

## **2022 ENVIRONMENTAL RECOGNITION AWARDS NOMINATION NARRATIVES**

March 21, 2022

### **Introduction**

Each year the City of Davis recognizes community contributions to Davis' environmental quality of life. This year is the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Environmental Recognition Awards. Additionally, a special category, the Environmental Legacy Award was started in 2017, Davis' Centennial year. This award may be presented at the Natural Resources Commission and City Council's discretion for sustainability efforts that have made a difference as part of Davis' 100-year history.

The following nominations for 2022 Environmental Recognition Awards (ERA) were submitted in three categories: Individual/Group; Business; and Non-Profit Organization, Agency, School, or other Community-based Organization. The Natural Resources Commission ERA subcommittee will be meeting prior to the regular NRC meeting on March 28, 2022 to recommend a slate of award winners to the full Commission. The NRC-recommended awardees will be reviewed and approved on the City Council consent calendar on April 5, 2022, and awarded in a ceremonial presentation at City Council during Earth Week on April 19, 2022.

Information about submittal requirements is available on the City's website: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/about-davis/community-awards/environmental-recognition-award-nominations>. All of the required forms for each of these nominations, including category, nominee and nominator address and contact information, were submitted during the process. Additionally, some of the nominations included photographs which will be used during the awards presentation.

The information below is the Narrative component of the submittal, provided by nominators, and includes:

1. How the nominee has shown exceptional environmental initiative, and/or how the nominee's actions/achievements have improved our environmental quality of life.
2. Any additional information that supports this nominee's application. This supporting documentation may be used verbatim for the award presentation and news article.

### **Individual/Group Nominations (6):**

#### **David Robinson, nominated by Erin Donley Marineau**

David Robinson has been a member of the Tree Davis Board of Directors for nearly 30 years - working closely with the organization's founders to bring its mission to life. He presided as Board President for 13 years. For each of those years, and many prior, David led tree planting and care events nearly every weekend resulting in thousands of hours of volunteer leadership and the planting of hundreds of trees. For decades, David has planted, watered and tended native oaks, California Buckeyes and other native

trees on Hwy 113 between Davis and Woodland -- which likely takes his personal tree planting tally into the thousands. David is truly Yolo County's urban tree hero. He gives of himself financially, with his time and with his labor in the hot summer sun to make Yolo County beautiful, clean, green and cool. David is also an avid naturalist with a keen eye for species identification, and a deep appreciation for the natural world. He inspires everyone he meets with his dedication, passion and genuine love of trees and community. David was also a member of the Davis Tree Commission for over 36 years, protecting the urban tree canopy and providing the public with guidance around tree plantings and removals - a service that over time, contributed mightily to the mature urban forest canopy we all enjoy today. David deserves the highest honors and recognition for his distinguished tenure as a life-long tree steward and for his selfless dedication.

### **Eliot S. Larson (they/them), nominated by Scott Steward Ragsdale**

Eliot Larson is a leader and an inspiration to youth and adults. Eliot has shown up for Friday's for the Future events regionally and has led Climate Strike Davis back to the Friday noontime climate action demonstration at Central Park for the last year and more. Eliot's consistently reached out to fellow youth at Davis Sr. High and through the network of fellow home-schooled youth. Eliot is an essential part of the reason the Environmental Club and Climate Action DHS clubs feel they have access to the Central Park Friday demonstrations and takes a no-nonsense approach when addressing the severity of the choices before us.

Eliot comments, "This is an action that everyone must join in or we will not save our home. We all are afraid of how this will end and so we must all act quickly and accurately. There is no time for our world leaders saying change will come in 2050, or 2030 or even 2025. That is too late. And too late is far worse than never. As the climate action organizer in Davis, I face constant struggles from outside sources not including the effects of the climate emergency. The DHS administration pushes back hard every time I ask students to show up and everyone tries to make the case that we are missing valuable lessons. But we will not be back in school until there is real change, and we will not be distracted by diversions. We will not be satisfied until there is real change, not just leaders using complex wording in bills that are being passed to hide all of their errors. We must all remember that there is still hope, and we must now all turn our fear or sadness or anger or guilt into action. We must take action now!"

Eliot does not consider the letters and the demonstrations for climate action an exceptional act. They are grounded in the normality of giving voice to the planet. Many of the rest of us are still catching up.

Eliot has gracefully and consistently held a place for all of us to join at noon on Fridays at 5<sup>th</sup> and B. Sometimes there is quite a good number of people who join us to be in community and to stand to send the message, and keep sending the message, that the climate needs us stop using fossil fuels now! See you at the park and in the legislature and in the courts and wherever else we need to go.

## **Eric Newman, Coordinator of the Friends of the North Davis Channel, nominated by Bruce de Terra**

Eric Newman is Founder and Coordinator of the Friends of the North Davis Channel (FNDC), formed in the Summer of 2019 to manage and enhance habitat and to improve the aesthetic value of the storm water channel that borders the north edge of Davis between Sycamore Lane and F Street, an approximately 1.25-mile corridor. Prior to the formation of the FNDC, a habitat restoration project within the same corridor limits was implemented in a joint effort by the City of Davis, the Putah Creek Council, the Yolo County Resource Conservation District and community members. Hundreds of trees and shrubs were planted throughout the Ditch, watered for a couple years and left to flourish as the backdrop to a rejuvenated public environmental space for Davis citizens to enjoy and wildlife to flourish. After the initial plant establishment period, an ongoing effort was needed to steward this new landscape in order to retain and improve its ecologic and aesthetic values, curtail invasive plants, clean-up trash and partner with City departments to accomplish even more. This is where Eric stepped in, took on the task and has been admirably leading the effort ever since. The FNDC currently has approximately 120 supporters and a dozen core volunteers, many of whom who work in the Channel on a weekly basis. This beautiful space is used daily by joggers, walkers, bird watchers, school children, photographers and numerous others.

