

From environmental storytelling to hydroponics, student cohort crafts solutions for a better future

Global Futures Impact Scholars are making their mark as changemakers at ASU, beyond

By Laura Randall, ASU News
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A select group of students from Arizona State University's [College of Global Futures](#), a unit within the [Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory](#), is laying the foundation to drive change around the world through the support of the [Global Futures Impact Scholars program](#).

The inaugural cohort of Global Futures Impact Scholars, who receive mentorship and up to \$5,000 to fund a student-led experience, includes 20 students from across the four schools within the College of Global Futures.

This spring, the students were divided into four teams to work on smaller projects throughout this semester that help them build communication, education, project management and collaborative skills.

From environmental storytelling to hydroponics, a few Global Futures Impact Scholars have been empowered to take steps of their own to bring their ideas to life.

This March, one team was awarded “Best Scientific Message” for a short film submitted to the [Youth Making Ripples](#) film competition. Global Futures students Linkoyam Painemilla, Alex Arnold, Khair Agusdinata and Lucas Flemming produced “[The Next Ten Years](#)” to call attention to the importance of protecting waterways and the necessity to take action now.

At the [Change the World showcase](#) on March 19, two scholars pitched their ideas to compete for additional funding.

Natalia Nava Bravo, a first-year transfer student getting a Bachelor of Science in sustainability with a certificate in biomimicry, pitched her hydroponics system startup, CUCSUA.

Paige Herbert, a first-year student studying sustainability, pitched her idea to support environmental storytelling for water action and shared her short story, “Remember the Rain.”

Other students have already begun shadowing research labs, enrolling in global education opportunities, getting involved in community workshops on energy solutions and starting documentary projects to bring awareness to the importance of research being done across the Global Futures ecosystem.

Through the Global Futures Impact Scholars program, students are being provided a launchpad to kickstart their dreams of building a better future.

“This experience is unlike any other because students are given such a special opportunity to pursue their innovative ideas with encouragement and financial support instead of obstacles,” said Herbert.

Through lab tours, guest speakers and group discussions, the students spent their first semester opening their minds to the vast opportunities to make a global impact within the Global Futures Laboratory and throughout ASU.

The program enables students to think critically about what it means to make a positive global impact and provides the necessary tools and resources to empower students to take action now.

Laura McGeary, a Global Futures Impact Scholars management intern and Master of Sustainability Solutions student, facilitates the program and mentors the students. She has served as a guiding light to scholars as they navigate through the complexities of bringing an idea to life.

“I hope that as students settle into their studies and build a career path for themselves, this program will help them continue to see ‘making a positive impact’ as core to their decision-making,” said Laura McGeary. “As leaders, we need to take responsibility to support students toward futures that align with both their ambitions and their values.”

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



Natalia Nava Bravo pitches her hydroponics system startup at the ASU Change the World showcase. Courtesy photo

Text image(s)



The 2024–25 Global Futures Impact Scholars inaugural cohort. Photo courtesy of Katelyn Reinhart/College of Global Futures



Paige Herbert presents her short story, "Remember the Rain," at the ASU Change the World showcase. Courtesy photo

Gallery



Dave White, associate vice president of research advancement in ASU Knowledge Enterprise and director of the Global Institute of Sustainability and Innovation within the Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory, leads the Impact Scholars on a tour of the Global Futures Laboratory at the Walton Center for Planetary Health.



Jennifer Vanos, associate professor in the School of Sustainability, walks the Impact Scholars through the Human Biometeorology Lab, introducing them to ANDI the thermal manikin and the MaRTy cart.



Laura Hosman, associate professor in the School for the Future of Innovation in Society, shows the cohort how SolarSPELL offline, solar-powered digital libraries operate on a WiFi hotspot to make education accessible from anywhere in the world.



Laura McGeary, a Global Futures Impact Scholars management intern and Master of Sustainability Solutions student, and Jeremy Babendure, research associate professor in the School for the Future of Innovation in Society, engage the class in a group discussion to brainstorm project ideas.