

A NOTE FROM TIM & JILL

It's been a wild journey over these past 25 years – from our launch in Los Angeles to planting our organizational flag in Oakland, from being volunteers working out of our basement office to being part of a tight professional staff in an airy Jack London Square loft, and from a local neighborhood grants program to achieving statewide and even national impact. But if you want to understand the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment – our values and our vision, and how that plays out in real terms – you need to understand the two programs that live at the core of our organizational heart and soul. This edition of our newsletter is dedicated to those two programs – our Grassroots Fund small grants program, and our *New Voices Are Rising* youth leadership development initiative.

Please join us in growing the grassroots, and building the next generation of community leaders!

GROWING GRASSROOTS POWER

By Drea Chavez

The people who are most affected by pollution aren't always the ones who are heard or considered when governmental or corporate decision makers write the policies affecting community members' day to day lives. According to a PEW research survey from April 2018, over 60% of Americans feel the government does not do enough when it comes to protecting water and air quality or reducing the effects of climate change.

Along with the lack of government protection, powerful interests groups often descend upon communities and ignore their impacts on delicate ecological systems and the people who live there. However, frontline people – speaking for themselves, for their children and for the special places of the earth – are capable of starting movements that lead to real change.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

HEARING NEW VOICES

By Drea Chavez

Starting off in the communications department at a new organization is challenging. There is tons of reading and research behind developing and crafting even simple messages, especially when the message needs to be data-driven and combines the rigors of science with the passion of environmental justice. Now imagine doing this work in the middle of a teenage hangout, which is precisely what the Rose Foundation becomes every Wednesday afternoon.

It certainly makes for a great break from the ordinary and has provided me some chuckles from overhearing the teenage conversations that take me back to the years of my youth. Recently, the journalist in me became curious and wanted to know, what exactly does the Rose Foundation's *New Voices Are Rising* program do besides host weekly teenage gatherings?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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WELCOME DREA CHAVEZ

We are excited to welcome Drea Chavez to the Rose Foundation as our Interim Development and Communications Assistant.

Drea comes to us after graduating last May from San Jose State where she earned a bachelors in public relations, with a concentration in global leadership and innovation.

Drea discovered her passion for sustainability and community empowerment while taking a climate science course and working as a communications intern for the SJSU Sustainability Initiative.

During her off time, Drea enjoys hiking trails of the Bay Area and planning her next open water dive.

When asked about joining the Rose Foundation team Drea said, "It's been a whirlwind to dive into, but I love learning about the people and places the Rose Foundation is helping and using my public relations background to help tell our impact stories."

WELCOME ROHAN DeCICCO

The Rose Foundation would like to welcome our newest and youngest intern, Rohan Luca Shankar DeCicco! Rohan was born on September 16th in the comforts of his own home, weighing seven pounds and measuring 20 inches long. We would also like to congratulate his parents, Rose Foundation's very own Development and Communications Director Sheela Shankar and her husband Tony DeCicco. Sheela is enjoying some time off with Rohan, and will return to the office in the New Year.



LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY WATER JUSTICE GRANTS PROGRAM

We are excited to announce the launch of the new Los Angeles Community Water Justice grants program!

In partnership with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Los Angeles Regional Board), the Rose Foundation is piloting the Los Angeles Community Water Justice Grants Program to support water-related projects that benefit and involve underserved, vulnerable, or otherwise disadvantaged communities in its design and implementation.

Grants from this 2019 pilot program will be funded through Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) payments. Experience in this first year and feedback from participants will educate the roll out of the full program in 2020. Organizations with projects that meet both the community and water quality criteria will then be placed on the initial Project List for potential funding.

For more information please visit our website at <https://rosefdn.org> and click on the Los Angeles Community Water Justice Grants post under the News and Features section.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

The Rose Foundation's Grassroots Fund helps small groups of community members go out and do the work they are most passionate about doing, enriching their communities and addressing conservation and environmental justice issues. And who better to lead these movements than the people that are close and directly affected by these issues?

"These are the change makers," asserts Megan Mubaraki, program officer at the Rose Foundation. "Most funders see them as too risky or too remote, we see time and time again that these grassroots groups are going to do the work and make it happen."

Amplifying Community Voices

Five thousand dollars is a small grant to many established organizations, but to the kitchen table activists that the Grassroots Funds targets, it's big money, and grassroots groups know how to stretch it to achieve their environmental health and justice goals.

