



## Our Management Team

The Institute's Platform team has a combined experience of over **50 years** of multi-cultural, leadership and development experience working in various fields of discipline and communities around the globe.



**Marianne Larned,**  
Executive Director

**Marianne Larned** is the Founding Director of the Stone Soup Leadership Institute and author of educational series, *Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes*. Marianne is a pioneer in designing transformational leadership initiatives and multi-cultural educational curriculum to prepare the next generation of leaders to address the economic, environmental and social challenges of the 21st century. From the inner cities of Boston, Cincinnati, Holyoke, Oakland to the islands in Hawaii, Martha's Vineyard, Vieques, Puerto Rico, Virgin Gorda BVI she developed workforce development programs with companies, Chambers of Commerce, schools, and organizations. She received her MBA in Organizational Development at Boston University she designed corporate social responsibility for major corporations that led to public-private partnerships in education, health and community development. Working with the next generation of leaders gives her hope for our collective future.

**Video:** <http://www.touchstoneleaders.com/video/>



**Nane Alejandrez, Barrios Unidos**

**Nane Alejandrez** is the founding director of Barrios Unidos and the Cesar Chavez Education Center which celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary providing youth-positive programs and spiritual-cultural movement. Nane is a national leader working with Harry Belafonte to reduce black-brown violence; with Governor Jerry Brown on prison reform, with Santa Cruz Mayor for tiny houses initiatives, Fair-Trade Movement for Indigenous coffee growers in Central America and African countries to educate the public on Fair Trade and farmer's sustainability. Nane is featured in the book *Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes* and is a founding board member of the Stone Soup Leadership Institute, featured on the Institute's video with Walter Cronkite.

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1k2MdVmDugg&t=7s>

## Summit Facilitators



**Kutasha Bryan Silva**

Kutasha is The Institute's Summit Facilitator Team Leaders. She trains new college graduates to use the Institute's learning tools to inspire young people to realize their dreams. Kutasha first served in 2004 as the Institute's Project Coordinator for the Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative: [www.vyli.com](http://www.vyli.com). She championed VYLI's year-round program, especially Cultural Arts and Entrepreneurship Initiatives. An educator, musician, and scholar who is passionate about innovative forms of education for K-12 students, Kutasha is a Ph. D. candidate at the University of Illinois Urbana in Curriculum Design & Development. Kutasha has also served on the Institute's Sustainability Summits on Martha's Vineyard. VIDEO:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbEZvj9EIIg>



**Namgyal Gyaltsen**

Namgyal is The Institute's TouchStone Leaders Platform's Cohort Facilitator. Working with multicultural high school youth, she interfaces with the Tech Team to ensure the Learning Tools are user-friendly to diverse ages, cultures, and experiences. She collaborates with the Institute's Sustainability Team on the research and development of the sites: Sustainability is Fun and the TouchStone Leaders Sustainable Jobs Network. Namgyal grew up in Bhutan, where the King developed the Gross Happiness Index in the 1970's to measure the country's success. Namgyal presented this innovative model at The Institute's 2018 Sustainability Summit. She interwove it into the Institute's Leadership Assessment. A Brown University graduate, Namgyal has a double degree in Economics and Environmental Studies. She served as a Renewable Energy intern at Bhutan's Ministry of Economic Affairs. At the World Wildlife Fund, she worked with Bhutan experts on bird conservation. While at Brown, she worked with Environment America to advocate for RGGI (Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative) and renewable energy in Rhode Island.



**Taynara Goncalves**

Taynara is a rising junior at Gordon State College. Her dream is to become the first Brazilian doctor on Martha's Vineyard. Taynara served on the first Brazilian delegation to MVYLI's Youth Leadership Summit in 2013; and then as a MVYLI Visioneer for the 2014 Summit. For MVYLI's Multicultural Project Taynara spoke to younger students to inspire them. While in college Taynara served as an Emerging Leader at the 2015, 2016 and 2017 Summits working with Brazilian youth to envision and develop their dreams. Having benefited from MVYLI's Career Mentor & Job Shadow Day Program (2013-2015), she was uniquely qualified to serve as Project Coordinator for this comprehensive program supporting first generation multicultural youth to pursue their dreams by going to college and College Field Trips. While in college, she travels during the holidays and school vacations to work with local youth to inspire them to stay true to their dreams. She graduated from Martha's Vineyard Regional High School where she was on the Honor Roll and soccer team.



