



ROSE
FOUNDATION
FOR COMMUNITIES &
THE ENVIRONMENT



SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

New Voices Are Rising: Where Are They Now?

Many students enter New Voices Are Rising with little knowledge of environmental injustice and how it relates to their lived experience. Through the program, they connect the dots between health, policy, history, and the environment, becoming advocates for more just and sustainable communities.

So where are the New Voices alumni today? We interviewed three past program participants to learn how their time in the program informed their later education and career choices.

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Reclaiming the Klamath

Through 20 years of persistent action, indigenous groups and conservation partners set the stage for the largest dam removal in history. This summer, four dams will be removed from the Klamath River, allowing it to once again flow freely from southern Oregon across northern California to the sea. This hard-fought win represents the wisdom and perseverance of the indigenous peoples who for centuries have called the river home.

"Globally, Indigenous peoples protect 80% of the earth's biodiversity on the lands they've maintained for centuries, despite being only 5% of the world's population."

– Ramirez

This staggering statistic highlights the importance of indigenous led environmental movements, guided by those with ancestral knowledge of how to have a reciprocal, rather than extractive, relationship to the land. The Rose Foundation is proud to have supported several key groups in the fight to save the environment, wildlife and culture of the Klamath.

The five Klamath Dams were constructed between 1917 and 1962 and operated by the utility company PacifiCorp. During this time, the federal government offered the surrounding land to WWI vets and white homesteaders to farm. The dams were intended to provide hydroelectric power and flood control to the burgeoning communities along the river. However, time proved these

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Looking Forward: Rose Leadership Transition

The Rose Foundation, is at an exciting juncture of change and potential as we ease into our third decade. Formed in 1992 by Tim Little and his co-founder Jill Ratner, The Rose Foundation is proud to announce the appointment of Aiko Pandorf as interim Executive Director.



*“As Chair of the Transition Committee and on behalf of the Board of Directors, we are thrilled to welcome **Aiko Pandorf (above)**. As Interim Executive Director, Aiko will build on Rose’s storied history and help us write a new chapter. Her steady-handed leadership style and collaborative approach builds on the organization’s strengths as we usher in exciting new opportunities for the Rose Foundation. She is a wonderful guide and an asset to Rose.”*
 – Willard Brown, Board Member

Tim and Jill have an unwavering commitment to justice for communities and the environment. Together, with a dedicated Board and staff, they have worked to develop a dynamic organization that empowers marginalized groups and environmental efforts. The Rose Foundation’s grassroots and mitigations grantmaking programs were initially built through Tim’s deep connections to local organizations and community activists. The Rose Foundation’s ability to reach frontline groups continues to make a difference in our shared pursuit of environmental justice, conservation and consumer rights.



“Tim Little (above) has devoted the past 30 years to building the Rose Foundation we know and love today. Alongside Jill Ratner, Tim grew Rose from a 2-person team to a 19-person organization, fundamentally committed to grassroots initiatives promoting stewardship of nature, protecting people’s rights, and advancing environmental justice. Today, the Rose Foundation is locally and nationally recognized as a nonprofit that is a testament to Tim’s values and leadership. After working at the Rose Foundation and now serving on its Board of Directors, I am confident Tim’s legacy will live on in the fabric of the organization, and I am ready for the elevated 2.0 version of Rose!”

– Laura Fernandez, Board Member

The Rose Foundation has grown dramatically in the last 30 years. Over the past 3 years alone, the organization has almost tripled its asset base. With this growth has come the expansion of Rose’s grantmaking and youth leadership programs, the addition of new staff members, and the refining of internal systems. On the horizon, the Rose Foundation is committed to growing the impact of our work and the grassroots groups we are privileged to support. We see the organization as a vital partner to small and mid-sized groups fighting for environmental and community justice.

Thank you for being part of the Rose Foundation community now and in the future. We are embracing being in a state of transition, honoring our past and planning for what’s to come. Fostering stewardship, building community and demanding justice are and remain the cornerstones of our mission work.

