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Human Rights, Environmental Justice, Social Justice, Faith Values and Ethics: Building Stronger Partnerships for the Common Good by Understanding the Differences

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Going Against the Grain

University of Dayton Human Rights Center
Social Practice of Human Rights Conference, Oct. 1-4, 2019

Human Rights, Environmental Justice, Social Justice, Faith Values and Ethics: Building Stronger Partnerships for the Common Good by Understanding the Differences

Presented by:

Theresa Harris, *Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights, and Law Program, AAAS*

Leanne M. Jablonski, *University of Dayton*

Sarah Fortner, *Wittenberg University*

Malcolm Daniels, *University of Dayton*

Session: Partnerships for Environmental and Social Justice

Abstract:

Partnerships between human rights practitioners, local communities, scientists, engineers, and health professionals have shown potential to address deeply rooted, systemic human rights concerns. These collaborations are essential for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and for engaging the perspectives and expertise of all constituents. However, even when the individuals in these partnerships or the organizations they represent have common goals, their motivations, analyses, and solutions often come from different perspectives. Members of good will can inadvertently alienate one another when attempting to work together. The fields of human rights, social justice, environmental justice, and ethics have each developed their own language, frameworks, and movements independent of each other. There are many synergies, but also important differences such as in the approaches, level at which they are applied (from the individual or local to global) and the resources available. Successful partnership building will also be enhanced by respecting the influences of culture (including faith communities) and other social movements. In order to work together more effectively and to have the impacts we want to see on both human rights and sustainability, we must understand the similarities and distinctions between the movements and their applications to achieve global goals. In this panel we will explore the histories of these movements as they apply to the complementarity and potential for collaboration at the intersection of human rights and environmental sustainability. Four panelists will share perspectives, success stories, challenges and hopes from each of their vantages.

- Human Rights & Science/Engineering (Theresa Harris - AAAS)
- Environmental Justice/SDGs, Ecologists and Faith Communities (Leanne Jablonski - Ecological Society of America & UD HSI)
- Union of Concerned Scientists - Community Partnerships/practitioners with Scientists on climate justice/sustainability issues (Melissa Varga, Union of Concerned Scientists)

- Engineering and Technology: Challenges from International Practice (Malcolm Daniels, ETHOS Center, University of Dayton)

Presenter information:

Theresa Harris is Project Director in the Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights, and Law Program at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). She manages the AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition, a network of scientific organizations that recognize the important roles of science and scientists in human rights. She also directs On-call Scientists, a referral service that connects volunteer scientists, engineers, and health professionals with human rights organizations that seek scientific and technical expertise. Prior to joining AAAS, she led the World Organization for Human Rights USA as its Executive Director, where she represented survivors of human rights violations before United States courts, the Inter-American human rights system and United Nations human rights mechanisms. She has served on the Board of Directors of Amnesty International USA and is a member of the governing body of the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT). She earned a BA in Anthropology from Florida State University, an MSc in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, and a JD from American University Washington College of Law.

Leanne Jablonski FMI, PhD is a scientist, educator and pastoral minister. Sr. Leanne is a vowed religious Marianist Sister who directs the Marianist Environmental Education Center in Dayton, Ohio and serves as Scholar for Faith and Environment at University of Dayton's Hanley Sustainability Institute. A native of Winnipeg Canada, Dr. Jablonski earned a PhD in Plant Physiological Ecology/Global Climate change from McGill U and MS Biology and MA Religious Studies from UDayton. She is a founding leader of the Ecological Society of America's initiatives in environmental justice and outreach with faith communities. She has served as an Ohio coordinator in environmental justice, climate change education and advocacy with the Ohio Council of Churches, Catholic Climate Covenant, Union of Concerned Scientists and Nuns On the Bus Ohio, and is part of the Ohio Sisters Integral Ecology Collaborative organizing team. She has published articles and spoken on climate change science, ecological restoration, environmental justice and education to scientists, faith community and general public audiences. Currently, she coordinates bridge-building dialogues with science and general public audiences around the global SDG goals.

Melissa Varga is Science Network community manager and partnerships coordinator with the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). She manages the online community for the Science Network, a group of nearly 24,000 scientists and technical experts interested in science advocacy, which offers its members resources, trainings, webinars, and opportunities to get involved in the issues they care about. In her role, Melissa oversees the development of skills-based trainings and resources, works to identify leadership development opportunities for members, manages the Science Network's social media and web presence, and analyzes program performance. She also manages partnership development for the Science Network, along with Center for Science and Democracy work on scientist-community partnerships, bringing together underrepresented groups and local scientists. Prior to joining UCS, Melissa was candidate outreach manager of the Candidate Project at the New

Organizing Institute, where she helped train and provide online resources for citizens across the country who were running for local office. She earned an MA in political management from The George Washington University, and BA in English and political science from Marietta College.

Malcolm W. Daniels, Ph.D. is a faculty member in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. With undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland he has worked at the University of Dayton since 1985. In addition to his faculty responsibilities, he has held various administrative positions include Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research. His professional areas of research are in electrical machines, control and automation. Most recently his research has focused on the design of renewable energy systems and the control of micro-grids. In addition to teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in Electrical Engineering he also teaches courses in Appropriate Technology Design. Dr. Daniels currently serves as Director of the ETHOS Center within the School of Engineering. The Center is the focal point for all community engaged learning and service within the School of Engineering. In this capacity, he directs domestic and international service immersion programs for undergraduate and graduate engineering students.