



Kahlil Kettering accepts the "Canopy Award" from Casey Trees in April 2019, when Kahlil led the Maryland/DC chapter's urban conservation program. In July 2023, Kahlil returned to the Maryland/DC chapter as the new Executive Director, committed to leading more than 50 conservation professionals toward a hopeful future in this critical "decade to deliver." © Benay Brotman/TNC

Homecoming

The Maryland/DC Chapter Welcomes a New Executive Director

I am incredibly honored to come "home" to where I started my career with The Nature Conservancy eight years ago as Urban Conservation Director, now with the privilege of serving as the Executive Director of the Maryland/DC chapter. This region is unique, unlike any other place in the world: From the forested Appalachian Mountains, to our vibrant cities, to the fertile agricultural lands, to the storied waters of the Chesapeake Bay, where the crash of every wave is a whisper of the rich history in which this region is interwoven with the natural resources that have shaped the course of history for our region.

These places are all connected, and we feel a mighty responsibility to care for this beautiful place in which we have the privilege to reside.

"Our chapter is in a fortunate position to serve as an example to others."

Kahlil Kettering, Executive Director Maryland/DC Chapter

Though I've had opportunities that have taken me away for periods of time, the National Capital Region has always been my home. I have always felt the magnetic pull of this landscape, and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to lead critical conservation work that will have lasting benefits for our communities.

Our region is not spared from the stark realities of the environmental crises plaguing our planet. Climate change wreaks havoc on our ecosystems and threatens our quality of life. Now, more than ever,

is the time for us to tackle the environmental challenges we face, and for our region to continue to be at the vanguard of implementing solutions that protect nature and people. Our chapter is in a fortunate position to serve as an example to others.

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TOP LEFT: Michelle Dietz (left) Director of Government Relations, and Caitlin Kerr (right) Conservation & Climate Policy Analyst lead the Maryland/DC chapter's government relations team; BOTTOM LEFT: Andrea van Wyk, Baltimore Community Project Manager, testifies in support of the Greenspace Equity Program (HB0503), which passed in the 2023 Maryland General Assembly; RIGHT: Dietz and Kerr help van Wyk prepare to provide testimony while walking to the State House. All photos © Matt Kane/TNC

Leading Maryland Forward Through Policy

Highlights From the 2023 Maryland General Assembly

At midnight on Monday, April 10, the 2023 Maryland General Assembly came to a close, marking the end of another exciting state legislative session. During this year's 90-day session, TNC was hard at work to influence legislation key to our mission and our values. We prioritized legislation addressing four key issue areas, including emissions reductions, nature-based solutions for resilience, protecting biodiversity, and advancing equity through policy.

Within these four priority issue areas, TNC supported more than twenty policies that were signed into law this year. For example, one of the bills we supported was the Maryland the Beautiful Act, which protects the natural environment by preserving habitats that also provide natural climate solutions through ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration. TNC also played a critical role in the newly created Greenspace Equity Program, which will lead to the creation and stewardship of public greenspaces in urban areas, including community gardens and parks, woodlands, trails and urban farms. We also supported the Promoting Offshore Wind Energy Resources Act, or POWER Act, which sets updated offshore wind energy generation goals and manages competitive offshore wind transmission procurement in the state.

To learn more about all of TNC's policy priorities in Maryland, visit nature.org/mdpolicy.

NATURE MARYLAND/DC



Kahlil conducts an interview with The Weather Channel at the 2017 March for Science. © TNC

New Director, Continued

Our staff, partners and supporters share the passion and commitment to lead ambitious and innovative projects and programs designed to deliver lasting solutions to the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, so that others around the world can look to us for inspiration.

My career at TNC has highlighted the importance of both firmly establishing tangible solutions at the local level, while working with partners that span large geographies to achieve success at scale. I am keen to work with all of you as brothers and sisters in conservation as we keep our sights set on 2030—a year that represents a tipping point for our planet.

I am grateful for your continued support as we tackle existential environmental threats locally and globally, for current and future generations. I look forward to this new adventure and the fruitful impacts we will have together in our home.

Yours in Conservation,

Kahlil Rethering