Demanding accountability and environmental justice from large-scale developers is a lengthy process, but is necessary when one's health is in immediate danger like for those living in the Hunters Point area of southern San Francisco. Decades of heavy industrial use as a US Navy shipyard combined with the legacy of the former PG&E Hunters Point Power Plant, one of the oldest and dirtiest fossil fuel power plants in California, has created a toxic legacy. It has been over a decade since the power plant was shut down; and the Navy has sailed away, leaving behind their hazardous and radioactive waste. But now, demolition and construction for redeveloping the contaminated

"Most funders see them as too risky or too remote, we see time and time again that these grassroots groups are going to do the work and make it happen."

– Megan Mubaraki,
Program Officer at the Rose Foundation

site, which will soon be the location for thousands of new homes, stirs up toxic metals and other health hazards for residents of the Hunters Point community where the majority of its residents are low-income people of color.

As part of their grassroots grant, Bayview Hunters Point Mothers & Fathers Committee for Health and Environmental Justice is working towards educating, empowering and mobilizing

members of the community to help fight for environmental and racial justice. At the core of their organization is an Environmental Justice Taskforce that recruits other members of the community to engage in meetings, hearings and events that address the toxic Hunters Point Shipyard and other environmental hazards to rid the area of hazardous waste once and for all.

"Before I became involved with the Grassroots Fund, the idea that one or two volunteers mounting some furious, passionate campaign, or hosting community events and getting people engaged seemed like the kind of endeavor only established nonprofits could do," confessed Megan. "Until working with these grantees, I didn't really understand what people power was and how one person can really mobilize their entire community with a couple thousand dollars."

As 2018 draws to a close, the Mothers & Fathers Committee find themselves at ground zero of a breaking news story. Whistleblowers from Tetra Tech, the global environmental engineering firm hired by the US Navy to evaluate toxic residue at the shipyard, have delivered explosive allegations about fraudulent sampling and fabricated soil samples of areas contaminated with radiation. Further shipyard development is now on hold and the Mothers & Fathers Committee is pushing for retesting of the entire site.

Photo courtesy of the San Francisco Examiner.



A Partnership to Bridge the Grassroots Gap

“Although supporting grassroots groups is part of our core values, we could never support these small groups directly,” explains Pam Allen, a Senior Program Officer with the Lisa & Douglas Goldman Fund and funding board member of the Grassroots Fund. “Large foundations like ours don’t have the internal capacity to fund these groups ourselves. Participating in the Grassroots Fund is how the foundation can effectively and efficiently support grassroots groups.”

That’s where the Grassroots Fund comes in. We help other funders – big and small – close the gap between communities and organized philanthropy so that frontline activists get the resources they need to push for healthy and just communities. From her perch in the foundation world, Amy Lyons, Executive Director of the John and Marcia Goldman Foundation and Rose Foundation Board Member puts it like this, “Bringing a grassroots dimension to the movement that compliments other larger group strategies is necessary to make change, and the grassroots need to be at the table.”

Too Risky? Too Remote?

After being turned down the first time by the California Conservation Board for funding, the volunteer-led Tolowa Dunes Stewards didn’t quit. They mobilized local youth and other community members to restore over 38 acres of the Tolowa Dunes, literally plant by plant.

An environmental watchdog group in this remote and underserved area of Del Norte County, they are the main habitat protectors of the over 70 endangered and sensitive species native to the Tolowa Dunes ecosystem. In addition to conservation, the Dunes Stewards also work directly with the Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nation. The two groups go on excursions that provide the opportunity for Tolowa people to reconnect with the native plants and animals, while helping area residents understand the heritage of these native stewards of the land who were nearly exterminated in the mid-1800’s with the active help of California’s first governors. The Dunes Stewards and the Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nation also worked together to defeat the State

Parks Director’s efforts to allow duck hunting on the sacred ground of the Tolowa Tribe.

After being turned down by the state conservation agency, the Dunes Stewards used their grassroots grant to implement a three-year restoration plan and prepare a competitive application for significant funding by the California Wildlife Conservation Fund. If awarded, the large grant would take them into the next phase of their restoration, involving archeologists, large machinery to remove invasive grass and preserving the largest population of Silvery Phacelia plants on publicly protected land.

