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Little protested “We don’t have any SF Bay programs at the Rose Foundation.” But Herz had an answer which helped shape the Rose Foundation’s destiny, “You’re a foundation,” he explained, “go find a great local group who does great Bay work and give it to them!”

We made the grant, and that led to the next settlement and the next grant, and that grew to become the SF Bay Citizens Action Fund (now the California Watershed Fund). Seeking to reach underserved communities most impacted by the pollution, Rose established a funding board of individuals familiar with the issue area and region. Guided by the settlement instructions and the community funding board, Rose administered grants to grassroots groups pushing for the protection of the San Francisco Bay watershed.

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Welcoming Four New Roses

In the last six months, the Rose Foundation team has expanded, and we welcomed four new full-time staff members! From finance and administration to youth and grassroots programs, these additional positions speak to the growing demand for our work and improvement in our services. Our newest team members are bringing a wealth of experience, both professional and personal, to their positions at Rose. Get to know Andrea, Lorena, Gabriel and Susan!

Andrea Pineda, 
New Voices Are Rising Youth Coordinator

Ever since my junior year of high school, I have been involved with New Voices Are Rising and the Rose Foundation. I’ve always been passionate about making real change in East Oakland and New Voices provided me with the tools and knowledge I needed to do that. One of the most satisfying parts of my position is that I get to not only recreate the experience I had as a teenager for the following generations of Bay Area environmental justice activists, but I also get to help our program grow and expand!

Lorena Rodriguez, 
Grassroots Program and Training Associate

From my background as a community and environmental organizer at a young age, co-founding different collectives, and practicing agroecology and permaculture, I bring first-hand knowledge of what it is like to lead and develop a grassroots organization. This has given me a unique perspective that I bring to working and communicating with our grantees and understanding their needs and challenges.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7
Richmond, Pittsburg and Oakland, this training helps students better understand how pollution is impacting their communities and what they can do to change it.

Historically, having good or bad air quality has fallen along racial and economic lines. A study by California-based tech company Aclima that measured the Bay Area’s air quality block-by-block found that communities of color are exposed to 55 percent more nitrogen dioxide, which contributes to smog, than mostly White communities (Fears, 2022). This is because low-income communities of color are more likely to live near highways, airports, industry and refineries.

For example, diesel trucks are not allowed on the I-580 which goes through higher income areas, so they drive through I-880 which goes through East Oakland. In Pittsburg and Antioch, gas power plants, crematoriums, and highway pollution are constant contributors to poor air quality. And in Richmond, shipping and oil processing from the Chevron refinery has burdened the local community with exposure to Nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter. This is not a coincidence, rather a direct result of redlining and other policies that favor the health and well-being of white communities over non-white, lower-income communities.

Poor air quality can result in serious health effects like asthma, cancer, cardiovascular diseases and premature death. Residents of impacted Bay Area communities are intimately aware of this threat, with family members and friends often falling ill to diseases associated with air pollution. In fact, a study by the Environmental Defense Fund found that Bay Area neighborhoods with higher percentages of people of color face, on average, double the rate of pollution-related childhood asthma compared to predominantly white neighborhoods (Environmental Health Perspectives).

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As Rose refined its internal processes to best manage settlements, our reputation as a problem-solver who could invest settlement funds back into impacted communities grew, and the Foundation began to receive money from a variety of cases, including consumer privacy, product rights, and financial protections. These grantmaking opportunities helped expand Rose’s network of grassroots consumer and environmental organizations to a national level.

Today, the Rose Foundation specializes in directing consumer class action cy pres and environmental remediation payments back to affected communities. Guided by the nexus of the case and community funding boards, Rose’s varied grantmaking funds funnel money to organizations focused on protecting consumer rights and the environment. In total, twenty grantmaking funds have distributed over $60 million to date from over 700 legal settlements. In addition, Rose has administered another $30 million in donor advised funds and regranting programs with partner foundations.

Unlike the big national foundations who focus their support on large organizations, the Rose Foundation prioritizes grants to small and mid-size organizations or emerging groups that represent underserved communities and unheard voices. Rose’s expertise allows the settlement parties and the courts to ensure that the available

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**Consumer Products Fund**

Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (BCPP) (San Francisco, CA) is a science-based advocacy organization working to prevent cancer. With funding from the Rose Foundation, BCPP partnered with Clearya, Black Women for Wellness, and leading health-related NGOs to develop and implement the Non-Toxic Black Beauty Project, a website centered around safe beauty products for Black women. BCPP developed a list of 78 Black-owned beauty brands and a searchable database of the nearly 700 non-toxic products they sell, as well as a Red List of Chemicals of Concern in Cosmetics including—for the first time ever—chemicals contributing to 13 diseases and chronic health conditions of particular concern to Black women. Over 140,000 individuals downloaded the app/browser extension.

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**Kern County Air Pollution Mitigation Fund**

In recent years, leaking oil wells in Kern County have threatened the health of nearby communities and the environment. Following public officials’ failure to implement a proactive approach to the issue, Central California Environmental Justice Network (CCEJN) developed the FLIR Project—Finding Leaks Impacting Residents, for which they received funding from the Rose Foundation. This project will reduce planet-warming and health-harming pollutants from leaking oil infrastructure in Kern County. To accomplish this, CCEJN proactively identifies and reports leaks to ensure a timely response from regulatory
funds are widely circulated to emerging, small and established groups, impact a broad scope of communities, and benefit the entire class.

