

Katherine Pitts Morgan (Kat Morgan)

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EDUCATION

- May 2029 (expected) **PhD in Environmental Studies, New York University** | New York, NY
MacCracken Fellow (5-year fellowship)
Advisor: Sonali McDermid, PhD
Dissertation: *Multi-Scalar Nutrient Dynamics in Legume Agroecosystems*
Three-paper dissertation examining nutrient dynamics across legume-based agroecosystems from omic to food system scales, with implications for sustainable, culturally relevant food production.
Research interests: Legume agroecosystems; food biochemical composition analysis; political economy of global food systems; biocultural perspectives on nutrition.
- May 2024 **Master of Public Health, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health** | New York, NY
Department of Environmental Health Sciences
Advisor: Dr. Lewis Ziska
- May 2021 **Bachelor of Arts in Cultural Anthropology, Emory University** | Atlanta, GA

RESEARCH/PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2022–2026 Program Associate, The Rockefeller Foundation, Food Team | New York, NY
Project manager of a multi-year publication on drivers of variation in food biochemical composition, coordinating an international team of 20 researchers and synthesizing 400+ studies to inform Rockefeller Foundation and Periodic Table of Food Initiative priorities. Produced 50+ research memoranda, one-pagers, and case studies; analyzed data in R and Excel to support program strategy and decision-making.
- 2023–2026 Host and Producer, [Oh Crop! a Food Systems Podcast](#) | New York, NY
Founder and host of award-winning food systems podcast (26 episodes) translating research for international audiences; grew listenership by 298% in 2025 (top 8% on Spotify). First Prize, Columbia University Health Messaging for Justice (2023).
- 2023–2025 Project Manager, Columbia University Department of Environmental Health Sciences | New York, NY
Under the supervision of Dr. Lewis Ziska, coordinated an international research team across the U.S. and Tunisia. Reviewed 100+ to produce a praxis-oriented technical review of Sahelian soil microbiomes and legumes for improved soil health, yield, and reduced reliance on synthetic fertilizers.
- 2023 Research Assistant, Columbia University, EAT-Lancet 2.0 Commission | New York, NY
Research assistant to Dr. Jessica Fanzo, former chair of CU's Food Initiative. Screened ~400 studies to identify effective food-environment interventions to inform the EAT-Lancet 2.0 publication.
- 2022 Communications and Partnerships Intern, Resilience Action Network International | Remote
Conducted policy research and supported digital strategy on global health funding for zoonotic disease transmission and pandemic mitigation. Led partner onboarding and auditing (546 organizations) using Airtable. Increased newsletter subscribers by 12% in two months through targeted engagement strategies.
- 2021 Gold Family Summer Research Scholar, Washington University Institute of Public Health | Remote
Research assistant for the project "Compound Vulnerability and COVID-19: African American and African Low-Wage Allied Healthcare Workers." Transcribed interviews, helped develop a Qualtrics survey, and wrote a literature review on vaccine hesitancy.

HONORS/AWARDS/FELLOWSHIPS

- NYU Food Impact Fellowship (\$5,000) (2026–2027)
- Harvard-Dumbarton Oaks Plant Humanities Summer Program (2026)
- MacCracken Fellowship, NYU Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (\$35,000) (2025–2030)
- Food Security Leadership Council Associate Fellow (2025–2026)
- Mickey Leland International Hunger Fellowship (Declined) (2025)
- Critical Language Scholarship Swahili, U.S. Department of State (2024)

HONORS/AWARDS/FELLOWSHIPS

- Randle International Scholarship, Columbia University (\$10,000) (2024)
- International Fellows Program, Columbia SIPA (2023–2024)
- Food Fellows Program, Columbia Mailman School of Public Health (\$5,000) (2023–2024)
- First Prize, Columbia University Health Messaging for Justice Competition (\$1,000) (2023)
- Shepard Scholarship for Graduate Study (\$20,000) (2022)
- Outstanding Senior Award, Emory Anthropology (2021)
- Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society (2021)
- Lambda Alpha Anthropology Honor Society (2021)
- Dean's List (All Semesters), Emory University (2018–2021)

PUBLICATIONS (Peer Reviewed)

Morgan, K., Warne, T., Toulabi, S., Li, F., Birnbaum, A., Cheang, S. E., Weng, C.-Y., Srichamnong, W., Kanwal, S., Aduku, L. N. E., Apprey, C., Balcha, K. H., Lutterodt, H. E., McGuinness, M., Wallace, B., Manoochehri, L., McAlvay, A. C., Nunoo, M. A., Agyekum, P. B., ... Brinkley, S. (2026). Agricultural and environmental drivers of variation in the composition of food crops: A scoping review. *Plants, People, Planet*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ppp3.70197>

Hachana, A., Souissi, A., Ziska, L., Morgan, K., Yiu, C., Achour, I., Bouatrous, A., Hemissi, I., Arfaoui, H., Riahi, A., Bouraoui, M., & Sifi, B. (2026) Effect of bio-fertilization and edapho-climatic conditions on chickpea nodulation, grain yields, and seed protein in a Mediterranean context: A meta-analysis approach. *Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jsfa.70430>