Then Dunes Stewards leader, Sandra Jerabek called us up with some good news – the big grant had been approved as a partnership project with the California Conservation Corps. “Thank you for bringing us to this point,” Sandra exclaimed. “The Grassroots Fund helped support our organization and keep us growing. Without your funding, we would have never gotten through it.”

“I have been really impressed with the Tolowa Dunes group,” adds Pam. “They are a good example of a rural area where there isn’t a lot of economic opportunity, its politically conservative and the environmentalists don’t have a lot of community support.”

Community-led Stewardship

Although policy or legislation may be passed in efforts to restore a habitat, forest or watershed, there is never a guarantee that the land will stay protected after the initial restoration work is done. The Grassroots Fund aids these small groups so they can become the leaders of their communities and caretakers of wild nature. Who better to watch over the land than the ones most passionate about preserving it?

The Salt River Watershed Council is doing just that, by creating a new generation of stewards who make sure deforestation, reclamation and channelization of tributaries don’t return to once again stop the flowing water of the Salt River Channel in the rural Humboldt County community of Ferndale.





Before approaching the Grassroots Fund, Salt River Council had secured other grants to help stabilize and restore the Salt River, converting 330 acres of dairy pasture back into tidal marshland and restoring five miles of river channel.

However, after the government-funded part of the rehabilitation plan is over, the Restoration Project Plan requires a local entity like the Salt River Council to assume responsibility in monitoring the land and preserving the long-term value of the restoration efforts. The council is counting on volunteers to help carry out this work and has an aggressive outreach plan. But as much as they need to mobilize volunteers now, they need to build a pool of future stewards. This is where the grant money from the Grassroots Fund comes in. The Salt River Watershed Council will use the funds to defray immediate communications costs, as well as host field trips for local elementary and high school students at the restoration sites.

Salt River Counsel leader, Carol Lee, summarizes her group's overall strategy, "We are training the next generation of managers of the Salt River watershed. As the children become aware of and involved in the project, they will talk to their parents and grandparents about the importance of the project, thus helping educate the community about the restoration work and its value to the community."

Access to Nature, Access to the Movement

Connecting members of the community back to wild places is a large part of what grassroots groups do. However, for communities that don't live in an area surrounded by nature, like the rural city Ferndale, this goal can be challenging.

Oakland-based Brown Girl Surf seeks to "build a more diverse, environmentally reverent, and joyful surf culture by increasing access to surfing, cultivating community and amplifying the voices of women of color surfers." Surfing has long been a white male-dominated sport, with only those from middle-class households being able to afford the gear necessary to participate. The staff and board of Brown Girl Surf are made up of women of color fighting against the surfer stereotypes, and inspiring other women of color to participate in the sport of surfing. But they face challenges as steep as the swells off of the famed Mavericks surf break.

One of the group's most significant ongoing challenges is that it's a long way from the streets of Oakland to the beaches of Santa Cruz. This trek might not be that hard for folks with a car, but the majority of the Brown Girl Surf community doesn't have access to vehicles. But with money from the Grassroots Fund, Brown Girl Surf was able to hold four 3-day summer camps with 86 participants, which included transportation, meals, surfing and education on ocean awareness and marine ecology.

Through their program, Brown Girl Surf is creating ambassadors to the ocean from community members who otherwise might never have the opportunity to connect to the environment in such a way. Why do we think that helping young women of color learn to love the ocean is important? Just go to almost any gathering of the conservation community and look around; you'll find the answer in the lack of diversity in the room. Brown Girl Surf is changing that dynamic, and the demographics of the environmental movement.

Small Grants, Big Impact

"It's incredible, the variety of grantees and the ability that some of these folks have with such limited resources to do such impactful work," expresses Cristina Kinney, a program officer with the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and Co-Chair of the funding board which guides the Grassroots Fund. This advisory body, comprised 50% of funding partners and 50% of community activists from all over California, rolls up its sleeves every three months to read funding applications and help us make strategic grant investments.

"I haven't seen any of our grantees take a step back, even when they haven't won right away, they are gaining ground and they are resourceful enough to use these small grants for exactly what they need to keep them going," adds Megan. Save California Salmon exemplifies this "keep pushing 'till you win" spirit. Although the group itself is fairly new, it leverages the hard-earned wisdom of activists Regina Chichizola and Tom Stokely, who combined have over 50 years of experience advocating for the Klamath River Watershed. Members of Save California's Salmon live in the affected rural watershed area including active tribal communities who depend on the river for their livelihood.

