

# CALIFORNIA – KEEPER OF THE NATION’S FUTURE

By Jill Ratner



**Oakland community members demand a clean future - THIS is equity in action!**

## GROWING THE GRASS-ROOTS:

By Megan Mubarak

Grassroots environmental organizations focus their passion towards our society’s toughest problems. Their members live and work near the fence lines of polluting industries or near timber clearcut zones, experiencing family health impacts and the power imbalance between powerful companies and local communities. They become the human face and story that drives environmental campaigns. The Rose Foundation specializes in funding these groups and we know that a small grant can go a long way in empowering communities to implement healthy, sustainable solutions. But

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*“Today, we woke up feeling like strangers in a foreign land...”*

- Kevin De Leon and Anthony Rendon

On the day after the presidential election, California’s legislative leaders Kevin De Leon and Anthony Rendon, wrote: “Today, we woke up feeling like strangers in a foreign land...”

They weren’t alone, as many of us grappled with the fact Donald Trump had been catapulted to the Presidency. A campaign that fostered and tolerated disrespect and outright hate – of people of color, of LGBTQ people, even of people with disabilities – had handed enormous power to a man who promised to make America great again by doing away with regulations protecting clean air, clean water, and climate.

In their November 9th statement, California’s leaders declared, “We are not going to allow one election to reverse generations

of progress... We will lead the resistance to any effort that would shred our social fabric or our Constitution.... California was not a part of this nation when its history began, but we are clearly now

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## "CALIFORNIA – KEEPER OF THE NATION'S FUTURE" CONTINUED FROM COVER

the keeper of its future.” For many of us, those words were words of comfort in a frightening, disorienting time. Now, nearly six months later, it’s time to ask ourselves: what does it mean for California to be the keeper of the nation’s future?

One out of every eight Americans lives in California. And while Mr. Trump moves to reverse climate protections, California has ambitious climate goals. We are committed to cutting greenhouse gas pollution to below 1990 levels - 40% below those levels-- by 2030 by switching to 50% renewable energy, cutting vehicles’ petroleum use in half, doubling buildings’ energy efficiency, and more. And because we know that those goals still don’t go far enough, we are also committed to protecting our communities from climate impacts like rising sea levels and extreme weather.

California has enormous resources to bring to the task. It has the most economic activity of any state; if California were a country it would have the 6th largest gross domestic product in the world. It’s a hub for technological innovation, a leader in renewable energy technologies.

At the same time, as Californians we know that our state struggles with enormous inequalities. While the wealthiest 20% of California’s households have fully recovered from the great recession, most other



households have not. State funding for universities, for pre-school and for social programs still hangs below what the state provided before the recession. And despite all the economic activity, California’s poverty rate jumps to the highest in the nation when taking the cost of living into account.

California can lead the nation, but we can’t be the keeper of the nation’s future without addressing the huge gaps we see across our state in income, in access to safe, healthy, affordable housing, and in environmental risks. The future must be built on justice. And the voices of the communities that too often are left behind must guide us towards creating and keeping a just future for all.

The Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment was founded on the principal that community members must be a part of any real environmental progress. To truly embrace our role as “keepers of the future,” we need to ensure that all Californians are able to move into that future together. 🌱



## THANKS DIANE!

A big thank you to Diane Stark for stepping into the Rose Foundation last fall to help keep our communications and development on track. We wish Diane the best as she moves on to promote her film, *Tuesday Lunch*. The film tells the story of a women’s lunch group that has met on Tuesdays since 1969; it documents their friendships and relationship to the women’s movement. To learn more about *Tuesday Lunch*, please search for the title on Kickstarter.com. 🌱

"GROWING THE GRASSROOTS" CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER.

we also know that grassroots groups need more than just money.

We've started the Grassroots Training Institute (GTI) to put effective training within reach grassroots activists. The goal of the GTI is to help grassroots environmental and social justice groups build community power by providing them with the skills, training, systems and resources they need for long-term success. The program is an annual learning program that focuses on fundraising, communications, board development, and technology. The GTI will help each participant create their own customized capacity-building plan to build the basic strength and resilience of their organization.

Our pilot cohort of five Bay Area grantees will receive training and mentoring tailored to their unique situation and goals. The central feature of the application process is an organizational assessment. Key staff, volunteers and board members rate their own strengths and weaknesses, but also tell us which areas they believe are most important. We will help each grantee turn their assessment into a written action plan with concrete steps to improving the areas that need work. Each grantee receives \$10,000 – plus consulting time and peer support- over the course of the year to transform their action plan into reality. At the end of the year, each grantee will retake the organizational assessment and compare it to the original. 🌱

## MEET OUR GRASSROOTS TRAINING INSTITUTE GRANTEES!



### BROWN GIRL SURF

Brown Girl Surf helps women of color catch the perfect wave.