Eric, 66, is a 40-year Davis resident and 1977 UC Davis graduate with a bachelor's degree in Political Science Public Services and a 1981 graduate of UC Davis Law School. He practiced environmental law, water law and local government law in Southern California, San Francisco and Sacramento, retiring in 2018.

As a new retiree, in early 2019, he enrolled in the 10-week Cal Naturalist Program and became a University of California Certified Naturalist. His capstone project for that certification was to assist the Putah Creek Council in constructing and planting a pollinator garden along Putah Creek in the vicinity of the City of Winters.

As a new naturalist he became infatuated with California native plants and birds. Reflecting on the 2013-2015 State grant-supported multi-partner California Native Plant Project that had been implemented in the North Davis Channel, Eric began researching the newly enhanced habitat and its status. Sensing a need for long term volunteer management of this community resource, Eric went to work in the summer of 2019 to create an ongoing volunteer organization to maintain the extensive habitat and recreation area along the 1.25 mile stretch of channel. He envisioned leading a group to perform regular maintenance and to substantially increase California native plant restoration throughout the Channel.

His first step was to form a community-based group, Friends of the North Davis Channel. With the help of online social media and Eric's regular promotion of the group to Channel users, the group's membership swelled to 116 supporters. Initially, he personally financed native plant purchases. Then, he moved on to raise \$2,500 through

group members and the many Channel users he regularly engages with on native plants and bird ecology.

Through his leadership, several hundred native plants have been planted along the Channel side from Bird Entry Park (at Anderson Road and Flicker Avenue) to the foot bridge at Kestrel Place, under a Memorandum of Understanding he negotiated with the City's Open Space Program. Eric has established an excellent working relationship with the Open Space Program and coordinated many joint activities between the Program and FNDC volunteers.

Two demonstration gardens on the bench areas of the Channel along the bike path have been carefully designed and planted under his direction to provide a small wonderful native plant reserve entryway to the Channel at Bird Entry Park, one with a mulch path to assist in public enjoyment.

Lately, he has selected many native forbs (flowering plants), to add wonderful color for the 100 plus daily visitors to enjoy. Eric researches the types of plants that make most sense, has his plant lists approved by the City's Open Space Manager, purchases the plants and then stages them for his volunteers to plant.

Through his outreach to local California native plant nurseries, Eric has established many long-term relationships. The nurseries provide advice and sell the plants to the Friends group at wholesale prices. The primary local nurseries who provide plants from the Putah Creek and Cache Creek watersheds are run by the Putah Creek Council and Cornflower Farms. Eric works tirelessly to support strong relationships with these growers.

Eric and his volunteers have uncovered and revived many struggling native plants from the original 2013-15 restoration project including Wild Grapes, Oregon Grapes, Snowberries and Coffee Berries. His team annually clears the Channel sides of flammable grasses in the Friends management area. And, the group has removed and/or pruned huge areas of invasive and often times flammable plants. Eric comes up with these projects and directs the work to be done weekly by his volunteers.

Over the past 3 years Eric has learned how to take care of native plants, identified what plants work and where, become a drip irrigation specialist, developed a system for hand watering and drip watering the approximately 3 acres assigned to the Friends in the MOU, learned what large shrubs and trees need pruning and how to do it and developed strong community support for the project. He has also developed supportive relationships with City Open Space and City Parks and Community Services Staff.

His volunteers regularly clear the Channel of garbage, especially the large amount of debris that gathers at either end of the Channel after a heavy rain, and coordinates with Open Space Program staff to properly dispose of the many truckloads of debris.

A favorite element of Eric's plan has been to add to the Valley Oaks planted along the bottom path in the Channel in the 2013-15 project between the Kestrel footbridge and Bird Entry Park. There is now a line of over 20 young Valley Oak trees there that will form a majestic promenade along that portion of the dirt path at the Channel bottom and will be a haven for numerous bird species.

It was in this same spirit to steward and enhance this wonderful community resource that Eric, after discussion with his trusted advisers in the Friends Group, approached the Director of City Parks and Community Services in the summer of 2021 with a proposal to restore the City-owned gazebo located in Bird Entry Park. The gazebo had fallen into substantial disrepair in the years since it was first placed in the park in 1990. The climbing roses at the corners of the star shaped metal beam structure had completely overgrown the gazebo and the 12 metal doves flying above were no longer visible. The metal beams were heavily rusted and the supporting wood lattice that held up the tangled mass of climbing roses was rotting. The gazebo, though beautifully designed and constructed, was rarely used and had become a neglected eyesore

Once approval was granted, Eric formed a team of Friends and community volunteers to prune back the years of rose plant overgrowth, scrape the dull, peeling paint from the beams and poles, scrape off rust, bend the crooked poles holding the doves back in place, replace connecting bolts with new stainless steel fasteners, replace the rotten wood lattice, and repaint all the steel. The beams were painted garden green, the bird poles sky blue and the doves a brilliant white. The project took 3 months and hundreds of volunteer hours. It all was designed, managed and coordinated by Eric and closely coordinated with City Parks. The effort was the topic of a Jean Jackman column in the Davis Enterprise.