Regina and Tom's goal is to change public policy, and influence community members to support the fisheries and water protection of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers and their people. They are using their grassroots grant to mobilize local and tribal advocacy for restored river flows, dam removal and overall water quality improvement. Save California's Salmon has a long fight ahead of them, not just because they are working to remove existing dams; there is also current legislation to build more dams along the river. However, they are making progress by creating alliances, including a strong partnership between the Winnemem Wintu Tribe, the California Sportfishing Protection Agency and the Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Associations. "We have realized that by working with salmon activists from all over Northern California we can make changes to California's laws and policies related to clean water and salmon," declared Regina.

More than Just Money

While we often focus on the policy wins or acres saved, we know that grassroots activists generally need a lot more than just money to build a winning campaign. Every grantee has access to free training through the year on how to build their organizations, amplify their communications and even how to build on our seed money and approach other larger foundations. Our goal is to make them stronger while they have our grant, so that they can continue to achieve impact long after the grant has been spent. The highlight of the training program comes every fall when we invite them all to come together to network and learn from pros like Wellstone Action or LightBox Collaborative.

Co-produced with the California Wildlands Grassroots Fund, the Grassroots Convening is a full day of training that happens every fall and is free to all grassroots grantees. We move the location around each year to make it accessible to our far-flung grantee pool, and travel stipends are awarded to all grantees coming from out of the area. Every year the convening covers a different topic, from organizing techniques, how to recruit volunteers and build a stronger board, to workshops on communications, donor outreach and grant writing. On average, about 50 to 60 groups attend each year, and leave with the knowledge and tools to amplify their campaigns.

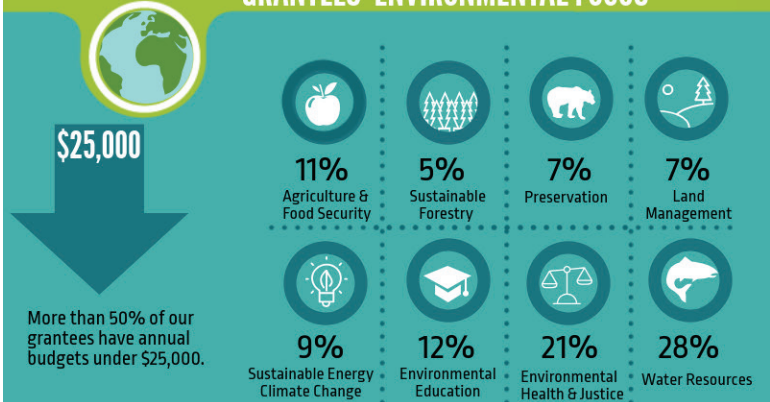
To Cristina, this support that goes above and beyond the grant, is what makes the Grassroots Fund stand out. "What I believe is really key is the training," she says. "These groups grow to be more sustainable and have resources so they can continue to do this important work."

Twenty-five years ago, the Rose Foundation started off like many of its grassroots grantees – zero funds, but with a couple of passionate people who cared enough to try and make a difference. Now we look back on over \$3 million in impact grants to hundreds of emerging organizations. Megan, who joined the Rose Foundation to lead the Grassroots Fund after learning about activism first-hand with grassroots grantee Food Shift, connects the dots between then and now, "What is embodied in the work that our grantees do is in the very heart of the Rose Foundation, and that is what this fund has proven over the last 25 years."

Grassroots Fund

Through ongoing surveys and reports we track where and how we fund as well as obtain feedback from our grantees.

GRANTEES' ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS



IMPORTANT

60% of our grantees have diverse or underserved communities serving or represented on their board.

SMALL GRANTS GO A LONG WAY



39% of our grantees received their seed money from the Grassroots Fund.

Average size grant in 2017



53%

of our grantee groups are staffed solely by volunteers

GIVING BEYOND THE GRANT



After awarding a grant, we provide our grantees with training programs and outreach support.



