CREATE RCE AWARDS

All fields marked with an asterisk (\*) are required.

9. Project Title\*

Coastal Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL)

10. Duration of project

Show End Date

Date

5/31/2017

E.g., 18 Jul 2016

11. Describe coordination and management of the project. Please also reflect how the RCE as a network organization has contributed to the project and the challenges involved, if any. Character count 400 words

Coastal Institute of Sustainability Leadership (CISL) is an experiential learning class that covers aspects of people, planet, and economies and the local and global policies that shape our sustainable development as a planet. The Institute was designed by the UN RCE Georgetown to integrate university student learning and young people into the UN RCE process and the county community. The class was based on Front St., the main street of the county seat in the City of Georgetown and it included guest lectures from policy makers and government officials on the theme that the UN RCE selected as significant: sea level rise and flooding. This class examined sea level rise, flooding, and climate change policy culminating in a community engagement role play simulation of a fictitious town in New England to gauge community awareness and readiness for climate change mitigation and adaptation policy on the coast. Students combined science and policy skills within a framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, using systems thinking and cultural and historical analysis. **Student Learning Outcomes**: Upon completion of this course, students could: 1) Identify and explain the Sustainable Development Goals. 2) Explain the science and policy development of climate change at global, national, and local levels. 3) Critically analyze the complexities of climate change, sea level rise, and flooding at global and local levels. 4) Facilitate a role play simulation on climate change adaptation and mitigation. 5) Evaluate, analyze, and offer feedback on readiness and policies for climate change and flooding in Georgetown County, SC.

12. What are the current results of the project in terms of output (e.g. publications, developed practices, course materials)? Character count 300 words

This Institute was used as a platform to test the viability of a) a student institute on the UN SDGs in Georgetown and b) the development of role play simulation case studies on sea level rise and flooding developed for Georgetown County, rather than using ones based on New England. Student evaluations demonstrated a desire for further institutes on sustainable development in Georgetown County and a new understanding of the interaction of social, economic, and environmental issues that face the county. (It should be noted that the City of Georgetown is located to the south of the university campus by almost one hour and students infrequently travel here. Thus, a course such as this could have presented a challenge, but instead presented a new opportunity for transformative learning). At the end of the Coastal Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL), students facilitated a community engagement workshop using the role play simulations with about 20 local citizens. For two hours, people in the county discussed solutions to sea level rise and flooding problems that our county has faced for decades, but has been impacted greatly in the last 3 years. At the end, citizens voted to move forward through the UN RCE to apply for a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant to produce role play simulations specific to our county with localized downscaled data. The UN RCE, led by Michelle LaRocco and co-sponsored by Pamela Martin, did apply and received a $100,000 grant to engage our community in conversations about sea level rise and flooding, integrate our local scientific, social and economic data, and produce role play case studies on the issue to contribute to our county comprehensive planning process.

13. What are the expected/confirmed outcomes (e.g. impact of the project)? Character count 400 words

As a result of the CISL course, the UN RCE has won a $100,000 NOAA grant and we have enhanced our youth outreach program to include a new paid internship program. Generous UN RCE stakeholders to include the city, county, town of Pawleys Island, Waccamaw Council of Governments, Surfrider Foundation, and the Bunnelle Foundation are funding this new program for spring 2018. The Coastal Institute of Sustainability Leadership (CISL) will hold its second session in May 2018 at which time we intend to test our draft localized sea level rise and flooding role play simulations.

14. Are there any unexpected/ unplanned results achieved by your project? If yes, briefly describe or list them. Character count 200 words.

Once we had positive student feedback from the summer CISL class, we wanted to engage students during the school year. As a result, LaRocco and Martin devised the UN Youth Corps initiative, a program that engages university students in our county through the UN SDGs and their application in paid internships in the county. Thus, the CISL program unexpectedly resulted in the creation of a new youth program to be launched this spring 2018.

15. What are the remaining challenges and/ or limitations for further development? Character count 300 words.

The CISL summer course emphasized the scientific-policy nexus. While it was a fruitful start, we plan to enhance the course in May 2018 by adding an interdisciplinary, field experience with team teaching of professors from Marine Science, Archaeology, Business, and Policy. Thus, students will gain multiple skills and tools to view our living coastline and solutions to becoming a resilient community.

16. What is the project’s contribution to innovative and transformative educational processes for sustainable development (especially regarding formal/ non-formal learning/ research)? Character count 500 words.

This approach institutionalizes collaboration between the county, the National Estuarine Research Reserve, and Coastal Carolina University and brings college level students directly to our communities. It also provides a new perspective to our county leaders from university-age students. The main goal, though, of the Coastal Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL) and its subsequent Youth Corps internship program is to transform our communities through jointly led and directed projects. As our county engages in a new comprehensive plan process and grapples with how to develop while preserving our cultural and historical heritage and our natural resources, new approaches are needed. The CISL and Youth Corps programs can be a part of that important process. Additional the CISL summer program and the Youth Corps internship program emphasize global learning in a local place through hands-on application of the SDGs and reflective engagement within community and environment. Thus, formal learning and non-formal learning transcend to transformative learning in mutually beneficial ways for the community and for students. As one students in the CISL May program commented, “I always understood global climate change and its importance, but I never really understood how it impacted me and my community until I took this course. Now, the SDGs have real meaning and so does the Paris Agreement.”

17. How can you scale up and mainstream ESD and SD practices of the project and enable it to contribute to the implementation of the Global Action Programme (GAP) as proposed by UNESCO? Character count 300 words.

