2016, Humboldt State University (*Arcata, California*)

- Coordinate and oversee all facets of twice-yearly one-day professional development event for more than 300 staff, faculty, administrators, and community members.
- Coordinate semesterly book circles, including book and facilitator selection, logistical coordination, marketing, registration, and ongoing facilitator support.
- Coordinate cross-campus team as Chair of the Institute Advisory Committee and oversee Institute Operations Team, which provides feedback and decision-making for the Institute, with particular focus on Institute workshop and keynote content.
- Collaborate with presenters on course content and other program logistics.
- Design, implement, and analyze evaluations for all aspects of the Institute – content, operations, and logistics – and provide annual reports on accomplishments and areas for improvement.
- Design and implement marketing and communications plans, including website and printed materials.
- Manage annual budget of \$45k.

**Lecturer, First-Year Experience**, Fall 2012, Humboldt State University (*Arcata, California*)

- Developed curriculum, planned classes, and taught First-Year Experience course for college freshmen.
- Utilized Moodle to provide structured online learning platform for the course.

**Middle School Science Teacher**, 2005, The Hamlin School (*San Francisco, California*)

- Developed curriculum, planned classes, and taught seventh- and eighth-grade chemistry and biology courses and labs as a temporary science teacher.

**Education Specialist**, 2002-2003 and Summer/Fall 2004, Save The Bay (*Oakland, California*)

- Hired and trained 5 field staff.
- Designed curriculum and taught outdoor and in-class lessons for youth from culturally diverse urban communities.
- With support from a local community college, developed and conducted week-long continuing education courses and professional development trainings for K-12 teachers.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION EXPERIENCE**

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**Empowerment Evaluation:** NatureBridge Golden Gate (2009-2010)

Led a year-long, internally-driven, and collaborative evaluation process designed to promote a culture of evaluation and improvement. Evaluation process was designed to help educators create increasingly relevant and transferable student experiences.

**B-WET Evaluation:** Headlands Institute and NOAA (2007-2009)

Led a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)-sponsored year-long qualitative and quantitative evaluation of educator effectiveness in teaching watershed concepts; results included recommendations for best practices, implemented program-wide.

# M E L I S S A M E I R I S

## **Youth Enrichment Program Master's Thesis:** San Francisco State University (2006-2007)

Conducted a qualitative dual case study examining social justice issues, program efficacy, and success factors in two community-based development programs for low-income urban youth.

## **AWARDS AND ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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### **Sustainable Design Intensive** (2013-2014)

Co-designed and constructed a semi-off grid yurt (including greywater systems), which became a profitable Airbnb.

### **Permaculture Design Certificate:** Regenerative Design Institute (2010)

### **Bishop-Marcus Award:** NatureBridge (2010)

Developed a proposal and was awarded a \$3,000 grant (the maximum amount) to travel to Mongolia and implement a partnership project, titled "*Exploring Multiculturalism, Environment, and Education in Mongolia's National Parks.*" Project included training teachers, volunteering, traveling.

### **South America by Bike** (2003-2004)

A six-month, 3,000-kilometer surf and bicycle tour from Ecuador to Chile.

### **Sierra Institute - Salmon Dreams: Wild Nature and Culture in North Coast California** (1998)

Eight-week extended education field course emphasizing conservation, field biology, land management, natural history, education, and ecology in northern California (Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity counties).