

Bios:

Caiti Waks

Caiti Waks is the Co-Founder and CEO of Debris Free Oceans, a Miami-based nonprofit that empowers local communities to go zero waste so that all can have access to a healthy environment and clean oceans. In this role, Caiti oversees the organization's strategic partnerships and vision to make Miami-Dade zero waste by simultaneously accelerating cultural change and institutional change toward waste reduction, reuse, and circularity. She also serves as Program Director of the Herbert W. Hoover Foundation, where she helps advance solutions to global environmental health challenges by building collaborations among scientists, stakeholders, and communities through strategic grantmaking. Caiti received her Bachelor of Arts in Ecosystem Science and Policy from the University of Miami and her J.D. from the University of Florida Levin College of Law, with a focus in ocean and coastal law and policy. She previously practiced commercial real estate law, helped establish a marine protected area in The Bahamas that is now recognized as a Mission Blue Hope Spot, served on the Marine and Waterfront Protection Authority for the City of Miami Beach, and was a NOAA Coastal Management Fellow. She lives in Miami with her husband, two young children, puppy, and cat, and spends most of her free time in the ocean.



Maddie Kaufman

Maddie is the Zero-Waste Institutional Change Director of Debris Free Oceans, a Miami-based nonprofit that empowers local communities to go zero waste so that all can have access to a healthy environment and clean oceans. She currently leads their Zero Waste Miami coalition, coordinating a group of 150+ cross-sector stakeholders working together to create and implement a circular economy strategy in Miami-Dade County. Maddie also developed and teaches a Tropical Coastal Restoration course at the University of Miami (UM), engaging graduate students in lectures and fieldwork



covering dune, mangrove, seagrass, sponge, oyster, and coral restoration. Maddie received her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Marine Biology from UM where she studied coral reef restoration resiliency, is an American Academy of Underwater Sciences scientific diver and PADI-certified divemaster, serves on Florida Sea Grant's Miami-Dade County Extension Advisory Committee, and volunteers as FWC-authorized sea turtle monitoring personnel.



<https://debrisfreeoceans.org/>