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## Student Affairs Fee Advisory Board

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

### Funding Request Form FY2021

*Department should complete one form for each individual request*

**Department:**

Memorial Student Center

**Program, Service or Operation Requested:**

The Intersectionality of the Local and the Global in Environmental Grassroots Activism

**General Description:**

If approved, this program will take place in the Spring of 2021. We are requesting funding can be broken down into three main parts. The first is a week-long residency with a speaker from a grassroots nongovernmental organization that works in environmental activism such as Blake Dyason, the founder of Love Our Trails. Love Our Trails is based in Cape Town, South Africa and is dedicated to cleaning up trails and educating people on how to respect our environment (<http://loveourtrails.com/>). The goal of this residency would be to have the speaker spend time in a variety of professor's classrooms to share their story of environmental and social responsibility in their home country and how we can be environmentally and socially responsible in Texas and our own local communities. The speaker could spend part of this residency at Texas A&M Galveston and part of the time in College Station, further integrating the Galveston students beyond the third part of the program.

The second part of this program is a collaborative round-table discussion with several speakers. Each of these speakers would have been involved in grassroots environmental activism in their own personal communities, and many would have an international perspective; that is, they would have worked and been from other countries. However, we hope to pursue a relatively local speaker as well to demonstrate that environmental issues vary significantly but are similar in terms of the effects of local activism and equity *and* are present in Texas. Possible speakers include Blake Dyason, Hilton Kelley, Greta Thunberg, and Alfred Brownell. Hilton Kelley is an environmental activist from Port Arthur, Texas who works towards environmental justice in response to industrial air pollution that causes public health concerns in his community (<https://www.goldmanprize.org/recipient/hilton-kelley/>); he received the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2011 and is the Founder and Director of the Community In-Power and Development Association Inc. (<https://www.cidainc.org/>). Another possible speaker is Greta Thunberg, a Swedish climate activist known for her school strike for the climate called "Fridays For Future" ([https://www.ted.com/speakers/greta\\_thunberg](https://www.ted.com/speakers/greta_thunberg;));

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/apr/23/greta-thunberg-full-speech-to-mps-you-did-not-act-in-time>). Alfred Brownell is an activist and lawyer from Liberia who worked to prevent deforestation that “that has destroyed farmlands, polluted water sources, and caused great harm to the cultures and livelihoods of the affected inhabitants”; he is currently in residency at Northeastern School of Law for his safety and is a 2019 recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize (<https://news.northeastern.edu/2019/04/29/northeastern-professor-alfred-brownell-is-awarded-goldman-environmental-prize-for-grassroots-environmental-activism-in-africa/>; <https://www.goldmanprize.org/recipient/alfred-brownell/>). The goal of this program is to allow each speaker to share their own personal and local activism while showing that environmental issues are global and cross international borders; a second focus is that each of us has the ability and responsibility to get involved in our communities to affect change.

The third part of this program is to organize a beach clean up at Galveston Island State Park for students from Texas A&M College Station in collaboration with Texas A&M Galveston and the Texas State Parks & Wildlife Department. This would take the message and information that the speakers have encouraged through the preceding week and allow students to affect positive environmental change in their own community. A second local environmental clean up would be organized in a Texas National Forest with the U.S. Forest Service. This would allow additional students to participate in local environmental activism and would allow two different types of Leave No Trace principles to be practiced.

**Request Type:**

Full       Increase       One-Time       Partial/Matching

**Type of Funds Requested:**

UAF       Other

**General Questions**

***How does this address an important need and/or positively impact students?***

Every single one of us impacts and is impacted by our environment, whether we are hikers in South Africa, high school students in Sweden, or Aggies in College Station. This program explores the idea that no matter who and where we are, we are all linked through living on the same planet. The residency would allow students to interact closely with someone who loves their own environment and took a stance to affect change in their own international community; they would be able to share the actions we may take as we appreciate our own environment and trails to protect and conserve them. Through our relationships in Ag, Science and Liberal Arts, we believe that our relations with some faculty would be open to the residency. The panel discussion would showcase the multitude of ways that environmental destruction affects people around the world and in our own community as well as ways people are organizing to protect themselves and their homes. Finally, the beach clean-up at Galveston Island State Park and the volunteer project at one of the Texas National Forests would allow the students to start putting into practice what they have learned during the week before; it would also allow Aggies from College Station and Galveston to interact in ways they may not get to otherwise, creating a closer bond between the two campuses. As a human population, we use ever-more resources and ask ever-more from our planet. There are many goals for this program: to show that we must remember that we all live on one planet, to show that the effects of environmental degradation are not

equitable, and, most of all, to remind our students that we have the power and responsibility to be stewards for our planet.

