



## 2026 Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education Board of Directors Profiles

**Rachel Balduzzi (2021-2026)**- Rachel's educational background is a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources with a focus on Environmental Education, Communications, and Interpretation. She also holds a Master's degree in Education and Teaching. Rachel has been involved in the environmental education community within Colorado for the past 20 years as both an educator and manager of an educational program. She began my career as the Lead Education Technician for Rocky Mountain National Park before becoming a classroom teacher for Estes Park Elementary School. After teaching, she became the Membership Manager, and shortly after, Education Director for the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, a position she held for 11 years. As the Education Director, Rachel coordinated the educational efforts that complemented the ranger led programming in Rocky Mountain National Park. This included, internship management, program development and management, budget management, volunteer management, grant writing, partnership development, in-field instruction, program evaluation, and a variety of other tasks to support a robust environmental education program. Currently, she is a Public Engagement Specialist for the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas specializing in volunteer management and school field trip programming. In her free time, she is an avid Flyfisher, hiker, skier, and mom to a beginner outdoor lover and nature enthusiast.

**Sue Bonfield (2023-2028)**- Sue has over 30 years experience in environmental education, developing and leading EE programs, developing educational materials, and working to improve diversity in environmental education and conservation careers. She was on the Founding Board of the Diversity Joint Venture and has experience collaborating with organizations across the Americas and globally. Prior to founding Environment for the Americas, Sue created the education programs for the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, worked at the Keystone Science School, and helped to develop some of the early bird conservation education materials at the national level.

**Jared Bynum (2026-2028)**- A lifelong resident of Colorado's front range, Jared is a policy lead with the Next 100 Coalition and the Colorado Outdoor Equity Coalition, a Children and Nature Network Youth Advisory Council member, and an environmental justice advocate with Colorado Rising, a statewide organization devoted to protecting Colorado's communities and environment from the impacts of pollution. Passionate about defending and restoring the Southern Rockies, he works to advance programs that increase access to the outdoors, fights for laws that conserve nature and halt climate change, and advances efforts to lift up the voices of underrepresented communities at the Capitol and in decision making bodies all around the state. Spending his childhood as a boy scout and seasonal ranch hand, he has since gone on to work at the Colorado General Assembly, Environment Colorado, and Conservation Colorado, amongst others. Advocating on behalf of LGBTQ issues, racial and social justice, and environmental causes, he works to lend capacity and leadership to the issues most important to him and Colorado's communities. In his free time, he enjoys hiking and backpacking through Colorado's extensive State and National parks system, exploring Denver's urban and mountain trails network, and baking banana bread.

**Natalie Flowers (2026-2028)**- Natalie is a passionate environmental educator who loves helping people of all ages discover curiosity, wonder, and connection to the outdoors. With over 20 years of experience in environmental education, nature-based programming, and volunteer engagement, Natalie brings both heart and hands-on experience to her role on the CAEE Board. She holds a degree in Wildlife Management from Purdue University and since moving to Colorado in 2010, Natalie has worked with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Denver Water, and Colorado Parks and Recreation Association. Currently, Natalie works for Colorado Trout Unlimited as the Director of Education and owns her own outdoor education business, Wild Within Reach. Throughout her career, she has focused on building partnerships, supporting educators, and creating

meaningful outdoor learning experiences that are accessible and welcoming to all. As a board member of the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education, Natalie is proud to serve as an ambassador and champion for environmental education across Colorado. She is especially excited to help strengthen collaboration, support a shared vision for the future, and ensure CAEE has the resources needed to continue its important work. Natalie believes environmental education plays a vital role in nurturing stewardship, confidence, and a lifelong love of nature. Natalie lives in the North Denver Metro area with her husband and two daughters and loves spending time with her family and outdoors, including hiking, boating, birding, skiing, horseback riding, fishing, and scuba diving.

**Tim Flynn (2023-2028)**-Tim's passion for the natural environment, conservation and education originated at an early age through exploration of the outdoors. By combining his passion with degrees in natural and social sciences, his personal and professional focus is to engage individuals and communities through outdoor education and recreation pursuits. As an outdoor enthusiast, Tim has worked in natural resources, education and outdoor recreation for municipal, private and nonprofit organizations for almost two decades. From 2012-2013, he received the Inspire By Example Award, along with the Youth Engagement Award from the City of Boulder for his youth development and leadership efforts. He currently serves on the New America Schools' Board of Directors and the Red Rocks Community College Outdoor Education Program Advisory Board. Tim's purpose is grounded in bringing communities together to expand natural resource awareness, involvement and stewardship, while improving equity in accessing outdoor resources. During his tenure as Director of Programs and Education, Lincoln Hills Cares has been nominated for and received multiple awards including the Outdoor Retailer Inspiration Award in 2019 and the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education Award for Excellence in 2021.