**Bailey Sweet**

Bailey is an incoming senior at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. She is enrolled in their Psychology program, minoring in Sustainability. She plans to obtain her Masters in Sustainability. Bailey has been an acting senator on the UMD student government, representing the commuter population. She chairs the Green Fee Allocation Committee, funding sustainable projects on campus, and promoting renewable energy. She chairs the UMD Civic Engagement Club. Bailey is passionate about making a difference, and teaching others is the first step towards influencing positive behavioral change. For the last year Bailey works with the Westport River Watershed Alliance as an Environmental Educator. In January 2019 Bailey traveled to Puerto Rico for a permaculture program. Plenitud PR where she learned how to utilize specific farming techniques to maximize harvest yields. This year she was a member of the Commonwealth Corps and dedicated 10 ½ months to teaching students about the environment. It has been one of the best experiences of her life. Bailey is looking forward to the Stone Soup Youth Leadership Institute's Summit to learn about the blue economy and sustainable practices.

## Summit Tech Team



**Chris Brown**

Chris is an experienced designer and product professional that creates compelling user experiences for consumers and business audiences alike. Specializing in early stage software initiatives of any kind, he brings a thoughtful and collaborative approach to problem solving. The mission of Touchstone resonated instantly with him - why *not* bring awareness, opportunity and a sense of purpose about climate change to the very generation that will be confronting it head on their lifetimes. Chris has lead a design teams at multiple startups focusing on consumer lending. At BillFloat, he created online and retail experiences that provide lending alternatives to the 60 million Americans without access to affordable credit. At Pillow Homes, Chris led the creation of a tech-driven marketplace which allowed renters, land lords and property owners manage short-term rentals with transparency. He believes user empathy is at the core of every successful product. Chris has helped every company engage & understand their users by contributing to or leading design thinking and research initiatives. With degrees in Instructional Technology and a Master in Fine Arts, he can acknowledge technology trends while incorporating creativity and human factors into product development teams. Chris built online classrooms & educational media for university professors and K-12 educators in Illinois.



**Chris Aring**

Chris is a junior at Olin College of Engineering, majoring in Computer & Electrical Engineering on a full scholarship. Chris served as a youth delegate to the Institute's 2015 Youth Leadership Summit where he was inspired by Gandhi's grandson to ground his ideals in serving humanity. For his Senior Project, Chris helped created a Hack-a-Thon for the Stone Soup Leadership Institute's TouchStone Leaders Platform. For this "Design Weekend", we brought together college students from Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mt. Holyoke College and University of Massachusetts Lowell. With the team, they created a presentation deck and video. An active member in the Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative, Chris worked on Institute's Platform's Leadership Course BETA to use the stories and curriculum from *Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes* to teach the 21st century skills. As his online Sustainability-In-Action Project, Chris designed an online system to match youth with volunteer opportunities with local non-profit organizations.



**Ilya Besancon**

Ilya is a senior at Olin College of Engineering, graduating with a degree in Product Design. One of the most meaningful design process meaningful projects he's worked on was partnering with service animal trainers to develop solutions for their communities. It was deeply humbling for him to learn from these incredible people and to work with a team to tackle challenging issues. Ilya believes the Summit is a wonderful opportunity to implement his technical skills in a meaningful way. He looks forward to learning, practicing and developing himself and his understanding of the world. He has always wanted to make an impact on people, and it's deeply fulfilling to participate in educating the next generation of workers, citizens and advocates for sustainability. Ilya aspires to live in a world that thrives in peace, where people are exceedingly kind to each other and young people pursue their dreams without fear or limitations. In his spare time, Ilya thoroughly enjoys music production, photography, reading and travel.

## Our Sustainability Team



**Trevor Tanaka**  
Sustainable Business Coordinator  
California/Hawaii

Trevor is the Sustainability Project Coordinator for the design of the sites Sustainability is Fun and TouchStone Leaders Blue-Green Jobs Network. He was the Project Coordinator for the Sustainable Hawaii Toolkit, a global model to connect youth, educators, business and community to build a sustainable world. Trevor is a founding member of the Sustainable Hawaii Youth Leadership Initiative. He first served as a youth delegate to the Institute's Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development in 2011. He then envisioned the Sustainable Education Resolution and championed it through passage. Trevor graduated from Chapman University. Trevor now serves as an emerging leader for the Institute's initiatives and annual Sustainability Summit, where he youth to realize their dreams and develop sustainability-in-action projects to help their communities.

