

Project Proposal Summary: “Voces de la comunidad: Connecting Environmental Perspectives in Camden, New Jersey”

“Voces de la comunidad” aims to bridge the gap between climate scholarship and the local communities of Camden, New Jersey, by creating a bilingual resource library. As climate change studies expand, the challenge remains to make this information relevant and accessible to the communities affected. The project seeks to engage with the Latinx community, which constitutes over 40% of Camden's population, and address their unique perspectives and experiences.

The project is a collaborative effort involving Rutgers-Camden students, who will translate and adapt regional climate research into bilingual, zine-style summaries. These will be produced alongside community-generated resources, fostering an inclusive dialogue on environmental justice. By partnering with the Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, the project will organize public events and workshops, equipping community members with the tools to share their perspectives and contribute to the conversation on climate change.

Through this project, students will have the opportunity to work closely with the Camden community, gaining firsthand experience in community engagement and environmental justice work. They will assist in organizing events, translating materials, and reaching out to local organizations. The project will also involve documenting activities, conducting interviews, and archiving materials, all of which contribute to a comprehensive understanding of community resilience and climate risk.

The project is informed by the work of scholars like Professor Gisela Heffes and Dr. Mercy Romero. Heffes’ focus on writing as a tool for exploring environmental collapse and Romero's deep engagement with Camden’s social and environmental landscape provide valuable frameworks for this initiative. By inviting these scholars to participate in talks and workshops, the project aims to foster an interdisciplinary dialogue that enhances the understanding of environmental humanities and community narratives.

By participating in the “Voces de la comunidad” project, students will play a crucial role in transforming climate scholarship into practical, community-driven initiatives. They will contribute to a public resource library that captures the diverse voices and experiences of Camden's residents, paving the way for a more inclusive and sustainable approach to addressing climate challenges. This project not only seeks to disseminate knowledge but also empower communities to take an active role in shaping their futures in the face of environmental risks. Through this collaborative effort, the project aspires to create lasting change and strengthen community resilience in Camden.