Brown Girl Surf's mission is to create more diverse, environmentally reverent, and joyful women's surf culture by increasing access to surfing, cultivating community, amplifying the voices of women of color surfers, and taking care of the earth.



### CONSERVATION ACTION FUND FOR EDUCATION (CAFE)

CAFE helps community members learn about environmental issues in hands-on workshops.

Throughout Sonoma County you might find a CAFE member leading a public forum on protecting wetlands, raising an important question at a community planning meeting or engaging people door-to-door. CAFE educates, engages and empowers the public on issues that concern sustainability and the environment.



### FARMS TO GROW

Farms To Grow nurtures crops of healthy food, but also offers a helping hand to minority farmers.

Cultural and biological diversity go hand in hand for Farms to Grow. They believe in farming practices that preserve cultural and biological diversity along with the agro-ecological balance of the local environment. Their mission is to assist African American and other underserved farmers and urban gardeners in creating and maintaining sustainable farms, while motivating the next generation of farmers to learn and utilize sustainable farming techniques.



### GROWING TOGETHER

Growing Together hopes to increase access to local, healthy food in urban environments.

Low-income, urban neighborhoods often lack for greenery and healthy food, but Growing Together believes that we can bring food forests to the city. Founded in 2013, they help community members plant fruit trees in the Oakland area. Growing Together's work improves the environment, builds community, and creates a long-term source of local healthy food in neighborhoods with a lack of tree cover, and classified as "food deserts".



### SPAWNERS

Volunteers and staff at SPAWNERS aren't afraid to get up to their knees in muck to restore watersheds.

Watersheds serve as important habitat for fish and other wildlife but also as treasures for local communities. SPAWNERS works to protect the San Pablo Creek Watershed and to inspire community appreciation and stewardship through advocacy, education, and habitat restoration.

# GRANTEES RES

In the first 100 days of the Trump administration, we've seen a climate denier placed at the helm of the environmental protection agency, an oil industry executive put in charge of foreign policy, promises to gut federal spending for clean air and clean water, and fundamental threats to human rights and the fabric of our communities. A team of our New Voices Are Rising students asked our grantees how their conservation and environmental justice organizations are responding to this radical departure from the generally environmentally friendly policies of the Obama administration. What we heard back was a strong sense of commitment to disadvantaged communities, a deepened resolve around core social justice and conservation values, and many reports of increased enthusiasm and engagement from the public. Some grantees plan to dig in and focus more locally, but others are scaling up to better project their community strength into statewide and national policy arenas. Many are seizing this moment to expand their constituencies, and all stressed a belief in the unstoppable power of an informed, committed and engaged community. On these two pages below and on the next page, in their own words, are what some of our grantees had to say.

~ Roscoe Escobar, Marlen Escobedo & Katherine Carcano



## CENTER ON RACE, POVERTY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

CRPE empowers low-income communities to fight for environmental justice in the San Joaquin Valley.

Caroline Farrell, Center on Race Poverty and the Environment:

The election put up fresh roadblocks for Caroline Farrell, the Executive Director of Center on Race Poverty and the Environment (CRPE). The administration's demonization of Latino immigrants makes CRPE's work to protect environmental health in low-income San Joaquin Valley communities of color more difficult. "Even if people are residents, there is still the sense of uneasiness of being in the record or setting themselves out. We want communities to participate and it's been hard to involve those communities," she says. However, she believes the election has taught her organization that paying close attention to those affected by policies can only make their position stronger. "We will win eventually. It will be harder than it was before but, we will prevail because we have to" she says.

*Even if people are residents, there is still the sense of uneasiness ...*



## WASHOE MEADOWS COMMUNITY

Leading tours for youth and other groups helps the Washoe Meadows Community build support to protect the scenic beauty of the Tahoe area.

Lynne Paulson, Washoe Meadows Community:

Even when serious challenges arise, Lynne Paulson, Chair of Washoe Meadows Community argues that leaders must not forget their goals. With many organizations focusing on national issues, Washoe Meadows Community sometimes struggles to find allies for their very local battle: to protect Washoe Meadows State Park. However, Paulson believes strongly that coming in closer touch with nature can inspire youth and policy makers to action – locally and across the nation. "Experience what you are trying to protect and see it for yourself" she says. Washoe Meadows Community offers tours of the park to youth, community members and has also welcomed the Washoe Tribe to visit important sites in the park.