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6JFbqCYbWM&feature=youtu.be>



**Mary Ellen Hawkins**  
Newport Sustainability  
Project Coordinator

Mary Ellen is an intrinsically-motivated young woman on a mission to make the world a more positive, healthy and peaceful place. As the Summit's Sustainability Project Coordinator Mary Ellen has invited local companies to be guest speakers and inspire youth to pursue jobs/career pathways that support the Blue Economy. Mary Ellen was founder and president of the Community College of Rhode Island's Sustainability Club. She's worked as a shoreline cleanup volunteer for Clean Ocean Access and compost program volunteer for Aquidneck Community Table. Driven by her passions, Mary Ellen devotes her spare time to volunteering in the community, performing music at local venues, gardening and advocating for both human and environmental rights. She is the founder of The Healthy Happy Project (thhproj.com), a health and wellness website. In the fall, Mary Ellen is pursuing a degree in Environment and Natural Resource Economics at the University of Rhode Island to make strides towards a more sustainable world.



**Kaylynn Polley**  
Newport Sustainable  
Tour Coordinator

Kaylynn Polley is a rising junior at the University of Rhode Island (URI). She is completing a double major in Environmental Science and Wildlife Conservation Biology, with a minor in Education. She serves as President of URI's Student Action for Sustainability and is a member of the Sunrise Movement's Rhode Island hub, where she is active with climate action, especially looking forward to the 2020 elections. Kaylynn is passionate about environmental education and teaching children through outdoor hands-on learning. Her interest in environmental studies began in high school as a volunteer with Clean Ocean Access, The Ocean Conservancy and The Norman Bird Sanctuary. Kaylynn has served as Community Cleanup Leader for Save The Bay; an after-school farm education intern with The Compass School; and an eco-camp counselor at W. Alton Jones Campus. This past winter Kaylynn studied abroad in Indonesia, focusing on problems in biodiversity and marine plastic pollution. Kaylynn is eager to be more involved in climate action and the green economy, so is especially excited to be a mentor during this Institute's Sustainability Summit!

## Summit Video Team



**Melissa Regan: Director,  
Producer,  
Cinematographer**

Melissa is a Sundance award-winning filmmaker, tech entrepreneur, educator and mechanical engineer. She has produced award-winning social change films for nonprofit and corporate clients, designed award-winning educational software, co-founded an early Internet software company, taught math, science and engineering, and published research on innovative uses of technology for learning. Client projects include an award-winning short documentary series for The Coca-Cola Company about water and sanitation in Africa and an e-learning Executive Education product line for the Stanford and Harvard Business Schools. She has a master's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University. Her 24-minute documentary *No Dumb Questions* received an award at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival and appeared on HBO, PBS and Oprah. The film and related educational campaigns are changing hearts, minds, and policies in schools, colleges, and communities around the world.



**Carli Lynch**

Carli Lynch is a rising senior at Salve Regina University. Her dream is to direct and edit films. During the spring semester of 2019, Carli was the video producer for Salve, filming university events, dance and theater shows, and editing the content for Salve's YouTube and homepage. Carli has served as the president of the film production club at Salve Regina for the past three academic years. In April 2019, she directed and edited a short film, which won for Best Narrative Short at the Aquidneck Island Student Film Festival. Her film positions have taught Carli leadership, adaptability, and teamwork. Carli took a gap year after high school, in 2015, to work on an organic farm in Kula, Hawaii, where she learned about a sustainable lifestyle and farming. In the fall semester of 2018, Carli went abroad to Sevilla, Spain, where she lived with a host family and learned to adapt to a new culture and language. In her spare time, Carli films and edits her own projects, while doing freelance work for several companies including New England Inns & Resorts Association and Sebasco Harbor Resort. Carli hopes that one day she will create films that will inspire people and contribute to changing the world.

## Summit Development Team



**Elena Kissel**  
Development Coordinator  
Newport, RI

Elena is The Institute's Development Coordinator. She is experienced Development Director with a legal background and demonstrated history of working in the non-profit organization management industry. Strong business development professional skilled in Nonprofit Organizations, Policy Analysis, Event Planning, Sustainability, and Strategic Planning. Elena has worked with the Clinton Global Initiative, Clean Ocean Access and others. She served as EPA's Assistant Regional Counsel. She serves on the board of the Green Schools Alliance.



**Emily Garland**  
Sustainability Research  
Development Coordinator  
Hawaii

Emily is The Institute's Sustainability and Development Research Coordinator. She first served as the writer/researcher for The Institute's Sustainable Hawaii Toolkit. A dedicated environmentalist, Emily is passionate about living simply and sustainably and helping others do the same. She graduated from Linfield College with a Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication and Creative Writing. Emily is a writer and teacher living in Hilo, Hawaii. She is on the Executive Committee of the Sierra Club Moku Loa Group. Emily is an active member of the Citizens' Climate Lobby Hawai'i Chapter. Emily lived in Cambodia for 4 years, where she worked as a teacher trainer for the Peace Corps and as a grant writer for Cambodian Children's Fund. After Cambodia, Emily worked as an education specialist, grant writer and communications manager for an assortment of environmental and youth education nonprofits in Hawai'i and California.



**Manasi Kaushik**  
Sustainability Communications  
India/San Francisco

**Manasi Kaushik** is the Sustainability Communications Coordinator. She collaborates with the Institute's Sustainability Team on the development of the Sustainable Workforce Development Network. She also works with the Institute's tech team to enhance the Institute's digital presence. Manasi is originally from India and moved to the U.S. for grad school. She graduated from Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University where she studied MSc. in Journalism – specializing in video and photojournalism, minoring in marketing and communications. While pursuing her Master's Degree, Manasi worked as the Communications Lead Intern with McCormick School of Engineering and Institute for Sustainability and Energy at Northwestern for House by Northwestern – the University's first-ever entry to the Solar Decathlon. Solar Decathlon is a collegiate competition organized by U.S. Department of Energy to build a sustainable house. The team placed first in the Communications and Market Potential juried competition. Upon graduation Manasi worked as the Marketing Coordinator at GreenBiz Group where she implemented marketing strategies as well as led marketing programs for GreenBiz events, special articles and awards.

## Summit Support Team



**Robin Harper**  
Webmaster  
Martha's Vineyard

Since 2011 Robin has been the Institute's webmaster overseeing six sites to showcase the progress and success of young people in these communities. A University of Maryland, College Park graduate she's lived on Martha's Vineyard since 1997. She began her career working for an internet bookstore in Vineyard Haven, then SEO/web marketing firm in 2007. She lives in Edgartown with her husband and two daughters. *"Over this seven years, I have been privileged to witness both the Institute's growth and positive impact on young people's lives. From helping them prepare to enter college and the workforce to encouraging them to recognize their potential as leaders in making positive change -- for the environment, their local communities and beyond -- SSLI is an organization that has shown great success in helping the voices of our youth be heard and make a difference. I am continually blown away how they guide these kids into taking charge in their local community and beyond to effect positive change."*



**Berta Paleaz**  
Summit Logistics Coordinator  
Providence, Rhode Island

Berta graduated from Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) in 2018 as a Medical Administrator Assistant. She immigrated to the U.S. with her mother from her homeland in Guatemala when she was 13 years old. Berta graduated from Central High School in Providence, RI. Her intention was to continue her education, however due to her immigration status, she was not accepted to college. Berta was persistent and never gave up her dream of learning. When Berta turned 31 she became a legal resident of USA. She immediately signed up for college. During the interim period, she joined many groups at her church and became a CCD teacher and a youth group leader. At age 22, Berta married and is the mother of two wonderful children. Marlon is a high school junior and soccer player and Leslie is a cheerful dancer in middle school. As a PTO member, Berta enjoys helping at her children's school. Berta joyfully oversees the Logistics Team for the Institute's Sustainability Summit and the annual Dr. King Community Service Project.

- Accountant: Jayme Gallenson, Gallenson/McDaneld
- Bookkeeper: Heather Martin
- Legal: Simon E. Carlo Valentin, JD