

CNR FORUM

The Official Undergraduate Newsletter of the College of Natural Resources

Alumni Snapshot: Meet Michael Colvin

Fall 2007



“CNR is a place where the passion to learn is placed on the highest pedestal. As a student, I was pushed to ask questions, to test assumptions, to find my own path to reach this ultimate goal called knowledge. CNR is a place where I found my voice.”

Michael Colvin
CNR Alumnus
EEP, '05

Superstar alumnus Michael Colvin sounds off on being an environmentalist, advice for new students, and tips for young alumni. Continued on page 2.

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CNR's Environmental Leaders

CNR students Desirae Early and Ky Ngo had the experience of a lifetime this summer after being selected for the prestigious Nissan-WWF Environmental Leadership Award. The award consists of three components, including \$5,000 cash; participation in the Nissan-WWF Environmental Leadership Summit in Washington D.C. and Nashville, TN; and an all-expense paid field expedition to Brazil. Early (EEP '08) and Ngo (ES '08) were among 16 undergraduates nationwide selected for the program based on their strong leadership skills and a commitment to environmental progress. CNR Forum recently checked in with the students to learn more.

CNR: How did you hear about the program, and why did you apply?

DE: I heard about the program through announcements on environmental listserves. I also attended an info session at the CNR Student Resource Center. I decided to apply after attending the info session, because I felt that this award was a great opportunity, especially since I have been set on working in the environmental field for years and have never had the opportunity to travel internationally.

CNR: What was your reaction when you found out you were selected for the program?

KN: I really didn't expect to be chosen so I was extremely shocked and very grateful when I received the phone call from WWF. I know there are many other amazing students out there and I feel so fortunate to have been selected for this amazing program.

DE: I was so excited! I actually started dancing while I was receiving the news on the phone.

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It's Your World



Dita, Freshman
Environmental Sciences

“To reduce my carbon footprint, I walk, use mass transit, recycle, am a vegetarian, and eat organic foods.”

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Alumni Snapshot

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After graduating in 2005, Michael Colvin went on to earn his master's from Goldman School of Public Policy while serving on the CNR Advisory Board. Here, he shares his perspective on environmentalism, and gives sound advice for new students and alumni.

On the environment—

From my perspective, the problems that our environment faces are no longer easily categorized into one category; no one field or specialty can solve our earth's problems. The easy solution, the "low hanging fruit", has already been done. What the College of Natural Resources specializes in is in its ability to look at the whole system, from multiple perspectives. The ability to have an interdisciplinary approach to problems has been an essential component of my life outside of college.

My advice for new students—

The most philosophical advice I can give is that there are a large number of ways to be an "environmentalist." You can be a tree hugger, a Birkenstock wearer, a spends time in nature for fun-er. You can also be a guy in a suit and tie who finds environmental friendly solutions to corporate practices. There is no right way to be passionate about the environment – part of the joy of the CNR experience is to find where your environmental passion exists.

Tips for young alumni—

Stay connected to the campus. We only get four years at Cal, and it goes by so quickly! There is a great network of environmentally focused people in the country. I would also say that because I was so involved at Berkeley, the people and the experiences that were so incredible became almost common. As an alum, I found myself having to explain some issues or some concepts a bit more (the shorthand was gone). It really showed me how special the CNR community was.

Environmental Leaders

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Early (left) and Ngo (right) with Congresswoman Barbara Lee

CNR: What was the highlight of your experience in the program?

DE: One of my favorite parts was getting to tour the Nissan plant and hear about how they have approached environmental impact in their production of vehicles. I also loved the trip to Brazil—the local people were so amazing, as many of them have endured unbelievable hardships yet are still leaders in environmental stewardship. The wildlife was like nothing I've ever seen. I also really enjoyed getting to know the other students and seeing how attitudes about the environment differ at their respective campuses. The whole program really helped me re-focus my professional goals and get me excited for my last year at Cal.

KN: My favorite part of the program was the leadership training in DC. I realized that during my years in college, I had been working towards a field of work that I was not particularly skilled in or genuinely

enjoyed. I had also been ignoring my strength of developing interpersonal relationships with people and my ability to communicate effectively. This realization has completely shifted my career and academic focus.

CNR: Describe the program in one word.

DE: Amazing!

KN: Life-changing.

CNR: What is your advice for students who are thinking about applying?

KN: Make sure you make yourself distinct in your application—that you're focused and skilled but also have the vast potential to grow into an even more effective leader.

DE: If you think you have a shot at all, definitely apply! The experience is something you will never forget.

CNR: Now the burning question that everyone wants to ask—What did you do with the \$5,000 award?