Some exciting developments include:

- This year, we are **expanding our grassroots training and capacity-building services.** We are piloting a coaching and mentorship program with 2-3 Cal Wildlands grantees, increasing our virtual training offerings to delve into critical topics like fundraising, governance, budgeting, and volunteer engagement, as well as hosting a fully in-person 2024 Grassroots Grantee Convening. Grassroots values are at the heart of the Rose Foundation’s mission. That’s why we are thrilled to create touchpoints that foster peer knowledge sharing, support resource exchange and build community among grassroots groups.
- This summer, New Voices Are Rising students are installing air quality monitors and collecting data to **create a community-informed air quality mitigation plan to share with key policymakers and governmental agencies.** Thanks in part to support from the CA Air Resources Board, the next generation of activists are using science and data to organize for cleaner air in the communities where they live.
- Next month, **Rose is launching a new website.** We hope it serves as a tool to inspire you with the powerful stories grantees share, the lessons learned in the bigger ecosystem of conservation, justice and community power, the opportunities Rose offers and more.

benefits negligible, with the dams providing little flood mitigation and generating less than 2% of PacifiCorp's power portfolio.

Once home to one of the largest wetland systems in the country, the dams decimated the Klamath River Basin, draining two lakes and eliminating roughly 90% of the region's wetlands (Estrada). The surrounding communities now rely on the dams to provide flood control, once the role of the wetlands.



With no fish ladders on any of the lower three dams, Steelhead, Suckerfish, Sturgeon and Lampre were blocked from 400 miles of habitat. And the Spring Chinook salmon, arguably the most important species to call the river home, could no longer access 90% of their spawning grounds. The dams slowed river flows, causing unnatural temperature rises that threatened cold-water habitat and fostered toxic algae blooms. Downstream ecosystems were also threatened as the dams starved the river of its usual sediment load. Gradually, key fish and other wildlife species disappeared from the river.

This ecological devastation had an outsized impact on the indigenous communities of the Klamath River Basin, including the Hoopa Valley, Karuk, and Yurok tribes. Professor Kari Norgaard of University of Oregon and her team explored the specific damage to the Karuk tribe, research that would later be used to prove the dams' connection to environmental damage, and in turn, loss of traditional food sources, economic opportunities, and declining human health.

As fish people, the Karuk historically consumed 450 pounds of salmon per person per year. By the 1980s, the environmental damage to the river had

caught up to the salmon and the Karuk tribe recorded consuming less than five pounds of salmon per person per year. Despite attempts to rely on other species, by 2006, every freshwater species consumed by the tribe was in decline. With access to their traditional first foods denied, the Karuk saw spikes in rates of diabetes and heart disease and a decrease in life expectancy (Norgaard).

Struggling with the depletion of the river's natural resources, the Karuk tribe, once ranked among California's wealthiest, also experienced a dramatic decline economically, and by 2007 emerged as some of the state's poorest, with a median income of only \$13,000 (Norgaard 25). Norgaard's research made clear: the Klamath dams were responsible for one of the most pronounced human rights violations linked to dam construction in the U.S.

The Klamath dams created tension between farmers, ranchers, and indigenous people with each group being promised more water than could be feasibly allocated. In 2002, this issue was laid bare when farmers pulled too much water from the Klamath, resulting in one of the largest fish kills in U.S. history. The thousands of dead fish mobilized both tribes and environmental advocates in the basin, launching the Bring the Salmon Home! Campaign. For the next 20 years, the groups worked together, spearheading a grassroots effort akin to David and Goliath, holding PacifiCorp accountable for the damage it had created. Several Rose grantees were part of the Bring the Salmon Home! Campaign and the larger fight for environmental justice in the Klamath River Basin.

Rose grantee Save CA Salmon (SCS) is a Tribally-led environmental group located on the Klamath and Sacramento Rivers. Dedicated to policy change and community advocacy for fish and fish-dependent people, SCS mobilized water policy experts, North Coast communities and tribal activists to advocate for policies that would remove the Klamath Dams. SCS successfully renegotiated permitting requirements for the dams by demonstrating the negative impacts of antiquated water permits to the Trinity and Lower Klamath River. These new permits also enforced terms to protect the cold water of Trinity Lake and Trinity River, a major tributary to the Klamath river.