*Experience what you are trying to protect and see it for yourself*



## CLIMATE JUSTICE ALLIANCE

CJA's work focuses on climate justice, building a framework for a transition to a more sustainable society.

Angela Adrar, Climate Justice Alliance:

Executive Director Angela Adrar considers the administration's enthusiastic promotion of fossil fuel extraction and discouragement of renewables to be a huge step backward and believes that new fossil fuel projects could put nearby communities at great risk. "The election created an atmosphere of serious threats for frontline communities," she observes. But Adrar takes lessons from history as she faces challenges from the election. She points out that, "administrations hostile to environmental causes have won past elections and will undoubtedly win them again." Adrar has seen rough waters before in the growth of the environmental justice movement, but points out that the movement is still strong. "Climate justice will not disappear because a president says so. Lives are on the line." As the communities with which CJA works face increased air and water pollution threats, Adrar plans to build the overall climate justice movement by forging alliances with new and different organizations.

*Climate justice will not disappear because a president says so. Lives are on the line.*



## THE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

CCA EJ's team works with local and indigenous communities to fight environmental injustices.

### Graciela Larios, The Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice:

Graciela Larios from The Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice doesn't look to Washington DC for answers. She believes in winning key battles in California. CCAEJ is especially focused on achieving clean air in Riverside County and San Bernardino where heavy truck traffic leads to serious pollution issues. "We do have amazing leaders in the state of California. They are leaders who understand. These leaders are standing up and want to fight for the people in California" she says. CCAEJ is dedicated to working closely with community leaders to demand clean air, water and soil for all. Larios sees a path to cleaner air and water by promoting unity. The main piece of advice she offers for other activists is to, "keep united, after all we are fighting together and not against each other."

*"[We must] keep united, after all we are fighting together and not against each other."*



## FOOTHILLS WATER NETWORK

If dam projects move forward, scenes like these could become the bottoms of artificial lakes created by walls of concrete.

### Tracy Van Thull, Foothills Water Network:

Tracy Van Thull sees serious threats from Washington DC and state government, but hopes to ride a new wave of environmental enthusiasm. She works as a coordinator with the Foothills Water Network, an organization dedicated to protecting watersheds in El Dorado County from dam projects. "There are threats at many legislative levels whether it's in Washington DC or our local legislature" she says. However, the Foothills Water Network continues to gain support from the public. "People are willing to dive in and learn about these issues, people are coming out of the woodwork to learn about issues they normally wouldn't learn about" she says. The challenges from the administration

seem daunting, but in a democracy power belongs to the people. "Don't overestimate the opposition and don't underestimate yourself, we now have more resources available to us in the grassroots," argues Van Thull.

*"Don't overestimate the opposition and don't underestimate yourself."*



## LEADERSHIP COUNSEL FOR JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Community meetings play an important part in the Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability's mission to empower local people.

### Kaylon Hammond, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability:

The Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability works closely with communities in the San Joaquin and Coachella Valleys to insure adequate infrastructure for all, regardless of race, immigration status or income. Thus, LCJA faces challenges from the administration's harsh immigration stance because many immigrants feel afraid to set themselves out from the crowd through civic engagement. To deal with the challenges faced by immigrants, Kaylon Hammond, LCJA's Director of Operations explains, "we've increased training on [how to] know your rights on immigration, and partnered with legal nonprofits that focus on immigration law, so that people don't live in fear." Hammond also places strong faith in the courage of young community members. Despite threats to some communities, she sees strong youth voices that aren't intimidated by officials. "No one expects a 10 year old to know everything they know, and what's good for their community" she says. But because of this dynamic, Hammond points out that, "youth can be some of the strongest voices" at community meetings.

*"Youth can be some of the strongest voices."*



## WASHINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

The Washington Environmental Council helps bring people together to protect Puget Sound and the local wildlife there.