**Maya Garcia (2022-2027)**- Maya M. Garcia joined the Colorado Department of Education as the Science Content Specialist in 2019, where she leads the implementation efforts for Colorado's Academic Standards for Science and supports CDE's STEM education portfolio. Maya began her career in science education as a middle school science teacher and science department chair, in the District of Columbia, where she taught for over eight years. In 2010, Maya travelled to South Africa as a Fulbright Distinguished Teacher, where she studied how community collaborations could be best leveraged to broaden access to rich and engaging STEM learning experiences in under-resourced communities. In 2013, Maya joined the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), where she led the District's adoption and implementation efforts around the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Common Core Mathematics, and developed the District's plan for advancing Pre-K- 12 STEM education. Maya also led OSSE's partnership with the Carnegie Academy for Science Education (CASE) to launch the DC STEM Network, a STEM Learning Ecosystem. In addition to her experience in the classroom and state-level work, Maya has also worked at the national level. Maya has served on various national committees and boards, most recently, Maya joined the National Academies Board on Science Education (BOSE). She also serves as a Board Member for the Council of State Science Supervisors and serves as the Board's liaison to the organization's Equity and Access Committee and is co-chair of the Climate Change Education Committee. This organization serves to coordinate and support efforts of the state science supervisors of all states and territories as they work to advance equitable science education for all K-12 students. She is leading the National Stocktake for Science Standards, and also served as a member of the NRC Science Education Board Committee on Out of School STEM Learning, and currently serves as a Co-PI on the NSF funded DRK-12 project "Advancing Coherent and Equitable Systems of Science Education Project". Maya holds a bachelor's degree in Neuroscience and Behavior from Mount Holyoke College and a Master's in Science Teaching from American University, where she served as adjunct faculty in the School of Education, and is currently pursuing her Doctorate of Education in Leadership for Educational Equity at the University of Colorado, Denver.

**Elizabeth Harbaugh (2025-2027)**- Elizabeth is an experienced community builder, leader, and educator, with almost a decade of experience working in Colorado's education system. She is currently the Vice President of Lyra Colorado, where she leads efforts to expand climate education in rural Colorado by cultivating collaboration, supporting policy, and developing green pathways for youth. Elizabeth grew up in the Pacific Northwest, where she developed a deep love for the outdoors, community service, and youth engagement. After graduating from the University of Puget Sound, Elizabeth moved to Colorado as a bilingual fifth grade educator in Denver Public Schools.. In 2017 she attained a Master's in Critical Pedagogy from the University of Colorado, Denver, focusing on breaking down systems of oppression in public education systems. Her

experience in the classroom has cultivated a deep commitment to educational equity and a drive to create transformative opportunities for students from all backgrounds. She brings this classroom experience to Lyra, with the goal of supporting youth to build a more environmentally, socially, and economically resilient Colorado. Outside of her role with Lyra, Elizabeth loves adventuring in the outdoors, writing or reading a compelling story, and experimenting in the kitchen.

**Heather Hubbard (2025-2027)**- Heather grew up in the mountains of New Mexico, where she developed a love for the outdoors at an early age. She has a Master's degree in Biology, with an emphasis in Ecology and Evolution and a Master's degree in Education, with an emphasis in Special Education and Curriculum Development. Heather started her journey working on field research as a graduate student at Los Alamos National Laboratory where she discovered her passion for education. For 14 years she was in public education as a K-12 classroom teacher and then as a district content specialist supporting educators and administrators. Heather has been the Statewide Education Coordinator for Colorado Parks and Wildlife for the last 6 years and focuses on formal education programming and resource development so students and educators have an opportunity to understand the importance of wildlife management and conservation work. A highlight of her work has been supporting partner organizations focusing on education, including supporting PLT and sitting on the Informal Science Committee for the National Science Teacher Association (NSTA).