Convening

Free full day of networking & training provided annually to all grantees



Mini-Grant

Up to an additional \$330 for administrative expenses



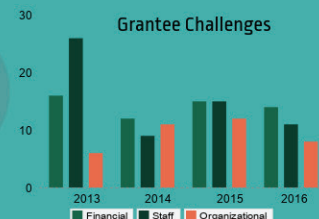
Travel Stipends

Awarded to those traveling 75 miles round trip for training

85%

of applicants report that the Grassroots Fund application process helped in other ways:

- identifying challenges
- setting measurable goals and developing
- language for other communication materials



CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

To find a few answers, I held a series of discussions with some of the core *New Voices* community members from past and present years.

The group included *New Voices* founder and co-director Jill Ratner, advisory board member Azibuike Akaba, former Rose Foundation Board Member Ina Bendich, co-director Carlos Zambrano and two *New Voices* alumni, Christina McGhee and Mykela Patton. I started the conversation by asking each of them to share how they got involved with *New Voices*.

Early Roots

"It was after the first year of voter registration that we realized it was hard for a lot of high school students to feel like voting mattered," Jill explained. "We needed to make a connection between voting, the people we elect, the policy we vote on and students' lives."

Jill had been working on a previous Rose Foundation initiative called New Voters Are Rising, which worked with Oakland youth to register voters but was struggling to find post-election projects for her crew of motivated young people. Jill met Ina, who was teaching at West Oakland's McClymonds High School, and together they conceptualized a set of integrated field and classroom activities that would motivate high-schoolers to become involved with public policy and take an active part in their communities. After a couple of years of field-testing at McClymonds, Jill and Ina rolled the *New Voices* program out to other high schools.

"I felt bringing the program inside the classroom was important so students could get hands-on experience with how the law works and impacts their lives," expressed Ina, who went on to explain how teachers from other subjects, such as science, started shaping their curriculum around what the *New Voices* program was working on. This helped tie in policy and environmental issues for the students in a whole new way.

"I first heard about *New Voices* through an internship program at Skyline High," mused Mykela, who is currently a sophomore at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. "During my first year, we took a field trip to the Richmond refinery district and covered environmental racism. At the time, I didn't know what that meant or what it looked like."

It was during this part of the conversation that I began to see some of the dimensions of the *New Voices* program that extended far

beyond the weekly gathering of teenagers. And in fact, the kind of impact *New Voices* has, especially in regards to educating Oakland students on environmental racism and environmental justice, which is exactly what is needed in our communities right now.

"I got involved with *New Voices* after the Rose Foundation received a grant that funded my time to develop curriculum around teaching students about environmental policy," said Azibuike, who currently serves as Senior Public Information Officer at the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

Azibuike used this funding to work with Jill and pilot the *New Voices* Summer Academy, setting up the backbone structure of this six-week training intensive around climate justice that continues to this day.

"I've always been passionate about environmental issues and being able to offer opportunities to youth that I didn't have growing up," Carlos proclaimed. Carlos had been working with the

local Clean Air Alliance on different issues involving many different stakeholders when he was introduced to the *New Voices* program.

"I was a high-schooler when I found out about *New Voices* and became an intern," said Christina, who is now a teacher at Oakland Emiliano Zapata Street Academy. "I didn't know what to expect with my *New Voices* internship. As soon as I found out we were going to register people to vote I wanted to change my internship."

There was a bit of a chuckle after Christina's honesty. But then she added that it was because she is a very shy person and doesn't like public speaking, but being in the *New Voices* program helped her get over that. In fact, later on during Christina's internship, she went on to speak at a policy hearing in Sacramento regarding the In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation. The regulation passed and limited truck routes in Oakland, helping to cut down the air pollution in residential neighborhoods.

Feeling the Impact

This led to my next question, how did being a part of the *New Voices* program affect them personally?

Ina paused and admitted that for her, it was the sense of pride she feels when looking back on the hard work the students have done and where they're at currently, "I'm really proud of the work they did, and most of them are in college now or are recent college

Being in the New Voices program gave me a lot of confidence and taught me that even though I am a youth, I still have a voice and still have an impact on decisions that are made.

Mykela Patton, *New Voices* alum

graduates.” Ina then added that part of her pride was vested in how well the *New Voices* students embraced opportunities, such as traveling to Los Angeles for a California Air Resources Board meeting and presenting in front of officials and large groups of people, and using these moments to see their self-worth and find their voice.