*"Nobody is going to do this for us."*

### David Gorton, Washington Environmental Council

As grants manager, David Gorton helps develop the resources that further the Washington Environmental Council's goal of enforcing state laws to protect the environment for all people. Despite the Trump Administration's proposed deep cuts in funding for Puget Sound restoration, Gorton notes how Washington State's environmental ethic continues to win his organization valuable allies. Citizens want to protect their environment and Gorton argues that the election led many citizens to important realizations. "People are recognizing that environmental protections are not guaranteed, they are only there because 20, 30 and 50 years ago people cared and did the work" says Gorton. The Washington Environmental Council hopes to tap into people's new energy to give them voices and tangible ways to be heard. Gorton stresses that the fight for the environment is up to the people, "nobody is going to do this for us"

# TALKIN' BOUT A REVOLUTION *By Tim Little*

I grew up in Massachusetts minuteman country, where the spirit of the American Revolution is as deeply rooted as an old apple tree and as sturdy as the stone walls that run beside farm fields. My sense of patriotism formed around the image of the embattled farmer firing the shot heard round the world, and I'd argue that much of our American myth of the rugged individualist who strode forth and tamed a wild continent flows from that ethos. Certainly we can point to a long line of heroes and villains who have tapped into that aspect of the American spirit to fuel their fame and fortune.

Like it or not, the latest chapter of the American revolution happened last November. Since then, the US has been locked in an argument about whether our president is a hero or a villain. But what you can't argue is that our country has been built by people who thought BIG. So when I read Becky Bond and Zach Exley's *Rules for Revolutionaries*, their fundamental point about big organizing struck a very large chord. Bernie Sanders challenged people to help him change the world, and mobilized millions to bring a socialist

from Vermont to within a whisker of the presidency. Donald Trump galvanized his militant cadre of supporters with a promise to make America great again. Hillary Clinton asked people to make a few phone calls. Regardless of who you voted for, what inspires you and what hits your snooze button?

We face unprecedented threats to our communities and our country. We could play it safe – go on defense and hang on to as much as we can. Uniting around a common enemy is a galvanizing and often effective strategy. But to build a winning movement for clean air, safe water, healthy communities and wild nature, we need to do more than simply hunker down or go negative.

We need to remember that we are the change we seek. I'm inspired by Rose Foundation grantees who are strengthening community ties and building a long-term movement to win progressive policies in California and nationally. Let's think big. ¡Sí se puede! 🌱

## NEWS FROM NEW VOICES *By Carlos Zambrano*

The Rose Foundation's New Voices Are Rising program creates positive impact now and builds towards a lifetime of achievement by training Oakland youth how to be environmental justice leaders and community activists. As our students head into the homestretch of 2016-2017 school year, we are very proud of their progress – both in their personal leadership growth and in their advocacy on a range of issues that affect the daily lives of the youth of Oakland.

All year long, New Voices students joined community coalitions advocating for air quality, food access, and environmental justice. Students testified at City Hall in support of new electric vehicle infrastructure in Oakland in order to keep Oakland at the forefront of green jobs and to improve air quality in our city. Students will continue to push for the reduction of carcinogenic diesel particulate matter pollution from trucks, helping neighborhoods in Oakland and across the state breathe cleaner air.

Last year, our students played an important role in the NO Coal in Oakland campaign – regularly testifying at City Hall and bringing a huge banner illustrating the youth perspective to every rally and hearing. The No Coal campaign was successful and blocked the construction of the proposed export terminal by a unanimous vote by the City Council. But developer Phil Tagami is challenging the City Council and the people of

Oakland in a lawsuit seeking to revive the coal terminal. New Voices Are Rising students will again step forward to add the youth of Oakland's voice to help defend their neighborhoods from this latest assault!

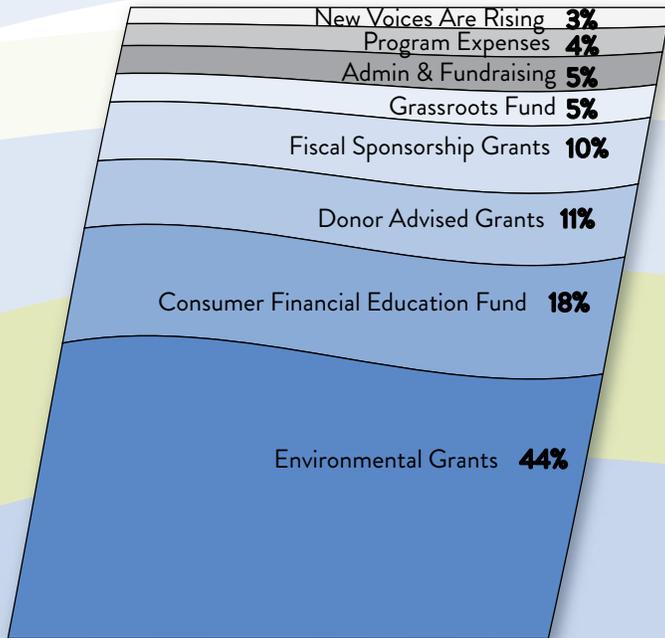
Our students also rolled up their sleeves and worked outdoors to make Oakland a cleaner and greener city. They cleaned up a trashed area at Arroyo Viejo Recreation Center in East Oakland, and worked with Oakland Parks & Recreation to revitalize a neglected community garden. Our students are proud of growing healthy food for their own families and to help feed hungry neighbors. 🌱

