

## PATTY DEBENHAM, PhD

### Summary

I am a Ph.D. strategy consultant to Fortune 500 companies, foundations, and global nonprofits. I have developed and implemented research-based solutions to solve large, complex social problems. I am highly successful in developing business and creating cross-sector partnerships (Coca-Cola/Ocean Conservancy, Healthways Insurance/National Park Service, Tiffany & Co./SeaWeb). I am an expert at strategic communications and have been invited to speak at international conferences such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Sustainable Packaging Coalition. I am extremely adept across teams and cultures and excellent at spoken and written Spanish.

### Work Experience

**UC Berkeley Center for Social Sector Leadership, Executive Director** **2022-present**  
Connecting business with social impact to develop the leaders the world needs now.

**UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics, Interim Executive Director** **2021-2022**  
For this center started by best-selling author Michael Pollan, led six academics to set the vision and strategy, launch its website, hire the new ED, create an online course, organize the multimillion budget, start a fellowship for Indigenous scholars, and commit 10 percent of funds to diversity, equity, and inclusion programs.

**UC Berkeley Innovative Genomics Institute, Strategic Plan and Public Impact Support** **2021-present**  
Led the strategic planning process for Nobel Prize winner Jennifer Doudna's institute. Principals requested I conduct a second contract to link my science communications networks to Social Impact Director search.

**Debenham Social Impact, Founder and President, San Francisco, California** **2009-present**

#### *Impact Created*

- Developed and implemented a strategic plan that catalyzed the global ocean plastics movement and resulted in more funding, better research, significant corporate action, and increased attention to the problem. Created a working group of best scientists in the world to quantify plastics in the oceans (*Science 2015*).
- Changed the culture of marine science so that it values communications and conservation science.
- Led strategic planning for Nobel Prize winner Jennifer Doudna that resulted in a focus on ethics and access to genome engineering research and commercialization institute at UC Berkeley.
- Reduced environmental impact and improved health quality of 190 million meals/year in national parks.
- For UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business, conducted thought leadership analysis for how to engage business schools and corporate executives in social impact.

#### *Sample Clients and Projects*

- Innovative Genomics Institute, Berkeley, California. Led strategic planning for Nobel Prize Winner's \$20 million organization. Supported search for Public Impact Director.
- Philanthropy Working Group (Chan Zuckerberg, Schmidt Futures, Packard, Moore, and Rita Allen). Leading feasibility study of mobilization of 10,000 alumni from science policy fellowships.
- SuSeWi, London, England. Created impact investing strategy for planet positive algae company that uses the ocean and desert land to sequester carbon, produce sustainable protein and create jobs.
- Ocean Conservancy, Washington, DC, Acting Director, Trash Free Seas Program. Created and implemented strategy for *Trash Free Seas Program* and *Trash Free Seas Alliance*, led a team of six, established science working group and cross-sector Alliance including corporate partnerships (Coca-Cola, Nestlé Waters, Covanta Energy).
- Golden Gate Parks Conservancy, San Francisco, California. Developed and implemented strategy for *Food for the Parks* and *Park Prescriptions* programs resulting in a decision by the Director of the

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National Park Service to require sustainability criteria in all food contracts and a major healthcare company to initiate a pilot program. Positive impact on 190 million meals per year.

- Haas School of Business, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, California. For Center for Social Sector Leadership: conducted landscape analysis and thought leadership strategy to show how business schools can elevate social impact. For Center for Responsible Business: Provided strategic plan and communications road map to establish the Center for Responsible Business as a thought leader in the corporate social responsibility (CSR) world.
- Council on Foundations, Crystal City, Virginia. Led a working group of Foundation CEOs to develop content for climate change and environmental issues conference track.

**Environmental Defense Fund, San Francisco, California**

**2008-2009**

**Managing Director, Ocean Enterprise**

- Created Ocean Enterprise, a \$1.2 million fisheries management consulting and innovations start-up.
- Initiated a new market for sustainable fish investments to give fishermen access to capital.
- Established the largest design manual, web portal, and database of effective fish management systems.
- Upgraded the organization's budget tracking system by designing a grant-required, project-specific process.

**SeaWeb, Washington, DC, and San Francisco, California**

**1997-2008**

**Director, Coral Program ('06-'08); Director, International Programs ('98-'06); Marine Biologist ('97)**

- Created an international program in three countries (Argentina, Fiji, Papua New Guinea) and across 12 time zones.
- Created, closed deal, and managed a \$675,000 corporate marketing partnership with Tiffany & Co., which led to increased jewelry sales for Tiffany & Co. and other leading jewelry designers.
- Persuaded Smithsonian Institution to sell sustainable coral by making a corporate responsibility case.
- Convinced U.S. government to submit a proposal to Conference of Parties international trade treaty.
- Grew program budget five-fold—from \$166,000 to over \$1 million per year.
- Generated over 100 million impressions (*Time*, *Bloomberg*, *O*, *WWD*, *The New York Times*, etc.) for coral conservation with design and implementation of media strategy, brand strategy, and website ([www.tooprecioustowear.org](http://www.tooprecioustowear.org)).
- Influenced the creation of NBC Miami's ocean show. Gave international attention (*AP*, *Economist*, *Science*, etc.) to four conferences; extensively researched work of 1,500 coral scientists; secured the attendance of 46 journalists.

**Ocean Conservancy, Washington, DC**

**1988-1991**

**Manager, Marine Debris Program**

- Recruited 100,000 volunteers to clean beaches as manager of the 1990 *National Beach Cleanup*. Improved services and communications for 26 state coordinators.
- Responded to more than 4,000 requests per year for materials about the problem of trash in the ocean.
- Generated over 40 million media impressions about data findings of volunteer beach cleanup work.

### Publications

Debenham, P., M. A. Brzezinski, K. R. Foltz, and S. R. Gaines (2000). Genetic structure of populations of the red sea urchin, *Strongylocentrotus franciscanus*. *Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology* 253: 49-62.

Debenham, P., M. A. Brzezinski, and K. R. Foltz (2000). Evaluation of sequence variation and selection in the bindin locus of the red sea urchin, *S. franciscanus*. *Molecular Biology and Evolution* 51: 481-490.

### Education

Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara, Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Biology  
A.B., Stanford University, Human Biology