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PACE ENVIRONMENTAL
LAW

2018-19 Message from the Associate Dean of Pace Environmental Law

Every year inside the front page of our annual leadership report I write this message to document what we did well over the last year and provide thoughts on what we might focus on in the next. Since 1978, Pace Environmental Law has provided students unparalleled opportunities to develop the skills necessary for great environmental lawyers. Our students learn from nationally and internationally recognized experts in the fields of water pollution prevention, sustainable development, food policy, renewable energy, human rights and global environmental law. Our faculty continue to produce amazing scholarship and serve as public intellectuals in areas as diverse as zoning and solar energy development, wind energy and national security, life cycle costing and green procurement, eco-label policy in environmental law, legal adaptations to climate change, productivity and risk management regarding the new farm bill, and globalization and the environment. This will not change.

However, we must do more. Millions of Syrians have been forcibly displaced by a war that was likely hastened by climate change, at a time when nations are increasingly turning their backs on refugees. The United States has announced its intent to withdraw from the Paris agreement and half of Americans do not believe that global warming will pose a serious threat in their lifetime, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. The current administration has also aggressively rolled back federal environmental regulations and protections. As is often the case, the impact of these measures will fall hardest on those with the fewest resources. Environmental degradation in the United States disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color. Flint, Michigan still has lead in its water but the State of Michigan no longer provides free bottled water in this city, America's poorest, where 45% of residents live below the poverty line. Closer to home, asthma rates in Bronx County and East Harlem are 21 times higher than asthma rates in affluent parts of New York City.

While Pace Environmental Law will strengthen our existing core programs and research areas, my hope is that over the next year our faculty and students will engage in more dialogue and action around issues of environmental and social justice, and that we will use our legal skills to defend the environment, improve public health, and stand in solidarity with communities in need. I look forward to taking these important steps with you.

@PaceEnviroLaw #socialjustice #environmentaljustice

Sincerely,

Jason J. Czarnecki