**Crystal Medrano (2025-2027)**- Originally from the Windy City suburbs, Crystal moved to Colorado mid-pandemic in 2020. She earned her bachelor's degree in communications, journalism and Spanish from Dominican University and has gained experience across various media landscapes including magazines, newspapers, production studios, and broadcast television. Before joining GOCO in 2021, Crystal worked at *5280 Magazine*. Now part of the communications team, she works alongside the director of communications and communications manager to implement GOCO's marketing and communication efforts, support the Generation Wild campaign, and share the impactful work of GOCO and its partners. In her free time, Crystal enjoys experimenting in the kitchen and exploring Colorado's biking and hiking trails with her partner and their ferocious 10-pound Yorkie, Milo.

**Sherry Nickolaus (2021-2026)**- serves as the Education Director at Bird Conservancy of the Rockies where she and her team focus on immersing children and adults in nature and fostering stewardship values across generations. Sherry grew up with a love for all things wild, leading her to acquire a Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife Science from the University of Washington and a Master's Degree in Conservation Biology from Miami University. Working with animals and children has always been a passion and she firmly believes children are our future and our hope. Sherry has worked in the conservation, wildlife and education fields for over 20 years and thrives on sharing her enthusiasm and helping the community make a personal connection with birds and the natural world. When not working, she spends her time with her family hiking, gardening, mini-farming, and enjoying the outdoors.

**Susan Taylor (2021-2026)**- Susan is a Colorado native who loves teaching locals and visitors about the environment. Susan graduated from Franklin and Marshall College with a degree in Environmental Studies and enjoyed two decades of experience in Outdoor Education and summer camping. She has worked for many organizations throughout Colorado, including YMCA of the Rockies, Cheley Colorado Camps, Geneva Glen, the Telluride Academy, and the Rocky Mountain Conservancy. In Key West, Florida, she worked for the Key West Botanical Gardens and volunteered for Reef Relief, a non-profit for conserving the nearby coral reef. Susan also worked for several years in marketing and content writing, helping to promote large scale events and programs. Susan returned to the YMCA of the Rockies in 2019 as Program Director, overseeing a vast program department, including a Day Camp with over 2,000 unique kids each summer, and an outdoor education department that serves nearly 8,000 students in a typical year. In her free time she loves hiking, backpacking, and skiing in her backyard of Rocky Mountain National Park.

**Kathryn Venzor (2022-2027)**- serves as the CSU Spur Director of Education, creating and implementing formal and informal educational programs inspiring youth and the larger community to tackle problems around food, water, and health at the new Spur campus. For over 17 years, Kathryn has been working in program development for K-12 and early childhood students and educators, environmental conservation, and community engagement. Kathryn began her professional career developing educational programs and

curriculum and interpretive resources in New York and Philadelphia. Originally from the Southwest, Kathryn moved back to New Mexico where she worked as the Curator of Education at the City of Albuquerque's four BioPark sites. Kathryn also served on the Board of Directors for the Environmental Education Association of New Mexico and worked with community partners in the STEM fields on multiple projects to engage students from all backgrounds in the sciences and art. After moving to Colorado, Kathryn served as the Director of School Programs & Interpretation at Butterfly Pavilion and the Guest Engagement Programs Manager at Denver Zoo. Kathryn holds a Masters in Anthropology and Museum Studies from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. She grew up exploring the desert mountains in El Paso, Texas, and that love of nature and exploration continues in Colorado. She enjoys taking in the beauty of colorful Colorado while hiking (or snowshoeing) with her husband, Jeff, and their dog, Yoda.

**Shaye Weldon (2026-2028)**- Shaye Weldon grew up in Ithaca, New York, where spending time outdoors shaped her deep appreciation for the natural world and sparked an early commitment to environmental protection and advocacy. She earned a B.A. in Geography with a minor in Spanish from Syracuse University. Following college, Shaye spent eight years leading grassroots advocacy campaigns across New York, California, and New Hampshire, working on issues including environmental protection, public health, voting rights, and youth civic engagement. Her work focused on building community power, mobilizing volunteers, and supporting young people running for state office. Over the past five years, Shaye has worked in digital marketing, advertising, and fundraising for national nonprofit organizations, helping mission-driven groups reach new audiences, grow supporter bases, and raise millions of dollars through thoughtful digital strategy. In 2025, Shaye founded Melon Marketing, a consulting practice dedicated to supporting nonprofits, grassroots organizations, and community-focused businesses with values-aligned marketing, fundraising, and storytelling that prioritizes sustainability, authenticity, and real-world impact. Shaye currently lives in Boulder, Colorado, where she spends her free time with her fiancé and stepchildren, soaking up the outdoors through hiking, skiing, camping, cycling, and running. She is excited to bring her background in advocacy, digital strategy, and community engagement to the CAEE Board of Directors.