



# Julianne Liu

DustKids Outreach Coordinator,  
Salt Lake Community College



## **Why did you become a scientist?**

In high school, I became really interested in learning about the climate crisis, both the science behind it and the social movements attached to it. I first had the opportunity to take classes about these subjects at the University of Utah, where I also found my passions for environmental justice and science communication. Being able to talk about science with people from all ages and backgrounds brings the research that scientists are doing in the field or lab to everyone's everyday experiences, which is what led me to pursue and enjoy doing outreach!



## **What do you do for DUST<sup>2</sup>? Why is this important?**

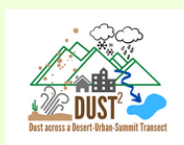
I help run the DustKids program with one of the DUST<sup>2</sup> researchers, Dr. Maura Hahnenberger. We work with after school programs to teach students about the different aspects of the dust cycle with hands-on science activities. Dust has always been prevalent in our lives and landscapes, and will continue to be in the years to come, but it's not often talked about. Sharing this science with students helps bridge connections between people and their surroundings.

## **What do you do day-to-day in your work?**

Most of the time, I'm in the classroom to facilitate DustKids lessons. I occasionally go into the field to collect samples for us to use in our activities or table at outreach events to talk about the dust cycle and how it affects people and the environment. I also help design the lessons and create resources (like this!) for teachers to use in their schools.

## **What is your favorite part of what you do and why?**

My favorite part of doing outreach is watching people get excited about dust and science more broadly. It's fun and interesting to look at oolitic sand through a microscope, and it's even more fun to teach someone else how to do it and talk together about why it matters.



Discover more DUST<sup>2</sup> Scientist Spotlights here:  
<https://criticalzone.org/dust2/scientistspotlights>

