Leah Marie Kocian

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ACADEMIA

Texas A&M University • Ph.D., Environmental Engineering (4.0/4.0)	**Expected: May 2025**
Texas A&M University • B.A., Biological and Agricultural Engineering (3.3/4.0)	**August 2015 – May 2019**

EXPERIENCE

PhD Researcher (Human & Environmental Health) – Vadose Zone Research Group   **Aug 2019 – Present**

- Launched a research project on cancer risk and human health, leveraging machine learning to evaluate urban gardens, predict carcinogenic heavy metals and microplastics, and highlight risks from contaminated produce
- Streamlined workflows for a **$1M** chemistry lab, enhancing collaboration and training **10+** PhD students and post-docts in advanced analytic chemistry techniques
- Identified infrastructure improvements, managed inventory, and proactively conducted equipment performance checks across **4** departments, saving **$800k** YoY in maintenance costs
- Reduced cleanup costs by **55%** through judicious negotiations with environmental health and safety officials and strategic planning to streamline waste pickup logistics
- Recognized in a CSA News interview for project impact and presented results at a national conference attended by **30,000+** industry leaders, policymakers, and scientists

Lead Environmental Researcher & Data Analyst – Biobank Co. in Cambridge, MA   **Aug 2019 – Present**

- Built, trained, and mentored a cross-disciplinary team of **7** undergraduate students, reducing processing time for **1000+** samples across **6** setups by **30%** and producing a user-friendly dashbaord along with 2 undergraduate reports
- Optimized sampling strategies for **50+** field campaigns, reducing data collection time by **20%** with the implementation of physics-based modeling software to pinpoint the most promising sampling locations
- Conducted bi-weekly meetings with Biobank's CEO and legal team, delivering synthesized findings via informative slide decks, concise visualizations, and actionable short- and long-term plans

Environmental Engineer & Scientist Intern – The City of Austin   **May 2019 – Aug 2019**

- Led a **5**-member research team on **20+** empircal studies to establish the relationship between geographical location and bacteria count in Austin lakes
- Received commendation from the CEO of the Austin Watershed Protection Project due to significant findings and directed the City of Austin's attention to key issues on water protection in a comprehensive report

LEADERSHIP

Texas A&M Graduate Consulting Club (TAMUGC) – Texas A&M University   **Aug 2020 – Present**
– President | Chair of the Board

- Transformed and scaled a consulting preparatory program, expanding it from the ground up by orchestrating **6+** pro bono projects and **10+** case workshops, engaging **150+** club members
- Secured **10+** placements for club members at top consulting firms through the program's impactful initiatives
- Spearheaded a partnership of 2 organizations to implement the first consulting case competition at Texas A&M, attracting **$6K+** in funding and drawing **100+** participants
- Multiplied club endowment by **5.7x** in **3** years by negotiating deals for company sponsorships, collaborating events with various campus organizations, securing grants, and doubling membership

AWARDS & VENTURES

- 2024 | Montgomery Award – Top **2** selected out of **200+** applicants to receive **$1,000** award for having a major positive impact on the Texas A&M graduate and professional student community as the TAMUGC president
- 2022 | Awarded **$5,000** from NSF I-Corps accelerator program for our investing digest startup, recognizing our approach to identifying customer needs and developing impactful, market-driven products
- 2010 | Earned a black belt in Taekwondo under Master Amani, trainer of Olympic gold medalist Steven Lopez
- 2024 | Created a user-friendly productivity enhancement tool gaining **1300+** site visit and **1,000** downloads by aggressively marketing to users through social media platforms via a comprehensive YouTube tutorial

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Technical Skills:** R (dplyr, tidyr, shiny, etc.), data analytics, visualization, machine learning & graph theory
- **Languages:** English (native), Spanish (limited working proficiency)
- **Books:** Thinking Fast and Slow, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People & How to Win Friends and Influence People
- **Hobbies:** Escape rooms, traveling, chess, LEGO puzzles, weight lifting & value investing