***What department/Division strategic plan item does this support?***

This program contributes to the DSA's first ("Enrich the learning experience of students by cultivating an environment of intellectual curiosity") and third ("Create an inclusive environment that develops global citizens and leaders who productively engage in a wide spectrum of ideas, perspectives, and cultures") goals. This program is inherently intellectual, exploring the social, psychological, and physiological effects of the environment on people as well as the geophysical effects of people on the environment; in addition, due to its hands-on nature, it would cultivate a sense of responsibility towards our environment and allow students to better retain the lessons and experiences they have learned. By inviting speakers from extremely varied backgrounds and countries, we are creating a space that will explore a diversity of ideas, perspectives, and cultures that are, nonetheless, united by the common thread of a shared planet, allowing students to work towards becoming global citizens and leaders by learning from that diversity and universality.

***Please provide data, evidence, and/or input (student faculty, staff, other) you gathered to help you determine the need for additional resources.***

The MSC L.T. Jordan Institute organizes a wide variety of on-campus and international programs every year. Towards that goal, we budget a certain amount of funds specifically towards on-campus programs. However, due to the length and impact of this program, the number of speakers we aim to host as well as their reputation, and the hands-on nature of it, those funds will not be sufficient to cover the cost of this program.

***What actions have you implemented or discontinued internally to address the identified need?***

Every year, we apply to a variety of grants to assist in funding our on-campus and international programs. We have had some success with grants in the past but cannot always guarantee that we will receive a grant. We focus quite heavily on development and have a student leader whose role is dedicated to creating and maintaining those relationships because we recognize their necessity to produce impactful experiences for Aggies. In addition, we have partnered with various student organizations and departments in the past to create meaningful programs.

***If funding is granted, what metrics will you use to evaluate the success of this program/service/operation?***

First, we will count the raw number of students who attend and learn from our speakers and residency. Secondly, where possible, we will include measures of the diversity of our students who attend, including major, class year, race, and ethnicity among other measures; we aim to create programs and spaces that are inclusive and welcoming towards all students. Thirdly, we will consider this program successful if we are able to create physical change in collaboration with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department at Galveston State Park and the U.S. Forest Service. Fourthly, we will give program attendees the opportunity to leave comments and evaluations of our program after attending it.

***Have other sources of funding (fundraising, sponsorship, reserves, etc.) been considered? Please explain.***

The expected cost of the program is greater than the amount the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute is requesting from SAFAB. Because of this, we are committing to find ways to fund the remaining costs. These include allocating a portion of our yearly budget to this program, researching and applying for grants, and reaching out to various organizations, academic departments, and colleges for financial assistance. Examples of possible grants include the Aggie Green Fund and the Reveille Club grant. Examples of possible third-party organizations that may wish to support this program include the School of Public Health, the College of Geosciences, the Office of Sustainability, and the department of Environmental Health and Safety.

**Total Estimated Cost**

<b>Funding Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Travel (Roundtrip airfare, boat travel, car rental, and gas reimbursement)	\$10,000
13 nights of hotel rooms	\$1,500
Food for speakers	\$1,000
Rudder auditorium	\$2,500
Marketing materials	\$200
1 charter bus for 2 days (fits 56 people)	\$3,000
Supplies for clean-up days (garbage bags, gloves, etc)	\$200
Speaker fees (estimated)	\$2,000
Security (for panel discussion) - 4 hours	\$250
Miscellaneous	\$2,000
Total	\$22,650
<i>Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if Applicable)</i>	\$5,600
<b>TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED</b>	<b>\$17,050</b>