In addition to Eric directly leading improvement actions he has also facilitated others to implement complementary projects. Two examples are when Eric contacted the Yolo Audubon Society and the UC Davis Western Bluebird expert to organize the placement of 14 Bluebird nesting boxes along the Channel. Eric coordinated the purchase of the materials and organized a group to put the supporting poles and boxes in place and worked with Audubon to create an on-going Bluebird monitoring and support program that is now led by Audubon leader and FNDC volunteer Sonjia Shelly. Similarly, he worked with FNDC volunteer Larry Snyder to increase the already significant number of Milkweed plants, the primary food resource for Monarch Butterfly caterpillars, in the Channel, with the ongoing stewardship and monitoring of those plants continuing to be managed by FNDC volunteer Larry Snyder. These two examples further demonstrate how Eric makes synergistic connections with other environmental enhancement efforts to improve both the Channel habitat and the other resource a win for all.

Eric's previous and on-going work and dedication has brought many community members into a stewarding relationship with this important resource and has made it more accessible and enjoyable to the hundreds of people who seek out this hidden gem.

Eric is a font of ideas for improving the Channel environment. But they're not just ideas he wants someone else to take care of. He literally rolls up his sleeves and gets to work and recruits others to join in to get the job done. He not only creates but he also makes time to share the wonder of the public space as he chats with passersby. He has made the Channel a truly friendly place to explore, learn, relax and marvel at the power of community members working together to make Davis an even more wonderful place to call home.

### **Gayna Lamb-Bang, nominated by Jo Ellen Ryan and Gene Trapp**

Gayna Lamb-Bang is the person we call first to help with any project to benefit wildlife and enhance our community's environment.

Valuable, often neglected spaces for wildlife and pollinators can be found right inside our neighborhoods. On her own, and without fanfare, Gayna began to rehabilitate the large, untended space at the corner of Cowell Blvd. and Washoe Street. She is removing the non-native weeds and replacing them with native plants. It is a big project, and she has the approval of Chris Gardner, Open Space Lands Manager, and only asks the City to supply enough water to sustain the plants. The whole corner is now in full bloom, and it is thanks to Gayna's efforts to introduce native plants that provide for pollinators.

We were lucky to meet her in 2016 at a Yolo Basin Foundation birding tour that came to West Pond, a recognized wildlife habitat. She took one look and said she'd like to be a Friend of West Pond. She is now an important team leader, as we enhance wildlife habitat all around West Pond and in the Butterfly & Hummingbird Garden. She is co-leader of our weekly pollinator garden work parties, annual cleanup days, and special projects like graffiti removal and fence repairs. Gayna steps up and is game for anything. On the coldest or hottest days of the year, she drives from her home in South Davis to plant, weed, and tend the Butterfly & Hummingbird Garden. She motivates the whole team. We look forward to seeing her every week, and we all benefit from her energy, enthusiasm, and gentle humor.

Covid? No worries. Vaccinated early and ready to go, Gayna inspires the group to work together safely. We have all remained healthy with her wise guidance. Our fine team of volunteers and the Butterfly & Hummingbird Garden continues to flourish today.

Gayna also volunteers at the City's open space projects at the North Davis Uplands and South Fork Preserve. Weeding, planting, and trail preparation are all skills she offers. Difficult issues like the decline of Burrowing Owl habitat on lands that surround Davis has energized her, and she has joined teams to remove tall grasses and plastic fencing that inhibit owl nest sites.

Gayna is a long-time Davis resident and a retired bank officer. Without skipping a beat since retiring, she has changed her focus from managing money to helping others less fortunate and to caring for our natural world. As a member of the Davis Community

Church team that assists the unhoused, she is actively involved in issues that also affect our environment, our parks and open spaces. Recently, Tree Davis honored the Friends of West Pond with the Community Group Stewardship Award. We gratefully received it as a team, and know we would not be a team without Gayna.

**Sherri Sandberg, nominated by Deb Bruns, Director, Teaching & Learning, Yolo County Office of Education and Kevin Perry, Urban Rain Design**

Sherri Sandberg has been teaching science for 32 years - 25 of those as a science teacher at Davis High School. She is also a resident of Davis, having lived for over 20 years in Village Homes.

Sandberg makes learning relevant to her students' lives – and provides lifelong lessons for future generations - in both her Chemistry in the Community and Zoology-Botany classes by integrating local environmental issues, resource conservation, sustainability and climate change awareness into the curriculum.

In Chemistry in the Community students learn about California water issues, tracking their own family's water use, learning how water is purified and understanding the water issues affecting the Bay Delta from a variety of perspectives through a role-playing project. The impact on students is long lasting. She recently ran into a former student who told her, "Ms. Sandberg, every time I use water, I think of you". Students present their climate change projects during finals week, often enjoying cinnamon rolls cooked in Sandberg's solar oven.

