



WHAT DOES #BLACKLIVESMATTER MEAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT?

By Jasmine Amons

In It's a narrative that has become all too familiar – the targeting, criminalization, and murder of black people at the hands of police officers and vigilantes. The sheer number of deaths is daunting: the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement estimates that police, security guards, or vigilantes kill a black person approximately every 28 hours. But Rose Foundation grantees are working to change that.

Black queer women spearheaded the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag on Twitter following the death and subsequent media villainization of seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin in 2012. The hashtag served as an affirmation of black lives and black contributions in a society that targeted, jailed, and killed them. It was quickly picked up on social media, creating a new movement against state violence on black bodies, and launching important conversations about race and justice in America. The same conversations about disadvantaged communities, justice, and inclusion that major environmental organizations are currently grappling with right now as diversity becomes a hot topic once more, as noted in Green 2.0's recently released report *The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations*.

Rose Foundation Community Leadership Project 2.0 (CLP) grantee Black Organizing Project (BOP) has been involved in discussions around race and police brutality since it was created in 2009. BOP is an

Oakland black member-led community organization working for social, racial, and economic justice, and in 2011, BOP started the Bettering Our School System (BOSS) Campaign in response to the murder of Raheim Brown by an Oakland School Police Sergeant. "The campaign... seeks to eliminate the presence of police in schools by investing in and implementing alternative models that actually work toward students' success, especially students of color," Misha Cornelius, BOP's Communications and Operations Coordinator, explains.



Black Organizing Project (BOP) supporters testify at a local hearing.

Since the launch of the BOSS campaign, BOP has won three important policies that limit the role of police in Oakland schools and increase police accountability. BOP is working locally and statewide to push for a shift from investment in harsh discipline practices to investment in restorative practices. "We operate from the understanding that Black communities have been targeted disproportionately in the criminal justice system and in interactions with police," Misha explains. "To me, #BlackLivesMatter is an

affirmation of the work that's been done for many, many years to have folks acknowledge the racist policies, practices, and ideology that are the foundation of the criminal justice system."

Fellow CLP grantee Movement Generation Justice & Ecology Project (Movement Gen) also watched the emergence of #BlackLivesMatter and discussed how to best engage with the swelling grassroots

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NEW APP ALLOWS COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO REPORT POLLUTERS

By Tim Little

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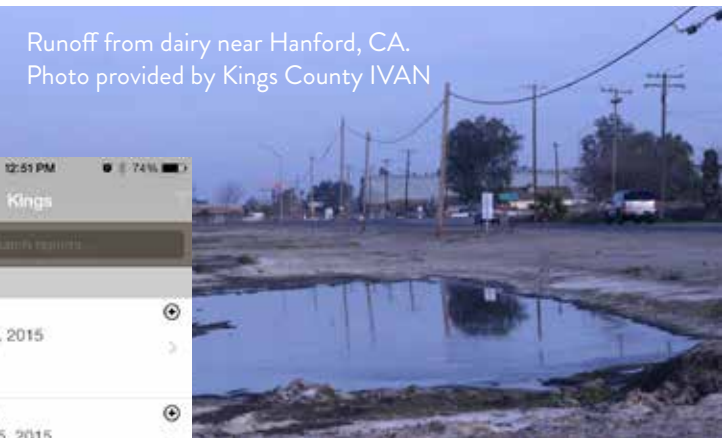
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1970 Broadway, Suite 600
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 (510) 658-0702
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We all noticed the pool of dirty water near the side of the road in Hanford, CA, an historic farming town 20 miles west of Visalia, and shrugged it off. “Must be left over from the big rain a couple of days ago.” But then we saw the nearby dairy with thousands of cows squeezed into a small feedlot and stains connecting the dairy with the the standing water. This was definitely something to report to the new Kings County IVAN.

IVAN stands for “Identifying Violations Affecting Neighborhoods” and it’s an online and mobile reporting platform allowing easy collaboration between community members and government regulators to identify and solve local environmental problems. First pioneered in the Imperial Valley, the IVAN concept is spreading to Los Angeles and the Central Valley.

The spark behind Kings County IVAN is Rey Leon, founder of the San Joaquin Valley Latino Environmental Advancement & Policy Project (Valley LEAP), a Rose Foundation grantee that helps local communities most heavily impacted by environmental hazards. When I came to Hanford to help launch the new Kings IVAN and saw all the state and federal regulators meeting with the community, I knew I was seeing a big impact from our \$5,000 grant to Valley LEAP.



