OPPORTUNITY #3: PHOENIX, AZ

TITLE AND NAMES OF SUPERVISORS:

“Student-community action research for urban resilience in South Phoenix”

Primary Supervisors: Matt Feagan, Marta Berbés, David Iwaniec, and Tisha Muñoz-Erickson, and Nancy B. Grimm

ABSTRACT:

We are looking for an undergraduate student to participate in an action research process with URExSRN researchers and community groups working in South Phoenix on issues of urban resilience, social justice, and environmental leadership. The project examines how local knowledge can best influence urban infrastructure planning through an action research process that builds urban resilience and social-environmental justice. The successful candidate will codesign and implement a community intervention workshop with members of Chispa, Sachamama, and the URExSRN, to evaluate options for student-community voices to shape urban development and resilience planning in ways that support social justice and urban sustainability. These workshops will help integrate different knowledge products – community photographs, stories, maps, and other forms of data – that put the experiences and needs of South Phoenix residents at the forefront of resilience planning and urban development in their own neighborhoods, while contributing to lasting community-researcher partnerships that support leadership development on issues of social-environmental justice.

RELEVANCE TO UREx SRN MISSION, OBJECTIVES, AND RESEARCH:

The URExSRN mission is to link scholars with city and community practitioners to produce resilient infrastructure data, models, images, maps, stories, and on the ground projects, to accelerate innovative urban sustainability knowledge and application. The proposed REU project would contribute directly to this mission by building capacity to use community-based knowledge in the production and application of products (especially stories and images) for shaping infrastructure development that supports communities’ needs and urban resilience scenario planning in South Phoenix. The project also contributes to the development of lasting partnerships between URExSRN researchers and community-based organizations, while building student-community leadership on issues of urban resilience and sustainability knowledge.
REU’S RESPONSIBILITIES AND SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED:

a) Prepare a short literature review of participatory action research projects for building university-student-community partnerships in social-environmental justice

b) Work with ASU students and climate justice organizations on supporting a climate justice student club, based on developing models of university-community partnerships for social-environmental justice

c) Support an actual participatory action research project in South Phoenix, including work on qualitative data analysis, scenario planning, and planning next steps

d) Develop materials for science communication materials in English and Spanish

In meeting these responsibilities, we are looking for students who can develop existing skills in social science research, community organizing, community based research, community, engagement in social-environmental justice, and urban resilience planning. Students with access to a vehicle and some proficiency in Spanish are especially encouraged to apply.