Sandberg goes above and beyond in seeking out resources for teaching about environmental issues. Most recently, she attended Climate Generation's 2021 Summer Institute for Climate Change Education where she joined (virtually) with educators across the country to learn new tools, skills and resources to teach climate change. She is putting those new tools to practice - and sharing them with her colleagues - in DHS Chemistry classes, bringing an understanding of climate change to even more students.

As a Zoology-Botany teacher, Sandberg has been one of the faculty members for the past ten years to organize a three-day field trip to Catalina Island where students learn about marine and kelp forest ecosystems firsthand - an unforgettable learning experience that has inspired many students to pursue related careers.

**SLEWS:** Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship. Sandberg has mentored students for 20 years through participating in the Yolo County-based Center for Land-based Learning SLEWS program which engages high school students in habitat restoration through a series of hands-on field days at real projects that develop science skills and environmental stewardship in youth. Over the course of three SLEWS Field Days, and associated in-class lessons, students build their knowledge, skills and personal connection to the land. Each year, a group of 30 students is matched with a habitat project where they plant native trees and shrubs, build irrigation systems and participate in ecological field studies while learning about careers and college opportunities in natural resource management and environmental science. Students see the effects of their work through multiple visits to their adopted project. Sandberg's

favorite project was at Sequoia Farms where the students worked to turn a walnut orchard into a forest ecosystem. The contrast with the nearly barren conventionally farmed walnut orchard across the street from the project was eye-opening for the students.

Sandberg's work doesn't stop at the end of the school day. She is the faculty advisor to the DHS Environmental Club, supporting students in taking the lead on campus actions including recycling, composting, installing new bike racks, and most notably, transforming dry, barren areas into bio-diverse, rich plantings and drought-tolerant demonstration gardens. Sandberg worked with students to write grants to the PTA and Davis Farm to School and spent many weekend hours with her students to beautify the area in front of Brunelle Hall and adjacent to the science class with drought tolerant plantings. The area is now used by both art and science classrooms as an outdoor learning space, multiplying the impact of the project for years to come.

This past year, collaborating with UC Davis and Kevin Perry of Urban Rain Design, Sandberg helped create the Davis High School Rain Garden. This courtyard space was transformed from a underutilized space into a high visibility landscape designed to capture rain water from nearby sidewalks. Sandberg served as a critical liaison between the Davis High Environmental Club and the UC Davis Student Leadership in Green Infrastructure. Not only did Sandberg help spearhead the project but she spent numerous hours in the installation and continued stewardship of the rain garden space.

Finally, Sandberg "walks the talk", modeling personal stewardship choices including riding her bicycle to school, shopping at the Davis Farmers' Market and minimizing plastic in her life by buying food and other products in bulk or in glass or other recyclable containers. According to a close friend, she is an avid recycler, and even removes every plastic 'window' from her mail before sorting and putting in the recycling bin.

### **Yolo Climate Emergency Coalition (YCEC), nominated by Chris Granger**

The Yolo Climate Emergency Coalition (YCEC) is an environmental justice alliance made up of climate activists who have successfully organized community action in Davis and Yolo County since 2019. YCEC is committed to the just transition framework, which centers Climate Action priorities around the needs of our most vulnerable populations and the front-line victims of climate change.

Their efforts to engage community leaders and institutions to set significant goals, and their emphasis on a just transition, environmental justice and equity has brought new people and issues to the table in Davis and at the county level. They are helping to shape policy discussions and priorities, mobilize people to action and decisions to allocate funds for Climate Action. Although as a group they have moved from an initial Davis focus to an Yolo County focus there work is already having significant impacts for Davis.

### **YCEC History and Action**

These local activists initially gathered in early 2019 to work together on a Climate Emergency Resolution for the City of Davis. Approved by Davis City Council on March 5, 2019 – the resolution commits to accelerating the Community’s carbon neutrality goal from 2050 up to 2040 and implement other significant City actions to address climate change by 2030. It also called for funding the current update of the City’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

After successfully encouraging action by the City of Davis, members of the original group then turned their attention toward Yolo County. Their goal was pushing Yolo County into becoming the first agricultural county in the United States to pass a climate emergency resolution. A description of this process is summarized on the Yolo County Sustainability Web Page:

“While the Sustainability Plan development was underway, in February 2020, County staff met with representatives of a local climate advocacy group (Yolo Climate Coalition) who were working on the resolution declaring a climate emergency in Yolo County for the Board of Supervisors to adopt. The purpose was to identify areas of similarity with the Sustainability Plan and to provide feedback on the resolution itself.

On September 29, 2020, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors passed and adopted Resolution No. 20-114 which declared a climate crisis and acknowledged that the COVID19 pandemic has exacerbated social and economic disparities in communities that require an immediate mobilization of resources to effect a just transition towards an inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and resilient local economy while also supporting and advocating for regional, national, and international efforts necessary to reverse the climate, social justice, and economic crises. The resolution contains directives regarding a future advisory body for County staff explore and return to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation.”

