

Environmental Justice work at the Wisconsin DNR

Julie Majerus, Environmental Justice Policy Advisor

September, 2024

Environmental Justice: A Mission for Wisconsin

- History of systemic racism, exclusionary practices, and segregation (both direct and indirect) have led to worse economic and health outcomes for communities of color, rural communities, and low-income communities.
- In Wisconsin, these practices have led to very specific disproportionate outcomes in many socioeconomic areas.
- This disproportionality extends to exposure to environmental harms and risks.

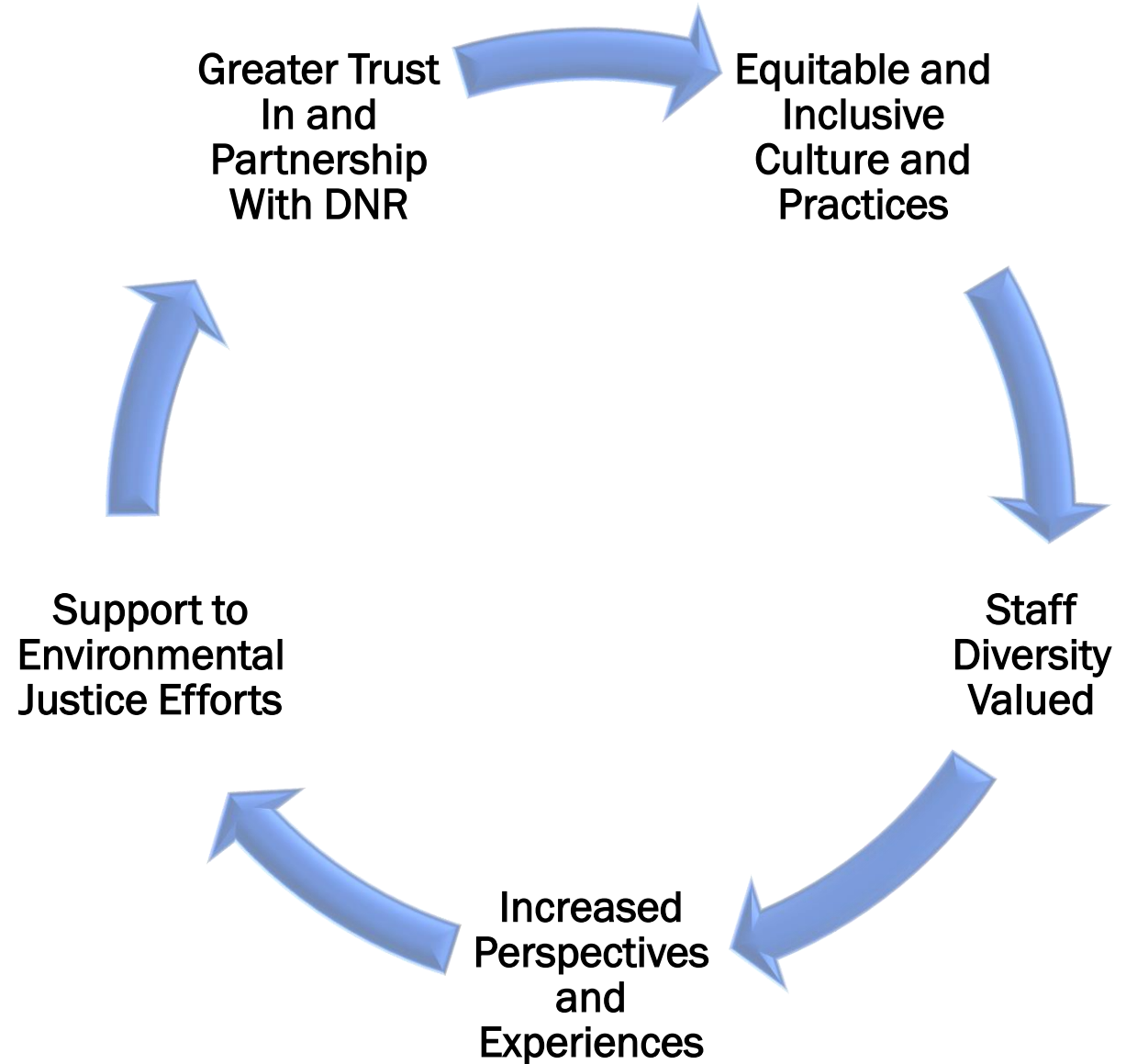




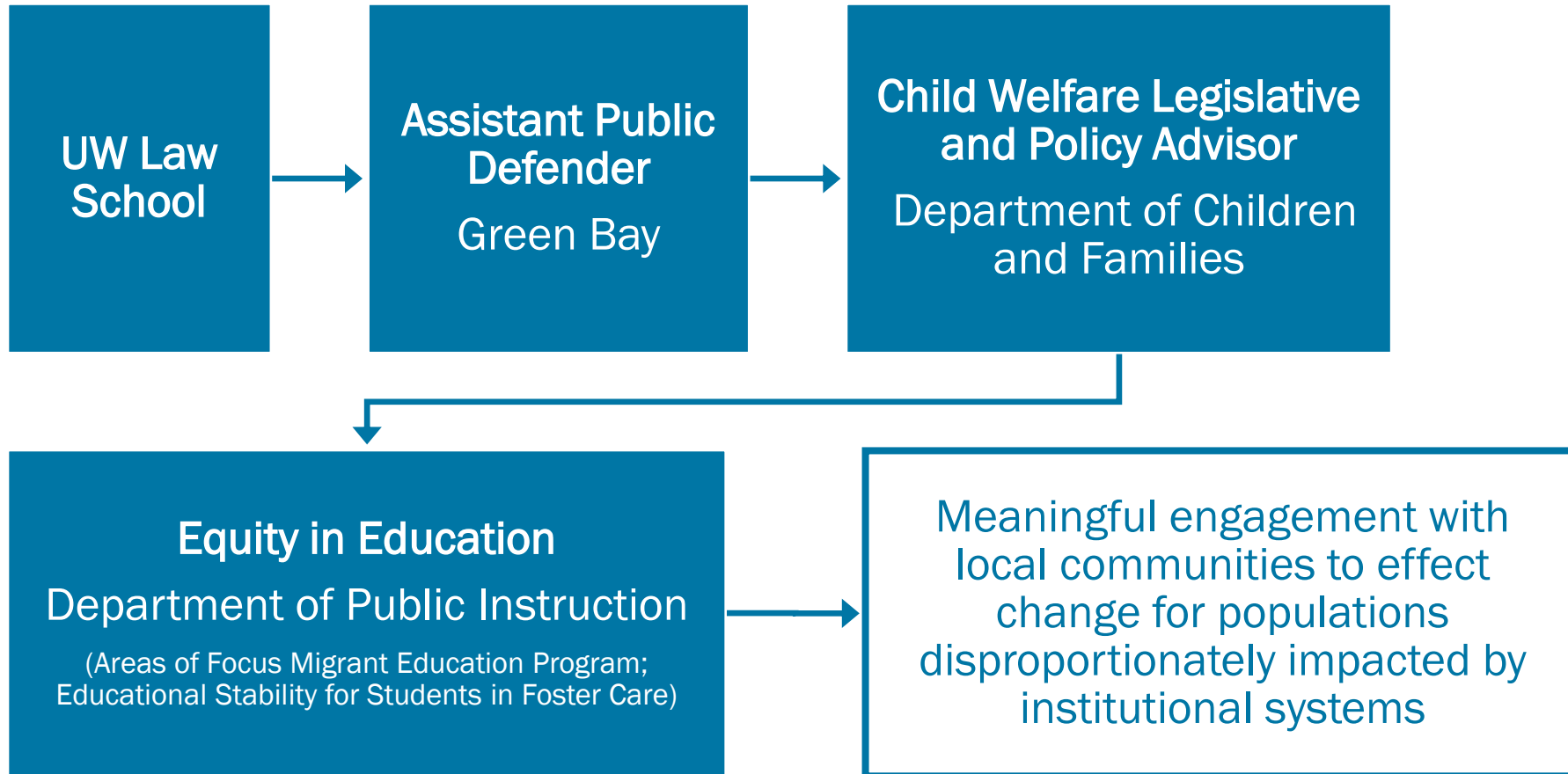
Environmental Justice is About Holistic Equity

Acknowledging the systemic barriers that limit certain communities in being able to thrive in education, housing, work, health, and well-being are all interrelated.