“Being in the *New Voices* program gave me a lot of confidence and taught me that even though I am a youth, I still have a voice and still have an impact on decisions that are made,” said Mykela. “It’s the only reason I had enough confidence to apply to Colby.”

“Students always have the ability to be a part of policy and the important conversations, but they are apprehensive,” Azibuike shared. “Being a part of helping to create the curriculum for *New Voices*, and seeing a student come in as a participant and leave as leader is one of the proudest moments of my career.”

It seems that everyone who was part of this conversation shared that same view as Azibuike. The *New Voices* program has impacted everyone’s lives in a significant way.

Proving the Impact

Which led to my next question, how do you know the *New Voices* program works?

“It starts off in subtle ways,” said Carlos after a long pause. He went on to explain that in his experience, a student first might notice something they have learned isn’t quite right, like an industrial truck

“Being a part of helping to create the curriculum for New Voices, and seeing a student come in as a participant and leave as leader is one of the proudest moments of my career.”

Azibuike Akaba, *New Voices* Advisory Board Member

driving down a residential street, then it will lead to peer-to-peer learning as students began to take leadership of the program and educate others about current environmental or social justice issues.

For Jill, it’s when she sees students like Christina go from being very quiet and apprehensive about speaking to volunteering to speak at a public hearing or meeting. Before this discussion, I had only known Christina to be a thriving *New Voices* alum who had been around in the early years. But this question, about knowing whether or not the program works, revealed that Christina is still very much involved with *New Voices* but in a different way.

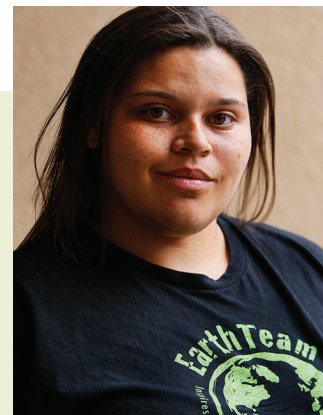
“I work with Jill and Carlos, I brought them into my classroom this year,” said Christina. Not only does Christina keep a partnership with *New Voices*, she also incorporates the style of teaching used in the *New Voices* program into her high school curriculum. The method is project-based learning, which includes small groups, with students working on projects that they are passionate about with the freedom to think creatively and independently, which helps make them more engaged.



Azibuike Akaba is a previous *New Voices* youth mentor and teamed up with Jill to develop the curriculum for the *New Voices* Summer Academy. He currently serves as the Public Information Officer for Community Protection at the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.



Ina Bendich, who worked with Jill to conceptualize the *New Vices* Program, is a former high school teacher. She currently coordinates the youth justice program at Jesse Bethel High School in Vallejo, where she trains students in youth court and restorative justice.



Christina McGhee is a *New Voices* alumnae who now teaches at Oakland Emiliano Zapata Street Academy, where she integrates the *New Voices* leadership learning style into her classroom.

“Kids grow up thinking they're not allowed to think freely or be creative. We give them a space to be their authentic selves and listen to what they want.”

Carlos Zambrano, Co-Director of New Voices

“The public education system stifles a lot of thinking,” explained Carlos. “Kids grow up thinking they’re not allowed to think freely or be creative. We give them a space to be their authentic selves and listen to what they want.”

As someone who is part of the Rose Foundations open office layout, I can attest to that! Every Wednesday the students come in and are quiet at first, but within minutes they are playing music and cracking jokes all while coming up with the next *New Voices* event or prepping for a speech at a public hearing. Like several other Rose staff, sometimes the only way I can concentrate amidst the students’ enthusiasm is to wear my earbuds.

The Youth Speak the Truth

This brought me to my next question, what kind of effect do the students have at policy hearings or decision-making meetings?

“When the kids show up, it is a positive experience for them. They feel empowered to speak and they understand they have important things to say,” Jill assets. “It also forces those in power to face the consequences of their actions.”

Ina then shared that at *New Voices*' first trip to a California Air Resources board meeting, she had delivered a statement regarding hazardous air quality and was met with boo’s from over 300 construction contractors who had a stake in the policy the *New Voices* students were opposing. After a *New Voices* volunteer admonished the boisterous crowd, the students spoke their piece one by one to a hushed and attentive room.

“I think it was really neat for the kids to see that even though the audience might not respect me as an adult, they respected the students and they were going to give them their space and their platform,” divulged Ina.