Because of the efforts of YCEC the Yolo County Climate Emergency Resolution calls attention to the importance of a just transition, the urgency of action by 2030, the formation of a new Yolo County Climate Action Commission. YCEC has remained attentive to the process of the creation of the new ***Climate Action Commission which is now established and is building a platform for collaborative action across Yolo County communities.*** Four of the founding members of YCEC now serve on the Climate Commission. **During the decision process for American Rescue Plan funds YCEC carried the flag for funding for Climate Action projects. Resulting in a \$1 million set aside for Climate Action funding throughout the County.**

YCEC has continued to organize regular meetings, respond to progress and issues in Davis, and throughout Yolo County. Their working groups are based on a distributed leadership model, and driven by very accomplished volunteers, extremely passionate about seeing change in their local communities. They are working collaboratively with other community organizations at county level to propose transformative projects and advocate for change away from business as usual decision-making.

### **YCEC (Organizing group)**

David Abramson

Juliette Buxton Beck

Robin Datel

Mary Jimenez

Andrew Kim  
Lynne Nittler  
Nancy Price  
Alan Pryor  
Scott Steward  
Adelita Serena  
Roosevelt Tarlesson  
Lupita Torres  
Catalina Torr

### **Business Nominations (2):**

#### **Dos Coyotes Café, Davis, CA, nominated by Greener Davis Staff**

Since the first Dos Coyotes opened in Davis, CA 1991, the restaurant has been a leader in environmental initiatives among the Sacramento-area restaurant industry. Now numbering over a dozen locations, Dos Coyotes' commitment to sustainability extends to every aspect of the business, from the way dishes are washed to the napkins in the dining room.

Management completed a comprehensive certification program through the Business Environmental Resource Center that includes energy and water conservation, pollution prevention, solid waste reduction and green building requirements. Dos Coyotes also achieved Gold Level Certification from Partners for a Greener Davis (one of the first restaurants to earn this distinction) for demonstrated, ongoing efforts to comply with environmental regulations and reduce carbon footprint.

Dos Coyotes supports community initiatives and programs and is a key partner and sponsor of community events. As a locally-based restaurant, Dos Coyotes is committed to serving and investing in community with substantial contributions to local arts, schools, sports and quality of life.

Dos Coyotes supports qualified local charitable and educational organizations to assist them in raising funds. A popular scrip program has benefitted everything from soccer leagues to PTAs and school bands. Community partnerships like Dos Coyotes' "Be a Reader" program, which rewards students for outstanding academic achievement, are designed to promote education and enrich the lives of local residents. By accomplishing pre-determined goals, students participating in the "Be a Reader" program earn a certificate for a free Kid's Meal and drink at their local Dos Coyotes restaurant.

Dos Coyotes is a community partner of Cool Davis, and long-time sponsor of Davis Farm to School, an organization dedicated to increasing farm fresh foods in school food, reducing solid waste and providing educational opportunities to students and staff through garden-based learning, local farm visits and volunteer/teacher workshops.

Each year, there are a number of “Dos Nights” in each restaurant, where a portion of the evening’s profits are donated to a local non-profit. From free concerts in the park to local fireworks celebrations, Dos Coyotes supports activities that entertain, enrich and bring neighborhoods together.

Restaurant facilities and products include:

**Take-out containers:** Compostable - made from sugarcane, not trees

**Lids:** Made from plant-based plastic (which requires 68% less fossil fuel to produce!)

**Cutlery:** Made from corn and other vegetable solids

**Napkins:** Made from 100% recycled paper

**Faucets:** Water conserving, automated faucets

**Dishwashers:** Special dishwashers that recycle rinsing water

For more information about the owner, Bobby Coyote, you can see a recent article:

<https://www.jweekly.com/2020/06/22/meet-bobby-coyote-the-southwestern-food-king-of-sacramento/>

### **The Wardrobe, Heather Caswell (owner), nominated by Karen Beardsley**

Clothing tells the truth about an age. In a world where fast fashion is becoming increasingly wasteful and creating a larger carbon footprint, The Wardrobe has been and continues to be focused on promoting slow fashion that is sustainable and long-lasting.

The boutique has always been eco-minded in its practices and was originally focused on selling used clothing in 1988. Later, the store would carry its first Ecollection by Esprit in 1995—one of the first major fashion houses to manufacture organic cotton and linen.

Owner Heather Caswell has generally carried very small clothing lines in her store, focusing on unique clothing that is often made by local designers. Caswell promotes California Chic fashions which are colorful, comfortable, well made, playful but, more importantly, ethically sourced. She believes that the boutique is both a reflection of her own attitude and of the Davis community where it has been located and reinvented over the past 34 years.

The Wardrobe is now in its 3rd location and has been a regional leader in carrying locally sourced goods. Eighty percent of their inventory is made in North America and a quarter of it is made right here in California. Each year Caswell makes a choice to have

a more environmentally conscious business model and reduce the store's carbon footprint.

Some of the practices they follow include using recycled bags and boxes (since day one), switching to LED lights, maintaining HEPA filters, and using natural non toxic cleaning methods that are proven to make a difference. Every year they try to take another ecologically responsive step forward: last year they stopped using foil for their labels and logos.

The business is also focused on empowering its customers and the community to make smarter environmentally friendly choices, often hosting Earth Day events and promotions to educate its clients and community.

Over the years, The Wardrobe has often encouraged prominent designers, including Eileen Fischer, to adopt more environmentally friendly practices such as the use of organic fabrics.