### SUMMER ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE JOBS!

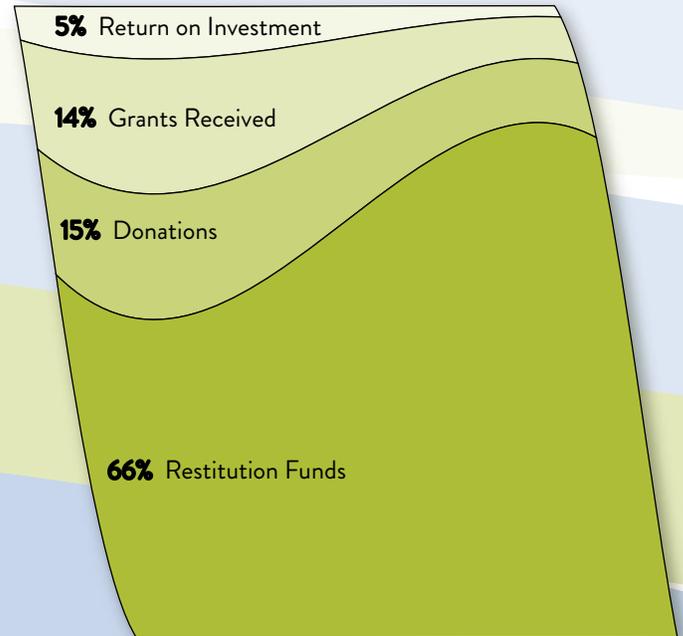
The New Voices Are Rising Summer Leadership Academy begins on June 26th. Paid interns will dive deep into environmental justice, with public hearings, climate rallies, and hands-on restoration. If you know a young person age 15-19 who would be a great fit, apply at [rosefdn.org/new-voices](http://rosefdn.org/new-voices). 🌱

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2016

**EXPENSES \$7,147,572**



**INCOME \$6,046,395**



## SALUTE TO OUR GRADUATES

Several of our core New Voices students will graduate high school this spring and head off to university to follow their dreams and deepen their studies in environmental fields. Here is a spotlight of our 2017 graduating class:



Marlen (left) & Katherine

### MARLEN ESCOBEDO

Marlen Escobedo was excited to receive early admission to Wesleyan University in Connecticut, where she will join her older sister, Jennifer Escobedo, another

New Voices Are Rising alum. Marlen plans to major in environmental studies. Marlen says that she learned at the Rose Foundation, “how somebody’s voice matters! If people actually take time to go to meetings and inform themselves it can make a real difference.”

**KATHERINE CARCANO** Katherine Carcano recently accepted her admission into UC Davis and plans to study biology or another related physical science. She wants to become a physician’s assistant and help bridge the health gap that exists in the United States.



### KIERRA JOHNSON

Kierra Johnson received a scholarship to attend Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. Kierra cares deeply about the BlackLivesMatter movement, and she plans to study criminal justice. We wish her the best in her pursuit of justice for all people.



Ratner (left) & Mykela Patton

### MYKELA PATTON

Mykela Patton, a New Voices Summer Academy graduate who then became our Rose Foundation office intern, received a full scholarship to Colby College in Maine. She plans to study Environmental Policy, and ultimately tackle global environmental issues. Experiences she had at the Rose Foundation like seeing the refineries in Richmond helped her decide what to study, “It was amazing to me because the refinery is literally across the street from low-income houses with no protection.”

### PA DWE

Pa Dwe will graduate High School this year and is applying to community college to continue his education. Pa intends to study hard, and after earning his AA, apply to university so that he can best provide for himself and his family.



Pa and his sisters



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the environment, public health  
and consumers

## JOIN THE CROWD FOR NEW VOICES!



10 people have already pledged to be crowdfunder hubs for our Spring '17 New Voices Crowdfunder! This annual May fund-a-thon supports the New Voices Summer Leadership Academy. Every dollar you help raise supports scholarships, stipends and field trips for this year's Summer Academy. Earn incentive prizes for getting your friends involved, and help our students build a stronger movement for clean air and clean water through a summer of impact that creates a lifetime of change. Join the New Voices crowd! To ask for your New Voices crowdfunder kit, or make a tax-deductible donation, visit [newvoices2017.causevox.com](http://newvoices2017.causevox.com).