Regina Chichizola (left) is the leader of Save California Salmon and recipient of the Rose Foundation's 2017 Anthony Grassroots Prize. She was an early leader in building the movement to remove the four outdated dams, pointing to the Klamath Rivers indispensable

commercial and cultural value. Some of the priority issues she pushed during the years-long fight included water rights, fish passage, endangered species, flows and water quality. By highlighting the infrastructure improvements needed to reduce environmental damage to the river, Chichizola helped economically incentivize PacifiCorp to undam the Klamath.

American Rivers (AR) is another Rose grantee and key player in the fight to remove the Klamath dams. AR's mission is to protect wild rivers, restore damaged rivers, and conserve water for people and nature. Among the group's main activities is removing unnecessary dams across the country. AR played a leading role in drafting the Twenty-First Century Dams Act, which provides funding to remove dams that are no longer safe or necessary. Today, several members of the group are on the funding board of the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRRC), the nonprofit organization spearheading the Klamath Dam removal project.

Years of protest, lawsuits, and direct action forced PacifiCorp to make a choice: update the aging dam infrastructure to meet the new and hard-fought environmental standards or remove the dams all together. PacifiCorp chose the latter, entering into a historic dam removal agreement with the government, tribal nations, and conservation groups. Today, the KRRRC has taken down one dam, with the final three slotted to be removed this summer.

The tribes and partner groups are now focusing on the watershed-wide restoration that comes after

dam removal. The groups have begun to strategically disperse billions of seeds across the previously inundated reservoirs, transforming the muddy reservoirs into riverbanks lined with native plants. Through targeted water quality improvements and continued monitoring of the tributaries and upper watershed, they hope to ensure a rapid recovery of the Klamath River and the species that call it home.

For the tribes, this is not only an environmental win, but a win for food sovereignty and cultural justice. The working groups are seeding the salmon run, releasing juvenile salmon into the waters above the dam which haven't seen the species in over a century. They hope the run will swim all the way to the sea and back up the river, starting the next generation of salmon on the Klamath River.



One Rose grantee, **Pàah Áama (above)**, is teaching Native youth in California's Klamath Basin about ancestral waterways, using paddling as a restorative activity and an entry point to activism. The group is preparing Native youth to paddle the Klamath River from source to sea, after the four dams are removed later this year.

As dripping water hollows out stone, indigenous groups and environmental allies achieved the impossible through persistent, long-term advocacy. We are excited to see the fruits of their labor this coming year, with the removal of the fourth dam and rewilding of the Klamath River Basin. The Rose Foundation is proud to support grassroots groups like these in the fight for environmental and community justice. Their work is a constant reminder of how tenacious community-led efforts are planting the seeds for profound change.

Stay up to date on this and other stories of grassroots activism by signing up at rosefdn.org/signup.

Works cited provided in full at Rosefdn.org



MARYAM

Passionate about environmental science, Maryam joined New Voices in 2021 as a Summer Academy participant. She developed

leadership skills through the program, joining the Youth Air Quality

Task Force and working as a Youth Co-Coordinator. Maryam enjoyed learning and later teaching the history of environmental injustice in her home city of Pittsburg as well as the greater Bay Area.

What was your favorite part of the program?

My favorite part overall was to educate the youth about things they weren't familiar with. It was powerful to educate them on environmental racism and how living next to two power plants, for example, can have long-term health impacts. Teaching environmental justice to the youth feels really good because they are able to connect it to their own experience.

How has the program resonated with you or informed what you are doing now?

New Voices shifted my focus. When I was younger, I wanted to study environmental science. When I got into this program it turned my perspective towards environmental studies. It exposed me to the humanities and justice side of the work. Today I'm finishing up my freshman year at UC Berkeley where I'm studying Environmental Conservation and Resource Studies. This program had a really big impact on my life.



JADA

Hailing from East Oakland, Jada joined New Voices in the summer of 2017 after hearing about the program through a friend. Jada rose through New Voices, returning the following year as a POD leader, then as a Co-Coordinator, and in her fourth year

becoming a Program Associate. Jada feels the program helped her step out of her comfort zone, and that mind set helped her take advantage of later opportunities.

What projects did you work on during your time in New Voices?