The Wardrobe is one of Davis' strongest proponents of the Go Local movement. In 2021, the store hosted a Make Every Day Earth Day that helped strengthen the downtown Davis Shop Local message. The event featured speakers that educated the public on local environmental issues from local environmental groups. The Wardrobe also designed and handed out dozens of "Think before you Click" stickers and Shop Local bags and jewelry and hats on its patio and throughout downtown Davis.

This year The Wardrobe's focus is on educating customers in sustainable laundry techniques. Especially with the store's unique upcycled cashmere clothing line, The Wardrobe is teaching customers how handwashing sweaters is a great opportunity for their customers to learn new environmentally friendly practices. Caswell is excited to offer biodegradable dye free made in the US clothes soap as part of the store's inventory in hopes of encouraging others to make the easy switch.

The Wardrobe's owner Heather Caswell believes that eco-activism needs to also extend to local politics. Caswell was a leading voice in successfully opposing the DISC 1 project because of environmental concerns. Last year, she and a group of concerned citizens founded the Davis Community Vision Alliance, to provide wisdom and ecologically-focused leadership for the common good.

### **Non-Profit Organization, Agency, School, or other Community-based Organization Nominations (4):**

#### **Bike Davis, nominated by Chris Granger**

Bike Davis volunteers have served the Davis community with bike education and advocacy efforts for 15 years. Their contributions to improving infrastructure, ensure safe biking for all ages and showing up to advocate for the long-term investment in biking for our community has made them an invaluable partner of the City, UC Davis

and other community organizations like Cool Davis, and the Bike Campaign. They have brought resources, expertise, creativity and innovation to every problem, bringing experts from around the region and the world to advise and challenge us to move forward on our lofty goals. Their work to achieve these goals for active transportation in our community has meant that step by step we are ensuring bicycling will have a significant place in our community for all of our residents, children, workers and visitors for remainder of this century.

### **History:**

“Despite its reputation as the premier bicycling city in the U.S., the advocacy movement that thrived in larger cities since the 1990s took longer to catch on in Davis. Bike Davis formed in 2007. Originally calling itself “Davis Bicycles!” it was founded with the goal of reviving the bicycling culture and increasing bicycle mode share back to levels around 20 to 30 percent that characterized Davis in the 1980s. In 2000, bicycle mode share in Davis was 17% (according to the US Census Bureau).

Bike Davis grew out of a Master’s thesis by Ted Buehler in the UC Davis Transportation Studies program. Ted documented Davis’ rise to prominence in the 1960s and 70s as the city created the nation’s first bike lanes, developed an extensive network of greenbelt bicycle and pedestrian paths in the 1980s and early 90s, and the decline of bicycling in recent years.

Various explanations exist for the decrease in bicycle mode share in Davis. These include demographic factors: an increase in residents commuting to work outside of Davis and the decline of cycling among students entering UC Davis. The retirement of visionary bike advocates from the city’s Public Works Department in the late 1990s, and the rise of the Unitrans bus system as the preferred mode for student transportation also are likely factors.

When Ted first presented his thesis in December of 2006, a few concerned citizens saw an opportunity to create an advocacy group. Ted gave his presentation again to a packed house at the Varsity Theatre on February 26, 2007, and Bike Davis was born. “Bike Davis’s mission is (from their website)

“Our mission is to encourage and promote bicycling, improve infrastructure, influence policy, and advocate for a vibrant bicycle culture in Davis.

We advocate for designs that meet current best practices and for adequate funding to create a complete bicycle infrastructure network throughout the city that is safe, comfortable, and convenient for riders of all ages.

We provide bicycle education for Davis residents through programs like our school bike rodeos that teach elementary school children bike skills

We work to increase the percentage of all trips in Davis that are made on bicycles by advocating for better infrastructure, convenient parking, and encouragement programs.

We foster a community that makes bicycling fun through our annual Loopalooza fun ride and other social events.”

And so since 2007 Bike Davis has accomplished a lot!

### **Summarized from Bike Davis Website.**

“ **Schools:** The Bike Davis Schools Committee has worked with Davis schools, the School District, and the City of Davis to encourage school children to ride bicycles and walk to school. The Committee organizes after-school Bike Rodeos, Walk and Bike to School events, and facilitates the Active4.me daily scan and notify program for parents.

It also initiated and ran the annual Davis Bike Loopalooza event, for which it continues to assist by providing volunteers.

**Citywide Infrastructure and Street Standards:** Bike Davis strives to ensure that accommodations for bicycles on city streets meet the highest standards. Recent changes in lane widths to give bicycles more space and to calm vehicular traffic are among the organization's achievements. Previous examples of BD's efforts concerning local infrastructure include the redesign of Fifth Street in the downtown area, elimination of car parking on B Street north of Seventh Street, and bike path connectivity to the new Cannery neighborhood. BD also has worked to address the safety hazard of yard debris piles placed on streets.

**Intercity Bicycle Commuting:** BD has worked with bicycle commuters between Davis and Sacramento, local agencies, and Union Pacific Railroad to ensure that conditions are improved on Road 32A, the bicycling route east of Davis that connects to Sacramento. The railroad crossing along this route is a site of many close calls and a few serious collisions involving unsafe driving, and this has spurred efforts to make improvements.

**Education and Outreach:** Bike Davis has organized events including membership meetings with invited speakers and films on bicycle advocacy, and candidates' forums prior to city council elections. In the past, BD has participated in the distribution of free bike lights and anti-bike theft devices, and hosted bicycle film festivals."