Screen Captures of the IVAN App.

Locals know where the problems are in their communities, like unmarked effluent pipes pouring into irrigation canals, illegal dump sites leaching toxics, and dirty runoff from cow feedlots. But historically, community members had no way to document what they saw and get it into the hands of regulators who could do something about it.

IVAN addresses this roadblock and amplifies the voices of people who otherwise are not heard. IVAN is a bilingual Spanish/English website and mobile app that lets anyone in Kings County upload pollution incident reports, pictures, and videos of suspected violations at ivanonline.org. A community/government task force meets monthly to ensure that each report is properly pursued. The original Imperial County IVAN has already solved several local pollution problems, generated \$90,000 in fines, and democratized a reporting system that was mired in red tape.

IVAN’s expansion to Kings County will empower more people to participate in the struggle for environmental justice. The IVAN app encourages greater public participation by utilizing technologies that people already carry in their pockets. The IVAN process is a cooperative framework for community and government to collaborate to solve pollution. The dairy incident I witnessed is already reported online, and representatives from the Water Board will be in Hanford at the next IVAN meeting to follow up. Then the community and the regulators will sit together to mutually decide what to do next, fulfilling our promise of a government “of the people, by the people and for the people.”

“#BlackLivesMatter”, continued from front page

movement. Formed in the wake of Hurricane Katrina with an eye toward transitioning society toward healthy, resilient, life-affirming local economies, Movement Gen is deeply rooted in social movements led by low-income communities and communities of color. “We have a following of folks who largely identify as being interested in the environmental frame of our work,” explains Ellen Choy, Staff Collective and Planning Committee Member. “And this is why the climate movement should step up.”

Movement Gen quickly found ways to get involved, first by putting out an analysis connecting ecological and social justice, and then by issuing a statement around eighteen-year-old Mike Brown’s August 2014 murder in Ferguson, Missouri by a white police officer. Movement Gen was also called upon to support black organizers and host trainings. From there, Movement Gen Collective Members Ellen Choy and Gopal Dayanemi helped launch #Asians4BlackLives in solidarity, which shut down the Oakland Police Department last December and protested at the annual Chinese New Year parade in March. Other Movement Gen Collective Members have been organizing within their communities with parents, families, and even healers.



#Asians4BlackLives raised awareness and promoted solidarity at this year’s Chinese New Year Parade in San Francisco. Photo provided by #Asians4BlackLives.

#BlackLivesMatter and other movements affirming the humanity and dignity of marginalized groups are emerging at an important moment for environmental movers and shakers. For decades, there has been what the Green 2.0 Working Group calls a “Green Insiders Club” composed overwhelmingly of white people and led primarily by white men.

“It’s time for everyone to take a stand and just be vocal,” Ellen states.



Movement Gen and other activists chain themselves to Oakland Police Department in December 2014 in protest and solidarity for those killed by police. Photo provided by #Asians4BlackLives.

Discussions to change this have reemerged within the past few months, but it isn’t enough to just talk about diversity and inclusivity if there aren’t concrete steps to make these goals a reality. “It’s time for everyone to take a stand and just be vocal,” Ellen states.

In order to sustain the environmental movement and make diversity real and lasting, it won’t be enough to just hire a few people of color onto staffs and boards. The environmental movement needs to learn how to communicate to different races, genders, classes, and cultures. In the report *The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations*, University of Michigan Professor Dorceta Taylor recommends that environmental organizations

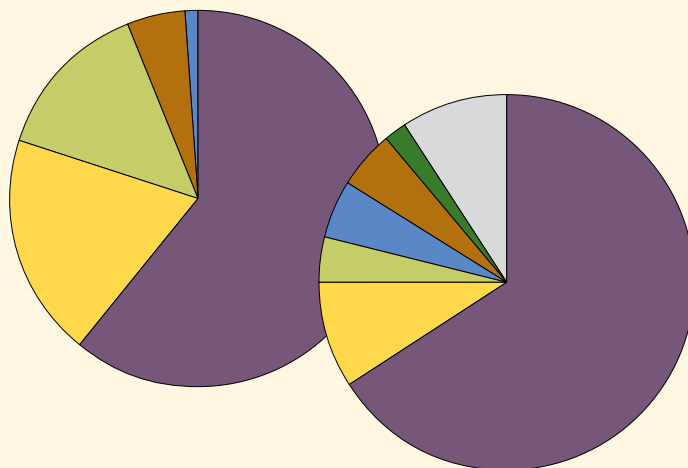
broaden environmental discussions to include issues that communities are concerned about, and also make inclusion, equity, and justice core values of their community work.