Rose makes the lives of plaintiffs and defendants easier by accepting the accountability to find impactful local projects which the court and the litigants could not find on their own – especially under the pressures of closing a settlement – and then through careful administration and reporting, demonstrating how each grant we make ties into the nexus of the enabling settlement. The parties determine the funding parameters, and then leave funding decisions to the Rose Foundation and our community-centered funding advisory boards. As a neutral third-party trustee or administrator, Rose establishes a distinct fund with the settlement money and funnels it to the community, watershed, or place where the harm occurred. Our network locally in California, regionally throughout the west, and nationally to other states combined with our funding expertise allows the Foundation to use its issue-based knowledge and justice/equity lens to efficiently and effectively move money to deserving nonprofits and the communities they serve.

Learn about the groundbreaking work of select grantees below.

agencies. CCEJN simultaneously conducts culturally appropriate outreach and education to fence line communities and involves interested residents in community enforcement and air monitoring projects. CCEJN also works with public health experts to develop a Strategic Inspection Plan that will prioritize community inspections of wells within 3,200 feet of homes or schools.

Orca Fund

Protecting complex ecosystems, such as the ecosystems of Southern Resident Orcas (SROs), depends on monitoring and evaluating levels of toxins within the food web. Rose grantee Kwiáht and the organization’s team of trained volunteers are sampling thousands of forage fish (i.e., Pacific Herring, Pacific Sand Lance, etc.) annually in the San Juan Islands of Washington. Their community-based lab will test the toxic loads of these samples to measure the levels of toxins in Chinook Salmon and SROs — predator animals that are higher up in the food chain where toxins bioaccumulate. Monitoring these forage fish is also a great way to track changes in the overall water quality of Puget Sound, as the pollutant accumulation in the watershed is quickly reflected in the toxic loads of forage fish.

Our Mitigation Funds Director, Jodene Isaacs, is a public interest attorney who has represented non-profits in numerous federal enforcement cases related to water and toxic waste pollution. She has extensive experience analyzing and managing technical information used to support complex litigation as well as drafting and negotiating settlement agreements. Mrs. Isaacs oversees all our grantmaking funds that are derived from legal settlements and ensures that the restrictions set by the Court and Parties are met.

For more information, contact Jodene at jisaacs@rosefdn.org.
To measure air pollution in their own neighborhoods, our Summer Academy participants perform a DIY air filter project. Students cover a section of paper with a layer of petroleum jelly then tape it outside their home for three to five days. On the last day, students examine the square of petroleum jelly for particulate matter: the more particles, the worse the air quality. Through these tests, youth get to see what’s in the air that they breathe.

Thanks to funding from California Air Resources Board (CARB) New Voices students are then provided with tools to mitigate the pollution within their homes. Using MERV-13 air filters, a box fan, duct tape and cardboard, participants create their own Corsi-Rosenthal box, otherwise known as a home air filter system. These DIY air filters can help remove indoor pollutants and reduce the spread of pathogens.

Air Quality Week inspires many of our students to get involved with pollution mitigation—from air quality fellowships to summit presentations about pollution in the Bay Area. By becoming experts on this subject, participants are able to educate others and advocate on behalf of their communities. Air quality is an environmental justice issue that can be mitigated through persistent community action. By involving our New Voices students in this process, they are on track to become the air quality stewards of tomorrow. Stay tuned for more air-quality related projects by our New Voices youth in 2024! 😊
already proven to be valuable experience at the Rose Foundation as I work to streamline our data systems and improve our impact tracking. These organizations worked alongside communities around the country and world dealing with environmental injustice and as I learned more about their struggles and efforts to right historic and ongoing wrongs, I came to see supporting grassroots environmental efforts as one of the most important actions I could take to ensure a healthy environment and sustainable future for all.

Susan Stock,
Senior Accountant

When I was the Accounting Manager at Florida Rising, I often had the opportunity to interact with our program staff and members. Generally, we would be discussing financial concerns, but I always tried to spend a few minutes asking about what projects or issues they were working on. It was interesting and inspiring and helped me view the numbers I looked at all day as a path to uplifting communities. I hope to maintain that sense of curiosity at Rose and continue to connect the dots of my work not just to balanced budgets, but to also to the potential for meaningful action.

IMPACT NUMBERS: REPORTING BACK ON 2022

TOTAL Giving & Funds

189 GRANTS totaling $4,005,058 across 27 FUNDS

Giving by GEOGRAPHY

WE AWARDED $2,783,370 to 124 PROJECTS in California

$898,138 to 28 PROJECTS in Washington

323,550 to 37 PROJECTS in other states or with a nationwide scope

STAFF Updates

Since the beginning of 2022, the Rose Foundation has created 6 NEW ROLES bringing our total staff count to 20 EMPLOYEES
IN THIS ISSUE:

- Returning Funds to Impacted Communities
- Air Quality Week
- Welcoming Four New Roses
- Impact Numbers: Reporting Back on 2022

What’s happening in 2024?
Rose Foundation’s 30th Anniversary!

From the beginning, Tim Little and Jill Ratner wanted to strengthen the voices of community members and help them direct their future. We’ve come a long way! Today we are a 20-person organization committed to community and environmental justice, consumer rights, and nurturing the next generation of environmental justice leaders. In the last two years alone, 6 new staff members have enabled our grantmaking and programs to flourish as more and more communities fight for a greener and more just quality of life.

In 2024, join us in celebrating Rose’s thirty years of community impact. Attend a tree planting, sail on a tall ship on the Bay, or listen to speakers and grantees talk about their work! Stay tuned for upcoming events by signing up at rosefdn.org/signup.