



RICE ALUMNI

LIFE AFTER RICE: CAREERS IN SUSTAINABILITY

Sponsored by the Association of Rice Alumni and presented in partnership with the Administrative Center for Sustainability and Energy Management and the Rice Environmental Society



BRUCKNER CHASE '90

Bruckner Chase is an internationally recognized ocean advocate and professional waterman whose athletic career spans the world in the most challenging adventures and events on water and land in some of the harshest conditions imaginable. Bruckner's athletic pursuits and innovative, evidence-based initiatives from American Samoa to Poland to the Jersey Shore provide opportunities to empower and positively impact individual and community behavior towards our shared aquatic environments, while also building capacity and opportunities across multiple areas. Chase is a former executive who worked in international project and brand development for companies such as Abercrombie & Fitch and West Marine. He traded a traditional office for an aquatic and community-focused career using his innate understanding that mutually beneficial partnerships with measurable positive

impacts are the foundation for sustainable initiatives and concept development. Bruckner is also a gifted and engaging speaker who brings the insights, knowledge and passion he confronts in the water to audiences around the world.



RANDE PATTERSON '14

Rande Patterson is an environmental affairs associate at ConnectGen LLC, an energy and storage energy development company headquartered in Houston. Patterson uses her knowledge of natural resources policy and permitting to ensure adherence to environmental laws and regulatory compliance and works closely with the wider ConnectGen development team to implement environmental policies, standards, and procedures throughout project development. Prior to joining ConnectGen, Patterson worked as an ecologist/project manager at Western EcoSystems, an environmental consulting company, where she helped utility-scale wind and solar developers comply with major federal and state natural resource regulations. Patterson has utilized her entomology background throughout her career, including through insect pollinator business development and T&E species compliance.

Patterson holds a Bachelor of Science in ecology and evolutionary biology from Rice University and a Master of Science in entomology from Texas A&M University.



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RACHEL POWERS '93

Rachel Powers became the executive director of the Citizens' Environmental Coalition (CEC) in 2013 after volunteering for the organization for nine years and benefitting from CEC programs and services for several years before that. She has extensive experience as a coalition builder, environmental advocate, executive and informal educator, working for both nonprofit organizations and local governments. Prior to working at CEC, Rachel was a senior environmental planner for the Houston-Galveston Area Council, managing projects relating to water quality (fecal contamination, dioxin and PCBs), the Regional Flood Management Council, the Natural Resources Advisory Committee, and the Parks and Natural Areas subcommittee. Previously, she served as the community services coordinator at the Harris County Flood Control District, coordinating

communications, parks and trails partnerships, and wildflower and tree planting projects. Powers also has experience managing environmental education programs, summer camps and volunteer programs at Hermann Park, Mercer Botanic Gardens, the City of Austin's Natural Resources Division and the YMCA. Patterson graduated from Rice University with her bachelor's and the University of Phoenix with her MBA. A native of Boston, Patterson enjoys family history, volunteering, civic engagement and embarrassing her two teenage sons.



CLAUDIA VASSAR '99

Claudia Gee Vassar is a native Houstonian and Rice graduate who earned a law degree from University of Virginia. Vassar began her legal career at Gardere Wynne Sewell prior to growing a commercial real estate and business practice and becoming a partner at Baker Williams Matthesen. After practicing law for nearly a decade, Vassar made a career change, working with nonprofits to help them through periods of transition and growth. She served as interim executive director for SIRE, EMERGE Fellowship and ArtBridge and completed consulting projects for the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University, Young Audiences of Houston and Main Street Ministries. In 2016, Vassar joined Houston Botanic Garden, where she currently serves as president and general counsel. She is honored to be part of a project bringing a world-class botanic garden to Houston, creating an oasis in the city that will conserve biodiversity, connect people to plants and nature and serve as a living museum.