My first year in the program, my summit project was using the design software I'd learned to create an ideal city. The following year, I made 3D models of hydroelectric dams. As a program associate, I worked on a tree mapping project in West Oakland. I coordinated with folks in Oakland and partner organizations to identify locations and design a plan to plant trees in priority areas to improve shade, air quality and create buffers from pollution. The project culminated in a tree planting event that brought together New Voices students and other community members.

What is something you learned during your time in New Voices that has stuck with you today?

I enjoy making things and getting creative. Rose helped me figure out how to use my abilities for a greater cause. It taught me that there are actual ways to tie important causes like environmental and social justice into things you are interested in.

Jada recently graduated from Arizona State University with a degree in Landscape Architecture. A dream project of hers is to restore a waterfront to make it more suitable to people while strengthening its ecological benefits.



CHRISTINA

Christina joined New Voices in 2006, when the program solely served youth from Oakland. She started as a Summer Academy participant and returned the following year as a

program facilitator where she

educated younger participants, lesson planned and coordinated externships. As a shy student, New Voices helped Christina come out of her shell and develop her voice as she advocated for her community.

What was your favorite part of the program?

New Voices challenged me to speak out. I wouldn't be teaching if I didn't get that practice. I thought it was really valuable. I also really liked that we weren't doing busy work but meaningful work for our communities. It was great getting to know the different organizations New Voices partners with that come together to do work for the community.


What is something you learned during your time in New Voices that has stuck with you today?

I learned that change doesn't happen without students. And a lot of times they're missing in the conversation. I also learned that there's community connections between science issues learned in school and the real world. Both of these lessons inform my work today.

Today, Christina works as a biology teacher at Skyline Highschool in Oakland. Christina works to incorporate the environmental justice issues she learned in New Voices in her biology curriculum.

These alumni exemplify the purpose of New Voices: to seed the next generation of environmental justice advocates. We are proud to serve as a catalyst and resource for frontline youth to discover their voice and power in advocating for change in their communities. Learn about upcoming opportunities to get involved at rosefdn.org/new-voices.

30 YEARS

**Celebrate Rose's
30th anniversary
with a generous gift!** 

Like our grantees, the Rose Foundation is in the fight for the long game. Over our 30 years of work, we've been a partner to countless groups advocating for justice on behalf of communities and the environment.

**Please continue to support these
crucial efforts by donating at
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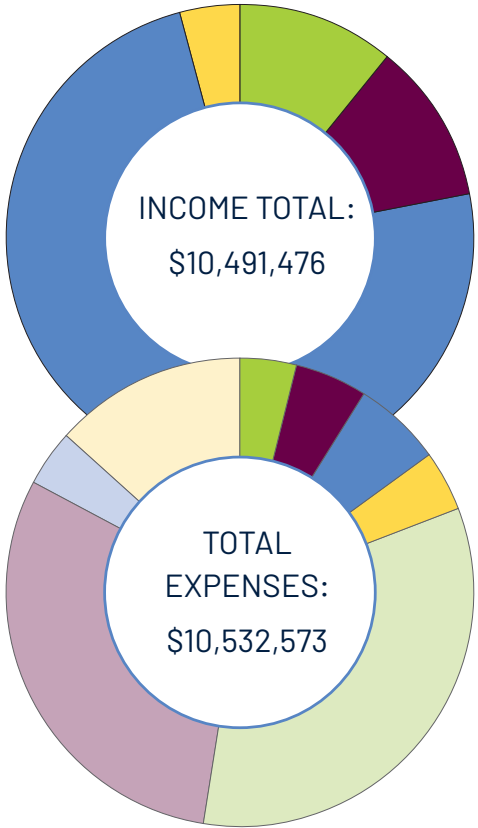
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supports grassroots action
to protect the environment,
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community health.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2023



- Donations 11%
- Grants Received 11%
- Restitution Funds 74%
- Return on Investment 4%
- New Voices Are Rising 4%
- Grassroots Grants 5%
- Donor Advised Grants 6%
- Fiscal Sponsorship Grants 4%
- Environmental Mitigation Grants 33%
- Consumer Protection Grants 30%
- Admin & Fundraising 4%
- Program Management 13%