And one way to take that stand is to do what Black Organizing Project, Movement Generation, and a host of other organizations have done – show in your words and in your deeds that black lives do matter.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2014

INCOME \$6,102,126

- Restitution Funds 61%
- Grants Received 19%
- Donations 14%
- Return on Investment 5%
- Other 1%



EXPENSES \$5,318,641

- Environmental Grants 66%
- Fiscal Sponsorship Grants 9%
- Grassroots Fund 4%
- Program Expenses 5%
- Admin & Fundraising 5%
- New Voices Are Rising 2%
- Donor Advised Grants 9%



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Featuring wine from Barefoot Wine & Bubbly, Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. beer, delicious Vietnamese sandwiches and rice bowls from Bicycle Banh Mi, and an environmental fair with interactive exhibits from local green businesses and Rose Foundation grantees. We are working to minimize our event's waste with Klean Kanteen – all our drinks will be served in reusable Klean Kanteen steel pint cups and food in compostable containers!

Are you a grantee interested in tabling?

Contact Marion Gee at mgee@rosefdn.org.



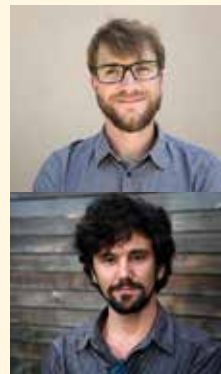
7:00 PM FILMS START

Go to rosefdn.org/filmfestival
for the full schedule.

SPECIAL GUESTS



We are excited that **JACK MUIR LAWS**, renowned naturalist, educator and artist, will return as our Master of Ceremonies for this year's Wild & Scenic Film Festival. Jack has dedicated his life to sharing his passion for the natural world with others. He is a trained wildlife biologist and Research Associate of the California Academy of Sciences.



JASON JAACKS AND STEVE FISHER, filmmakers, will be joining us to talk about their film, Silent River. Jason is a visual storyteller who focuses on social and environmental issues. In 2012, Jason was named a National Geographic Explorer. He is the founder of SplitFrame Media. Steve Fisher is an investigative journalist with a focus on U.S.-Mexico relations. In 2014, he was a fellow at the Human Rights Center at Berkeley Law where he worked with the ACLU to investigate a little-known migrant incarceration program. He is a fellow at the Investigative Reporting Program at UC Berkeley.



Interested in becoming a Sponsor or donating a silent auction item?
IT'S NOT TOO LATE:
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FEATURED FILMS



Delta Dawn

The Colorado River hasn't kissed the sea in almost two decades — until the spring of 2014 when an experimental pulse of water was released into this forgotten delta. A team of river runners followed the water on paddle boards to witness this unprecedented restoration effort.



Love in the Tetons

Sponsored by Mechanics Bank

Fifteen years ago, Juan Martinez, an at-risk teenager from south-central Los Angeles, stepped off a bus in Grand Teton National Park and saw the stars for the first time in his life. The experience inspired him to connect more diverse and urban youth to nature, and in the process, he met Vanessa Torres, a park ranger, and fell in love all over again.



Silent River

Since the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement 20 years ago, U.S. companies have used the Santiago River as their own waste canal. Silent River is a short documentary film that follows a young woman and her family as they defy death threats to try and save one of the most polluted rivers in Mexico.



SILENT AUCTION and GIVEAWAYS

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Our film festival will feature an enticing silent auction selection along with opportunity drawings for valuable prizes from Patagonia, Klean Kanteen and more. Featured Silent Auction items include entry for four to Disneyland theme park, a one-night stay at the H2Hotel in Healdsburg, and tickets to SF Opera, Cal Academy of Science, DeYoung Museum and more!

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New Voices Are Rising

DEBUTS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



Program Director Jill Ratner works with *New Voices* students at a Health Impact Assessment community workshop.