### **Davis Community Meals and Housing, nominated by Janet Lane, Buildings and Grounds Chair, and The Rev. Dr. Pamela Dolan, Rector, The Episcopal Church of St. Martin**

We are pleased and honored to nominate Davis Community Meals and Housing. DCMH is a nonprofit organization providing three community meals per week (which have continued without stop during the pandemic) and shelter, supportive housing and other assistance to individuals in need in the community. The three meals per week are prepared and served at the Episcopal Church of St. Martin. We at St. Martin's have partnered with DCMH for over 35 years and know their work well as many of our parishioners volunteer at the meals and other DCMH services. Our rector and several parishioners have also served on the DCMH Board of Directors.

DCMH deserves recognition for their extensive work in preventing food waste in the Davis community and preventing excess food from going to the landfill. These efforts are all carried out by volunteers in the community donating their time to preventing food waste.

First, DCMH volunteers glean bakery products, fruits and vegetables at least once and often several times a week from the following locations: Nugget on Covell, the Co-op, Safeway Marketplace, Safeway South, Save Mart, Ikeda, and Panera. These stores give the gleaners bakery, fruit and vegetable products that have "pull-dates" on the date the volunteer is there. Instead of being put into compost or landfill, these products are then brought to St. Martin's church and put into people's hands—people who are very appreciative to have and use it.

Food that is gleaned is distributed in the following ways: First, it is used as needed to prepare the community meal, and some is distributed for take-away to guests of the community meal. However, the bulk is taken by volunteers to be distributed at various locations in the city, including Creekside Apartments (supportive housing), Cesar Chavez Apartments, Bartlett Apartments in the Cannery (affordable housing), the DCMH Shelter and Resource Center on H Street, and the Davis Night Market. Any food that is gleaned which is not in good-enough shape for distribution is given as food for goats kept by local individuals.

In addition to receiving food from the local retailers above, DCMH receives produce from Grace Garden and also from Dianne and Mike Madison, who donate vegetables, fruit and olive oil. DCMH also receives excess tree fruit from many Davis residents who bring their fruit to St. Martin's to be used at the meals and/or distributed to locations listed above.

The average amount of food received each week and saved from wastage is an average of 1200 - 1500 pounds per week, but the amount can go up as high as 2500 pounds per week of food saved from wastage or going into the landfill.

In another related community collaborative program, DCMH receives excess coffee beans from the UC Davis Coffee Center. The Design of Coffee course is the most popular course at UC Davis at present and its students generate a large quantity of excess beans. Volunteer gleaners from DCMH retrieve the excess beans four to six times a year and bring them to DCMH to be used in coffee for the community meals and also coffee for the H Street Shelter and Resource Center. This project has been ongoing for at least five years now.

While gleaning and distribution happens throughout the week, the most extensive gleaning and distribution of excess food products is done on Tuesday mornings and one can witness a bustle of activity going on outside the kitchen at St. Martin's where numerous DCMH volunteers are working to make the above processes happen. (Please see attached photos).

In addition, it should be mentioned that DCMH has had good environmental practices in place many years. They have composted all excess food products that cannot be distributed for many years, even before composting became widely practiced in Davis. DCMH also uses all compostable paper products (mainly cups and napkins) when disposable products are needed.

We believe that DCMH's extensive volunteer network and operation dedicated to preventing food wastage and distributing excess food to those who need it is a model for the Davis community and shows that preventing food wastage and getting excess food into the hands of people who need it is possible. Obviously, this program does not solve the huge problem of food wastage facing us today, but it is certainly a noteworthy step in the right direction.

If you have any questions, we would be happy to talk with you in more detail about DCMH's food collection and distribution programs and other environmentally sustainable practices.

### **Explorit, nominated by Anna Fantasia**

Explorit's vision is to ignite and foster curiosity about science and nature through inquiry and discovery. We do this by providing opportunities for hands-on science exploration to excite children and their families about a future in the sciences and in STEM careers. Nothing today is more important than the future of our environment. Teaching our youth how to be good stewards of our earth is a top priority at Explorit.

Two years ago, we began a journey to create a Pollinator Garden, located in the back courtyard of the museum. Why are pollinators important? The simple truth, we cannot live without them. Without pollinators, the human race and all of earth's terrestrial ecosystems would not survive. Of the 1400 crop plants grown around the world, *i.e.* those that produce all of our food and plant-based products, almost 80% require pollination by animals. Visits from bees, moths, hummingbirds, bats, and other pollinators result in more flavorful fruits and support more than 150 food (fruit and grain) crops in the USA alone. In addition, those same pollinators provide environmental benefits. Pollinators are key to the reproduction of flowering plants which provide clean air by producing breathable oxygen from carbon dioxide created by animals. Flowering plants also help to purify water, prevent soil erosion through roots that hold soil in place and foliage that buffers the impact of rain, and contribute to the water cycle which depends upon plants to return moisture into the atmosphere.