DE: Ah... most of it was sadly spent on tuition for this year. I did indulge in getting a nice digital camera for myself, as I have picked up digital photography as a hobby. I also got some nice hiking gear, but most of it had to go to tuition.

Midterm Season is Here-- Now What?

CNR Peer Advisor Liz Dow's Survival Guide

This is the time of the year when summer's glow is finally fading and the reality of classes, commitments, and dreaded midterms start to seem like a lot to handle. So what can you do to balance your schedule and kick start your studying? Here are a few pointers.

Time management— One of the most important things you can do as a student is buy a planner and keep track of when assignments are due, when tests are coming up, and all of your other activities and commitments. Make sure you check ahead a few weeks to anticipate midterms and large projects and see if there are any commitments before your exams that may prevent you from studying as much as you normally would. In this case, it may be a good idea to start studying a little earlier or to reexamine how important those commitments are to you. Remember to prioritize!

Review— Another thing you can do to anticipate midterms is to occasionally review the material that the professor has covered in class. Ideally it is good for you to review your lecture notes the day of or the day after the lecture was given. However, things come up and it's often very difficult to set time aside each day to do this. Reviewing once a week or every two weeks is a good compromise and can help clear up questions while they are still fresh in your mind.

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It's Your World

Retailers in Europe recently announced plans to add "carbon footprint" labels to all of their products. With this in mind, we wanted to know what CNR students are doing to reduce their own eco-footprints.

I recycle and conserve energy by turning off the lights during the day and using sunlight.



- Christina
Senior, Microbial Biology

I compost, recycle, conserve water, and I don't drive a car.



- Michelle
Sophomore, Undeclared

I use energy efficient light bulbs, take showers that aren't too long and use paperless billing.



- Jimmy
Senior, Environmental Sciences &
Molecular Environmental Biology

I try to conserve electricity by turning off unnecessary lamps, lights, and household electronics. It also comes in handy with P.G.&E.



- Vincent
Senior, Molecular Environmental Biology

I recycle all bottles, cans, and cardboard.



- Aditi
Senior, Nutritional Science

I'm local freegan, I ride my bicycle, grow my own food in the garden, and vigilantly compost.



- Annie
Sophomore, Conservation & Resource Studies

eco-footprint

/i.kou- 'fut-.print/

noun

1. a snapshot measurement of your environmental impact
2. compares human demand on ecosystems with the biosphere's ability to regenerate natural resources

Are you doing something unique to reduce your eco-footprint? Let us know at cnr_news@berkeley.edu.

Midterm Season Survival Guide

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Study— Once I figure out when my midterms are and what material will be on the exam, I usually start studying about a week before depending on how much I have going on. Make sure you are clear on what will be covered in the exam, then come up with daily study goals to make sure you review all the material before the exam. Making a list of the topics covered and assigning a topic or two to review each day will have you ready for the test in no time.

Find your spot— Now you are ready to get started, but where are some good places to crack the books? I am fortunate to live in a quiet apartment and thus do not need to worry about getting too distracted. However, I find that I really like studying in cafes. It is pleasant to be able to enjoy a cup of coffee while reading and be in a more social atmosphere than the drab library. That being said, the library is a great place for people to get work done efficiently, and for people who are easily distracted.

Health Matters— Finally, the last piece of advice I can give is to still take care of yourself during exams. They are very important, but they are not worth compromising your health. Remember to eat well, get some exercise, and get plenty of rest. Good luck!

CNR OISA: Here For You

The CNR Office of Instruction and Student Affairs provides supportive, individualized advising to prospective and current undergraduates in the University of California, Berkeley College of Natural Resources. Our staff are committed to attracting outstanding, diverse students and to helping them achieve their academic and career goals.

Located in 260 Mulford Hall
Hours: Mon-Fri 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

New Kids On The Block

Meet the newest additions to the Student Affairs team!



Steve Welter
Interim Associate Dean



Emilie Dandan
ESPM Intake Advisor



Melissa Pon
NST Student Affairs Officer



Dana Jantz
PMB Student Affairs Officer

Upcoming Events

Check out these events in the CNR Student Resource Center!

Tuesday, October 30 @ 12 noon
Education Abroad Program Student Panel

Friday, November 2 @ 2 pm
University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

Wednesday, November 7 @ 10 am - 2 pm
USDA Forest Service Liaison Drop-in Advising

December 11th, 12th, 13th, 17th
CNR Study Break (Resource Center stays open until 7 pm)

CNR students— would you like to be featured in a future edition of CNR Forum? Email us at cnr_news@berkeley.edu and tell us your story!

COLLEGE OF
Natural Resources

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY