

Imperial County Nonprofit Capacity Building Training

Program Trainer Bios



Sarah Diefendorf, Director, Environmental Financing Center West

Sarah is the Director of the Environmental Finance Center West (EFCWest) at Earth Island Institute. She has founded and managed numerous nonprofit organizations throughout her career and has specialized in building financial, communications and leadership capacity in the US and abroad. Sarah serves as a Leadership and Communications trainer for the Environmental Finance Center Network and most recently Sarah co-facilitated leadership and internal/external communications workshops to elected officials, water systems and government agencies as part of a USEPA grant in 28 states to gather support for sustainability and environmental health initiatives.

Sarah has served as a national and international capacity building and leadership trainer for the League of Women Voters and the Center for Collaborative Exchange. She has trained in capacity building, advocacy, community outreach and leadership in countries around the world including South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Jamaica, Armenia, Uganda, Kenya and Thailand. She holds a BA in International Relations from San Francisco State University and an MS in Environmental Geography from Cambridge University.



Elaine McCarty, Senior Associate, EFCWest

Elaine brings over fifteen years of management and consulting experience in business, health care and education with an emphasis on developing and implementing strategic plans with multidisciplinary teams. Elaine has consulted with companies, government agencies and nonprofits in industries ranging from health care to banking, specializing in strategic planning, business planning, finance and communications. She recently served as VP of Operations for a start-up medical device company, where she helped bring the world's first biodegradable medical device to market.

As Program Director of Dominican University's Green MBA program, she led all aspects of an innovative graduate program in sustainability, including strategic planning, operations, compliance and budgeting. As a U.S. Air Force veteran, Elaine participated in more than 160 reconnaissance sorties resulting in eight Air Medals and the Southeast Asia Service Award for support of Operation Desert Storm. She holds an MBA in Sustainable Enterprise from Dominican University of California and a B.S. in Nutrition and Dietetics from Southern Illinois University, summa cum laude.