Simply stated, without pollinators, we DON'T eat. During the past 30 years, our nation's pollinators have suffered serious losses due to invasive pests and diseases such as mites, viral and fungal pathogens, exposure to pesticides and other chemicals, habitat loss, loss of species, genetic diversity, and changing climate... some species have even gone extinct. While humans are responsible for some of this decline, we also have the ability and the responsibility to recover those species if we guide our future scientists, and future community leaders initially to care, realize that even small, local efforts have ripple effects through our world, and encourage them to take the correct actions now and in the future. We understand that this begins with us, but it ends with our children.

Explorit discovered 10 easy ways to protect our local pollinators which we have implemented in our garden:

1. **More garden, less lawn.** While grass had been a fixture of the American dream, more flowering, pollen producing plants support bees and other pollinators.
2. **Plant native flowers to support the native (non-invasive) pollinator species.**
3. **Diversify the garden** because variety is the spice of life, broadens food sources, and attracts different pollinator species.

4. **Take advantage of the season**, leave plant materials behind in Winter to shelter pollinators.
5. **Create habitats for nesting bees**. Leave hollow logs, bare ground or sandy areas for burrowing.
6. **Provide sources of water** to help pollinators digest food, regulate humidity in their colony and keep them cool in summer.
7. **Don't mow so often** so pollinators can capitalize on unexpected flowering plants.
8. **Avoid pesticides** so pollinators aren't picking up harmful substances in gardens and bringing them back to their homes.
9. **Learn to love imperfection** and lose the visually pristine garden image for the munched leaf look which indicates that cultivated resources are not going to waste.
10. **Bees are awesome but so are other pollinators**.

But we aren't doing it alone. To aid in our mission, Explorit recently received two City of Davis Art Grants. How can art help the environment? How many times have you walked by a beautiful painting or a sculpture and stopped to admire it? At least a few times, right? Art captured your attention, the colors, shapes, the details and precision, how it made you feel... It captured your attention and your imagination. That is how the art installation in Explorit's Pollinator Garden enhances the environmental learning and overall experience. Descriptive panels will be installed this spring to highlight the pollinators that grace the canvas to add an element of understanding to the beautiful bird, bee, bat and insects masterfully painted by local artist Monica Jurik. Our most recent art project, a tile installation featuring hummingbirds, which was directed by professors and students from UC Davis Art/Science Fusion and created with the help of local children who designed the tiles, will be unveiled at a Pollinator Garden Grand Opening and Celebration to be held in April 2022... a celebration two years in the making, delayed by a pandemic.

We are proud to involve our local leaders, artists, families, students of all grades, from K to university level, to return to their roots and learn more about how the Earth sustains us, when we sustain her. For those who want to learn more, we invite YOU to plan a visit to our pollinator garden later this Spring, register your summer camper in our Need for Seed's gardening camp (for grades K-5<sup>th</sup>), or visit our exhibit, *Healthy Planet, Healthy You* (on display until Fall 2022). Because the changes we make today is vital to a healthy tomorrow.

### **Tree Davis, nominated by Erin Donley Martineau**

The mission of Tree Davis is to enhance and expand the urban forest by teaching the people of our community to plant and care for trees. Tree Davis is dedicated to keeping our community green, clean and cool by enhancing and expanding our urban forest. Dedicated volunteers have been planting, monitoring, and caring for trees in the Davis area since 1992, so 2022 is the 30th anniversary of Tree Davis'

Trees and people need each other to survive in an urban environment. Trees benefit people in many ways. They shade our homes, clean our air and water, help to feed us,

provide shelter, and much more. But trees need people too! It takes a community to plant and care for an urban forest. Tree Davis has been educating volunteers on how to plant, prune, care, and monitor trees for over twenty years.

## History

Since our inception in 1992, Tree Davis has:

- Worked with over 5,000 volunteers to plant 12,000 new trees
- Coordinated educational programs with area schools and community groups, including Birch Lane, Cesar Chavez, North Davis, Patwin, Pioneer and Willett Elementary Schools, Holmes Junior High, Emerson Junior High, Davis High School, Davis School for Independent Study, UC Davis, University Extension, the Yolo Basin Foundation, the Boy and Girl Scouts, and the Davis Rotary Club.
- Established a partnership with the City of Davis Parks and Community Services Department, Tree Commission, and Tree Maintenance Division to involve Davis citizens in the planting and maintenance of our urban forest.
- Published a quarterly newsletter, Branching Out, and educational brochures on tree planting, tree establishment, and selecting quality nursery stock.
- Coordinated the volunteer activities for the 1998 national Make a Difference Day tree planting at the Vic Fazio Wildlife Area where 200 volunteers helped plant 3,600 native California trees and shrubs.
- Planted and maintained a 3.2-mile Adopt-a-Highway site on State Highway 113.
- Sponsored free community workshops on tree care, planting, maintenance, and urban forestry/environmental education

## **Tree Davis' goals for the future...**

As the success of Tree Davis grows, so do the expectations of the community. Future projects include working with the City of Davis to help create a 40-year urban forest management plan, plant 1,000 trees, and implement a career and college readiness program in Urban Forestry.

We are committed to educating the public about trees because we view urban and community forestry as an integral part of a healthy environment. Teaching people to plant and care for trees increases environmental awareness and empowers our citizens as stewards of our community, country, and the planet. Planting a tree is much more than a fun outdoor activity. It reduces pollution, provides cooling shade on a summer's day, brings neighbors together, increases property values, reduces crime, fosters community cooperation, and provides habitat for local wildlife.