Morgan, K., Hachana, A., Yiu, C., Souissi, A., & Ziska, L. (2025). Locally adapted rhizobia strains for Sahelian nutritional security. *Sustainable Microbiology*, 2(4). <https://doi.org/10.1093/sumbio/qvaf023>

Morgan, K. (2023). The agricultural dilemma: How not to feed the world [Review of the book *The agricultural dilemma: How not to feed the world*, by G. D. Stone]. *Economic Botany*, 77(4), 480–483. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12231-023-09593-8>

Ahmed, S., Chien, C., de la Parra, J., German, J., Jarvis, A., Lal, V., Lartey, A., McDade, M., Prenni, J., Rajasekharan, M., Shafizadeh, T., Morgan, K., Vázquez-Manjarrez, N., & Watkins, S. (2023). What is in a tomato? Mapping the building blocks of food. *Frontiers for Young Minds*, 11, Article 1038318. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frym.2023.1038318>

Morgan, K. (2022). Addressing food insecurity in American Appalachia: An anthropological public health assessment and recommendations. *Emory Undergraduate Research Journal*, 18. <https://www.emoryurj.com/read>

PUBLICATIONS (In Preparation)

Morgan, K. & McDermid, S. Common bean value chains and the pursuit of healthy, traditional diets: a scoping review of health, environmental, and justice outcomes

PUBLICATIONS (Public Scholarship & Media)

Morgan, K., & de la Parra, J (2026). Can Understanding the Dark Matter of Food Revolutionize Agriculture? <https://foodtank.com/news/2026/06/op-ed-can-understanding-the-dark-matter-of-food-revolutionize-agriculture/>

Morgan, K. (2025). On listening to the land: Celebrating Hopniss and the future of our food. *Society for Ethnobotany*. <https://sebstudentblog.com/2025/09/07/on-listening-to-the-land-celebrating-hopniss-and-the-future-of-our-food/>

Morgan, K., & Bittman, M. (2024). How to help Americans eat less junk food. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/30/opinion/food-warning-labels-ultra-processed-food.html>

Morgan, K., de la Parra, J., & McAlvay, A. (2023). Legume-based agroecology for African nutrition security: Policy report. *FAO Agroecology Hub*. <https://doi.org/10.17613/e803-rx71>

Morgan, Katherine. (2021, September 7). Moving beyond the encyclopedia: Cultural insights for effective global

PUBLICATIONS (Public Scholarship & Media) cont.

health intervention design. Institute for Public Health.
<https://publichealth.wustl.edu/moving-beyond-the-encyclopedia/>

Morgan, K. (2021, September 7). Covid-19 & the value of anthropology in public health. Institute for Public Health.
<https://publichealth.wustl.edu/covid-19-the-value-of-anthropology-in-public-health/>

GRANTS

- Summer Doctoral Research Fellowship, NYU GSAS (\$3,000) (Summer 2026)
- Dean's Conference Fund, NYU GSAS (\$750) (Summer 2026)
- Center for Environmental and Animal Protection Travel Research Grant, NYU GSAS (\$2,000) (Spring 2026)
- Society for Ethnobotany Conference Assistance Award (\$500) (2023)
- Local Solutions Programme Grant, UN Global Youth Mobilisation (\$500) (2022)

PRESENTATIONS

Jun 2026	"Agricultural and Environmental Drivers of Variation in the Composition of Food Crops: A Scoping Review" Paper Presentation Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences, Virtual
Apr 2025	"Regenerative School Meals" External Strategy Presentation, Rockefeller Foundation Food Team RegenerativeNYC, Brooklyn, NY
Jun 2023	"Upstream Drivers in Downstream Variation of Food Biochemical Composition" Methods Presentation Society for Ethnobotany, Atlanta, GA
Oct 2022	"Legume-Based Agroecology for African Nutrition Security" Lightning Talk Society for Ethnobotany, New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

2025–Present Food Security Leadership Council
2022–Present Society for Ethnobotany

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Sep 2025 –Present	Volunteer NYU Urban Farm — support crop maintenance (weeding, watering, harvesting), NYC
Dec 2025	Youth Representative Speaker, FAO World Soil Day, "Healthy Soils for Healthy Cities" United Nations Headquarters, NYC
Sep 2025	Researcher, "Future Foods List" Jumpstar! × Secret Supper Society, Richmond, VA — speculative tasting menu projecting Richmond's agriculture 1,000 years into the future
Sep 2024	Panelist, "The Role of Technology at the Nexus of Affordability, Nutrition, and Food Waste" Food Tank NYC Climate Week Summit
2023	Vice President of Communications Students for Environmental Action, Columbia University
2021	Farm Volunteer Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms — supported crop maintenance, harvesting, livestock care, and composting; led bilingual (Spanish/English) community outreach, Spain

COMPETENCIES

Languages: Spanish (Intermediate), Swahili (Advanced Low)
Certifications: Food Systems and Public Health (Columbia University), AI and Climate Change (DeepLearning.AI)
Technical: R, Excel, Google Suite, Qualtrics, Audio production