As the conversation continued, I discovered that the students aren’t always met with excitement and are sometimes faced with hostility when they go to public meetings and speak truth to power on behalf of their communities. However, they don’t give up. They may get a little discouraged, but perhaps because of their youth, the students have incredible energy and keep pushing through which reminds adults like me that doing nothing is not an option. Carlos added that he could see the students’ impact every time they testified, “bringing youth to the meetings does change the dynamic in the space.”



Mykela Patton is a *New Voices* alumnae who is currently a sophomore at Colby College in Maine. This picture was taken last summer at Pardee Dam during her time serving as a pod leader for the *New Voices* Are Rising Summer Academy.



Jill Ratner is the founder and co-director of the *New Voices* program. For the past 15 years, Jill has been working to strengthen the pathway for Bay Area youth advocating for environmental justice issues impacting their communities.



Carlos Zambrano is co-director of the *New Voices* program where he works with students to help ignite them as leaders who take community action and fight for environmental justice. Carlos is pictured at the *New Voices* Halloween event, raising awareness of scary air quality in Oakland.



Today's Experience Catalyzes Tomorrow's Leadership

To help me pull it all together, I had one more question: what is the most valuable skill or experience the students gain from being in the *New Voices* program?

"I think it's knowing how to do research, gather information and evidence, while also being able to present it intelligently. There is real power there and it is a very important skill," expressed Ina.

"It's a combination of the two," explained Azibuike. "The students get exposed to different professions they wouldn't otherwise have known existed while also learning how to be a public speaker and how to influence policy."

"Learning how to make an argument," said Jill, who practiced corporate law before helping launch the Rose Foundation. "Working in a group and coming away with a sense of how to build community along with leadership skills, I feel is the most important takeaway."

Mykela shared that for her it was, "definitely the leadership skills and the ability to understand and dissect profession jargon in the environmental world."

Everyone in the group agreed that leadership skills and the experience the students have in taking leadership of the *New Voices* program are the most valuable lessons learned. As Carlos added, "leadership skills trickle out to other parts of the students' lives outside of the *New Voices* program, making an even more significant impact out in their personal lives and communities."

Throughout my research and discussions about the *New Voices* program one thing became clear to me, as the needs change for the students in Oakland high schools, so do the opportunities offered at *New Voices*. What was once an internship program employing students to register voters has morphed into a launch pad for students with big goals and the chance to achieve them while improving the health of our communities and environment along the way.

"Be on the lookout for former *New Voices* students in the next few years," declared Carlos. "They are going to do work that impacts the world."



Our students have registered
5,000+
voters in
East and West Oakland

Planted
75+ trees

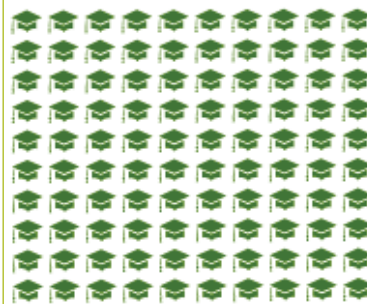
aiding to break up
urban heat islands on
school campuses



New Voices has reached

2,700+

students in high schools from
Oakland to Richmond



Graduated

140+

students from our
**Summer Climate
Justice Academy**

90%

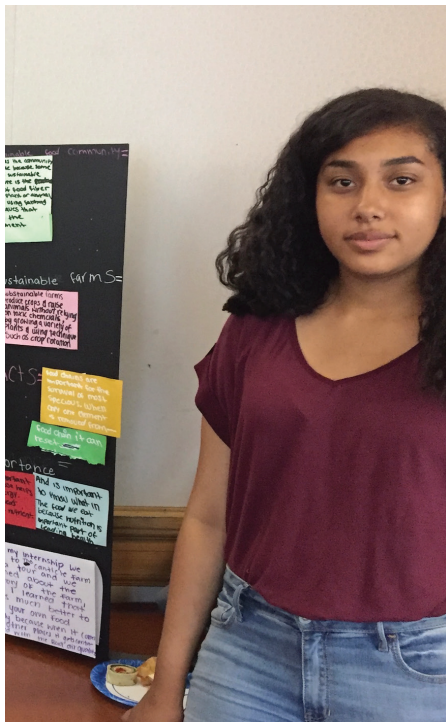


of former students report staying in school,
completing college or beginning careers in
community service professions