The GAP proposes 5 areas of focus. The CISL program addresses them in the following ways:

(1) policy support – CISL is a policy-driven class in which multiple UN RCE Georgetown stakeholders interact with students and present the challenges faced with sea level rise and flooding. In turn, students evaluate current local policies, compare them to the UN SDG targets and applicable documents at the global level (such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction) and make policy recommendations that link the county within the broader UN, global framework; (2) whole-institution approaches – this class is not housed within walls, but rather embraces place and community as its environment. Thus, the community, citizens, policymakers, and students become institutions and vehicles for change through dynamic role play simulations, dialog, field work, and engagement.; (3) Educators – While Coastal Carolina University faculty and Michelle LaRocco of the National Estuarine Research Reserve are the primary teachers in this CISL course, community leaders and students become educators as well. For instance, our city Economic Development Director, Dr. Gloria Tinubu toured students through a low-income area of our city that suffered from repeated flooding. Dr. Tinubu and the residents were the teachers that day. Additionally, students were trained to facilitate and lead role play simulations for the community. In that activity, students became educators.; (4) Youth – the CISL program is focused on university-level students in our county, a county that does not have a four-year university in it. Thus, CISL brings mentoring opportunities for the county to inspire other youth to attend university; and (5) local communities – in the CISL program, the local community is the key to learning and to understanding the real applications of the UNSDGs in practice.

For GAP details visit: [http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002243/224368e.pdf. (link is external)](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002243/224368e.pdf)

18. How does you project contribute institutional and policy reforms as part of sustainability change? Character count 500 words.

The CISL program places university researchers and students within the City of Georgetown and the county seat with interaction from policy makers in the county. It also includes research and community engagement regarding sea level rise and flooding to include localized precipitation fall, port sedimentation, community impacts of flooding and sea level rise impacts on beach access, renourishment, and insurance. The interaction of pubic and private policy and policymakers in this class provides students with opportunities to present new ideas and policy changes with leaders. Through the UN Youth Corps internship program that was inspired by the CISL summer program, students will work directly in public and private offices in the county, analyze the SDG application to the county, and present their findings in a public meeting. Both CISL and the UN youth Corps internships provide opportunities for institutional and policy reform, dialog, and collaboration.

19. How does your project further improve capacities of various partners and stakeholders on the theme? Character count 500 word.

The CISL program and the UN Global Youth Corps initiative (to begin January 2018), are directed by Coastal Carolina University (CCU) and the National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR). As CCU is located to the north in Horry County, these UN RCE programs extend the reach of the university to an underserved county. For NERR, the CISL and Youth Corps programs provide new training opportunities and new facilitators for our upcoming sea level rise and flooding localized role play simulations. Historically, there has been little interaction formally between CCU and Georgetown County. These programs are enhancing the relationship and framing it within the optic of sustainable development together. Further, the community has provided much of the leadership of the CISL summer program and has guided many of the classes and conversations. This has enhanced student learning tremendously, but has also provided new skills to the county. This spring, 13 new interns will help develop new programs and research areas through the Youth Corps internships. This will surely expand the capacity of our county, a poor county in South Carolina with limited resource to apply toward SDG implementation. These programs can serve as the conduit to sustainable development for Georgetown County.

20. What is the significance of this project for developing global linkages in order to strengthen activities in this area? Character count 250 words.

The global linkages to the UN SDGs are the central framework of the CISL program and the UN Youth Corps initiative. Students are asked to review the SDGs and their applications to quality of life in the county through the goals 8 and 9 on work and economic growth and innovation; 13,14, and 15 on climate change, life on land and in water; as well as goals 1 and 4, poverty reduction and education. Sea level rise and flooding have impacted the county in a myriad of ways and the UN SDG goals listed above focus the conversation and provide targets for improvement. Further, linking Georgetown County to other regions around the world through the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction provides common issues through which we can all relate and view progress, as well as learn from best practices.

21. What is novel about the project within the RCE network and what could other RCEs learn from this experience? (Answer only if relevant) Character count 250 words.

The Coastal Institute of Sustainability Leadership (CISL) and the subsequent development of the UN Global Youth Corps are novel in that no other UN programs exist formally within our state. Further, the programs formalize the SDGs into the analysis of the sustainable development of the county and have resulted in a $100,000 US federal government grant for the county to produce role play simulations based on localized sea level rise and flooding data. These are examples of educational partnerships that have transformed policy through innovative strategies and joint research with UN RCE stakeholders.

22. What is the significance of this project for the region? How important are its results for its particular project category? Character count 250 words.

As the Southeastern coast of the United States faces increased threats of hurricanes, flooding, and precipitation, Federal Emergency Management statistics also show that the region is poorly prepared in terms of recovery and resilience. The development of university and community-driven educational and policy partnerships that lead to resilient communities will not only enhance SDG implementation at local and global levels, but it will save lives and improve lives. Poorly resourced counties like Georgetown can buffer these impacts through collaboration and innovative strategies to learn from the RCE network and from our community members. Young people engaged in these initiatives through CISL and the Youth Corps will be better trained and better equipped to lead our communities and our world in the future. Thus, the Coastal Institute for Sustainability Leadership and the UN Youth Corps programs aim to create new, locally connected, but globally minded leaders for the 21st Century.

23. Please add up to 2 images in high resolution that best reflect the project activities. High resolution means the image should be a JPEG, or a TIFF file and not lower than 5 Megapixel (MP) in resolution.