Starting Fall 2014, high school students from our annual Summer Institute now have the opportunity to become *New Voices Are Rising Fellows* during the school year, allowing them to put the skills they learned in the Summer Institute to pursue environmental justice work in more depth. The students, working with *New Voices* staff, are supporting local advocacy and outreach projects with our partners, including the Oakland Climate Action Coalition and Ditching Dirty Diesel Collaborative.

Our 2014-2015 school year Fellows have already hit the ground running. They provided input at Alameda County Transportation Commission Open Houses and are participating in community workshops led by *New Voices* partner Ditching Dirty Diesel Collaborative (DDDC). DDDC's community workshops will help shape a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) identifying and evaluating impacts of freight on Bay Area communities, including the neighborhoods where our Fellows live, play, and go to school.

The HIA will inform a Goods Movement Plan, Alameda County's transit planning, AND the larger Plan Bay Area process, which is a long-range transportation, land use, and housing strategy. Alameda County is already heavily impacted by freight, so our Fellows' input will help guarantee that those communities most heavily impacted by diesel pollution are heard!

MEET THE FIRST CLASS OF NEW VOICES FELLOWS



SAVON BARDELL is a Bay Area native and current junior at Oakland Technical High School's Health Academy. As a *New Voices* Fellow, Savon will focus on

developing advocacy skills and educating community members around pressing environmental justice issues affecting Oakland's low income communities and communities of color.



WENDY LA is an Oakland native and senior at Oakland High School's Environmental Science Academy. As the eldest of three children

and the daughter of Vietnamese immigrants, Wendy is eager to learn about environmental justice and climate change as a *New Voices* Fellow.



GIA PHAM is a senior at Oakland High School's Environmental Science Academy. Born in Vietnam, Gia moved to the United States with

her father and older sister when she was five years old. A hiker and rock climber, Gia is very interested in environmental protection, conservation, and law, and is excited to work with *New Voices*.

NEW VOICES NEEDS YOUR HELP

>> DONATE TODAY

We need to raise \$15,000 to support local Oakland youth participation in our 2015 Summer Institute and Fellowship program where we train the next generation of youth advocacy leaders to make a difference on issues like diesel pollution. Your support will help build their leadership and advocacy skills like:

- Mapping diesel truck routes
- Power analysis and Policy/issue analysis
- Public Speaking and Mock Policy Hearing practice
- Participating in real local policy workshops and hearings
- Recruiting 2-4 fellows from the Summer Institute to continue work on Goods Movement Plan and the County Transportation Plan

Go to rosefdn.org/donate to contribute today!

>> START A FUNDRAISER

Want to get your friends involved? Start training for a run, climb stairs or just ask your friends to help this amazing program.

Go to rosefdn.org/summergiving to set up your own peer to peer fundraising page and help Oakland youth become the next generation of environmental leaders. It's easy – set up your page with your story and email your friends or let them know on social media how to give! Please contact Marion at mgee@rosefdn.org if you have questions on how to set up your online fundraising page.

>> TAKE ACTION

Sign up for our e-newsletter at rosefdn.org/signup to find out when and how to get involved in all the local policy processes that *New Voices Are Rising* tracks to stop diesel pollution and other environmental hazards that affect our students' health.



LEFT: *New Voices* alum Robert Willis and Sonia Yu share their thoughts on freight transportation with Alameda County Transit Commission's Deputy Director of Planning and Policy Tess Lengyel at the ACTC's Transportation Open House in the Fruitvale District of Oakland.
RIGHT: Current Fellows Gia and Wendy submit comments at the Open House.



CARLOS RANGEL is a senior at Coliseum College Prep Academy in East Oakland. Born in Mexico, Carlos has previously participated in multiple extracurricular programs such as 67 Sueños, an advocacy program that creates murals showing the unique challenges faced by undocumented students. Carlos is eager to work with

New Voices to serve as part of the movement to help underserved communities maintain a healthier life and cleaner environment.



ALLAN VEGA is a senior at Coliseum College Prep Academy in East Oakland. Allan has graphic design and editing experience from an internship with KDOL TV, an educational cable network serving Oakland Unified School District. As a *New Voices Are Rising* Fellow, Allan hopes to better educate himself and his community around the issues

of toxics and air pollution, which will also serve as the primary topics of his Senior Project.



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From the film 14.c showing at our Wild & Scenic Film Festival On Tour on April 24, fourteen-year-old Kai Lightener ascends to the top of one of the most difficult routes –rated 5.14c. Buy your tickets at rosefdn.org/filmfest.



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