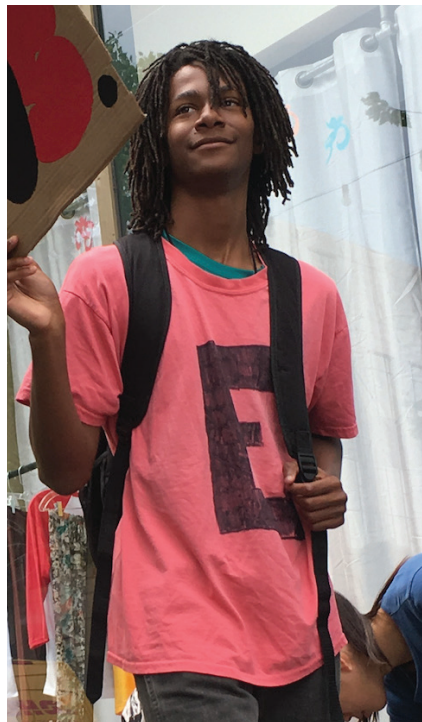
MEET THE 2018-19 *NEW VOICES ARE RISING* FELLOWS

Each school year, the Rose Foundation takes on several high school Fellows who want to deepen their involvement in environmental justice. Fellows work with us for 4 - 6 hours each week, acquiring professional skills at our Oakland office and taking on projects to engage the local community and their classmates in environmental issues.

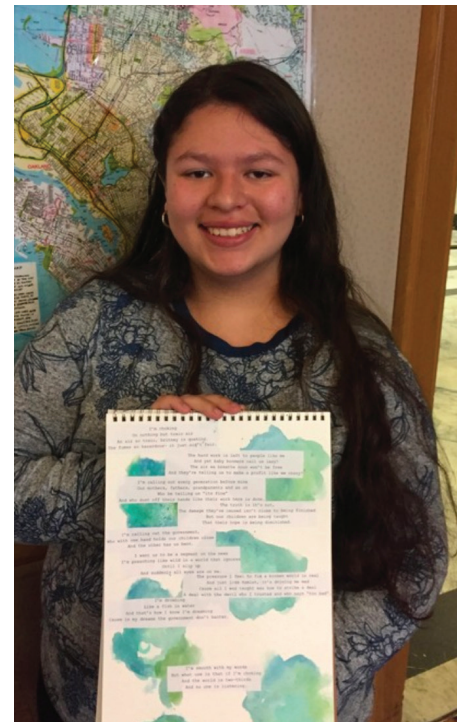
This month we asked each of the fellows what they were expecting to get out of the *New Voices* Fellowship Program.



Nariah Garcia is currently a student at Emiliano Zapata Street Academy in Oakland. Nariah joined the *New Voices* Fellows to work on environmental racism and hopes to continue working on improving air quality in Oakland. "I want to do something while I'm young and in my high school years," said Nariah, who was one of the *New Voices* students who spoke at the California Air Resources Board public hearing in Sacramento back in September. Nariah hopes to have more opportunities to speak out for environmental justice issues either in board meetings or in her community.



Justice Touré is a homeschooled student who joined the *New Voices* Fellows to learn more about environmental justice with emphasis on air quality. Justice hopes to continue the work he started while in the *New Voices* 2018 Summer Academy working on the "No Coal in Oakland" campaign. Justice also hopes to learn more about opportunities after graduation in the environmental justice field, helping him to pursue a career in community leadership adding that he joined *New Voices* because he has, "a deep concern about the environmental justice issues in Oakland and I want to be more involved."



Michelle Arango currently attends the Oakland Military Institute and hopes to continue working on improving air quality in Oakland and working on helping to get more community members involved in activism. Michelle then pointed out that, "even though we live in different communities or neighborhoods, pollution knows no boundaries and bad air quality seeps out to surrounding areas." Michelle added that it is shocking to her that more people don't advocate for better air quality in the Bay Area. She is hoping to raise awareness and get more people involved in the fight for improved air quality.



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IN THIS ISSUE:

- Growing Grassroots Power
- Hearing New Voices
- Meet New Rose Foundation Staff
- 2018-19 New Voices Fellows

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THANKS FOR COMING OUT TO THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY FILM FESTIVAL!