Environmental Justice and Equity & Inclusion: Interrelated and Supportive Goals



Julie's Social Justice Perspective



EJ Policy Advisor Role



- Coordinate and lead our agency environmental justice work to ensure consistency throughout the agency: In policy development, definitions, and implementation
- Policy Analysis and Development
- Elevating EJ priorities and initiatives – internally and externally
- Consultation for individual programs
- Collaborate with the Climate and Resilience Policy Advisor and Tribal Liaison
- Advise the Secretary’s Office on Environmental Issues and Opportunities in the EJ Space
- Stakeholder engagement and relationship building

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WDNR Environmental Justice Coordination

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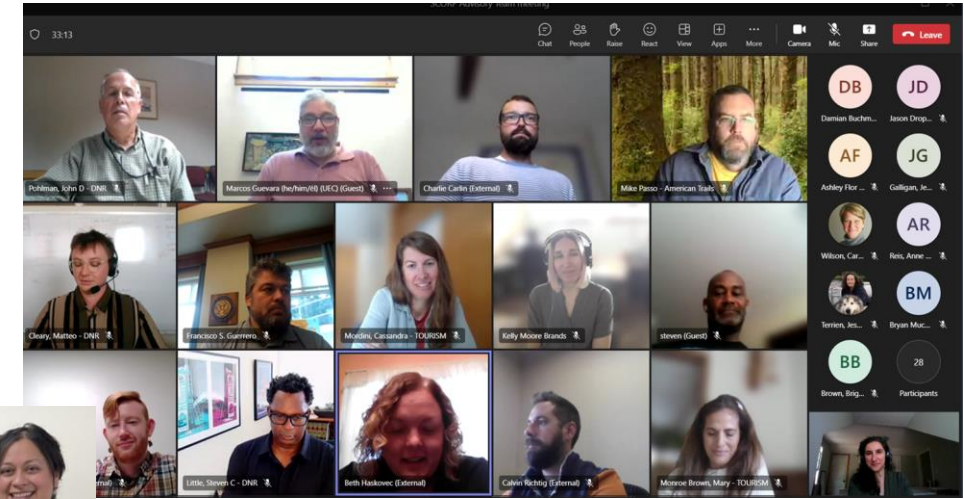
Climate and
Resilience Policy
Advisor
Sean Kennedy

Year 1: Achieved successes

- Partner relationship building with specific wins
- Agency workgroup to share ideas and develop guidance
- SCORP research focus and Advisory Committee
- RR Pilot Projects
- EPA's G2G EJ grant



Relationship Building with New Partners



Developing models for better communication and outreach

- G2G (Government to Government)
EPA EJ grant: Partnership with non-profit organizations in central Wisconsin for water quality outreach
- Milwaukee and Green Bay Areas of Concern Community Advisory Committees
- Projects throughout the state: new approaches to stakeholder engagement



Development of Internal Guidance

- EJ Framework and Toolkit for Program and Project Planning
[DNR_EJFrameworkAndToolkit.pdf \(widen.net\)](#)
- Also developing internal “EJ 101” training for all staff



2024 Goals

- Roll out toolkit for incorporating EJ into project planning
- Establish our agency's EJ mission and begin developing a strategic plan or framework
- G2G Grant Project Implementation
- Develop a venue for internally sharing and modeling projects
- Expand our outreach and relationship building with new partners
- Continued project support/model development in various programs
- EJ Basic Principles training module

Achieving Environmental Justice Means:

We reach people where they live, work, play, and learn.

Everyone in Wisconsin has equitable access to clean water, clean air, the natural world, and recreational activities to contribute to their health and well-being.

Local communities are a key source for solutions, and we build relationships to work with them as partners to develop and implement those solutions.

Questions for Discussion

- What are the EJ priorities for Southeastern WI?
- How can DNR best support your EJ efforts, whether through advocacy, guidance, or changed policy or practices?



CONNECT WITH US

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OFF THE RECORD"