

Town of Apex Sustainability Position Bios

Megan Pendell, Sustainability Program Coordinator

Megan Pendell is the new Sustainability Program Coordinator for the Town of Apex. Growing up in Apex, Megan worked her first job at the Wake Zone Coffee House and graduated from Apex High School. Megan attended Wake Technical Community College and transferred to NC State University, where she pursued a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Sciences, Minor in Applied Ecology, and Focal Area in Climate Change and Water Resources.

During her college career, Megan interned at the Environmental Protection Agency, NC Museum of Natural Sciences, and travelled to South Africa where she conducted research and experienced the rural villages of HaMakuya. The local people invigorated and inspired Megan to devote her skills and energy to environmental activism and thus she joined the Climate Reality Project on campus. Megan became the Sustainability Grassroots Coordinator for the organization, leading the team to achieve over 7,000 student signatures in support of the *100% Renewables by 2050* petition delivered to and approved by Chancellor Woodson. Megan continued her activism upon graduation from NC State and was hired as the Sustainability Program Manager for the campus Public Interest chapter.

Collectively, Megan earned core skills and experiences that she decided to bring back to her hometown and work with the Apex Parks and Recreation department. Keeping a watchful eye on the ambitious and impressive sustainability goals set by Apex leadership, Megan recognized the need for a sustainability officer to spearhead the initiatives. Beginning in January 2019, Megan began the mission of creating the Sustainability Program Coordinator position and pursued the goal with the Town in mind and without self-interest; she met with over thirty Town and statewide leaders, interviewed and established qualitative relationships that she maintains today. Megan developed the proposal to incentivize a Sustainability Coordinator position with the goal of gaining understanding and approval from Apex Town Council members. On June 2nd, 2020, Megan watched the live YouTube broadcast of the Council members officially adopting the Sustainability Program Coordinator and Sustainability Analyst positions in the FY 2020-2021 Budget.

Today, Megan is honored and thrilled to be the Apex Sustainability Program Coordinator: designer of the Town's first sustainability program, mentor to the Sustainability Analyst, consultant to our Town employees, representative of our community, and ambassador to regional allies. Megan is here to Perform at the highest efficiency, to Empower all to make sustainable choices while holding ourselves Accountable to reach Town sustainability goals and continuously pursue Knowledge for a sustainable and resilient Town of Apex.

Valeria Mera, Sustainability Analyst

Valeria Mera is the new Sustainability Analyst for the Town of Apex. This position is supported through the Lead for North Carolina Fellowship. Valeria (Val) was born and raised in Raleigh, and has made supporting the local community a priority in her personal life for many years.

Valeria graduated from NC State University with a BA in Political Science and minors in French and History. She graduated having finished the Political Science Honors Program, in which she completed an independent research project. Valeria also completed the Global Perspective Certificate Program and studied abroad, a decision inspired by her Peruvian background and desire to further understand and appreciate different cultures from around the world. Valeria's dedication to leadership is reflected in her completion of the Leadership Development program as well as through her on-campus leadership roles. Valeria's time serving with the Food Pantry, French Club, the College Ambassador program, and as Director of Sustainability for Student Government are exemplary of the various commitments Valeria balanced while at NC State.

Valeria's research assistant position, campaign internship experience, and community engagement internship are examples of previous work experience that compliment her leadership skills and have prepared her to be a Fellow and serve her community. Valeria's purpose in working for the Town of Apex comes from serving others and creating a more just and sustainable world. The Fellowship encapsulates the importance of community and allows Valeria to apply what she's learned from college in a meaningful way.