

GREEN CORPS

The country's most respected training program for environmental organizers



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

“When ecological crises mount, and powerful interests stand between the public and planet-saving solutions, that’s when we need the tough, the resolute and the resourceful to get going—by organizing.”

30 YEARS OF TRAINING ORGANIZERS FOR THE PLANET

When the going gets tough for our planet, the tough get going.

2021 was a tough year for the environment, with hurricanes, wildfires and heat waves turbocharged by global warming, as well as plastic dumped into our oceans, threats to our public lands, and more plant and animal species slipping away toward extinction.

When ecological crises mount, and powerful interests stand between the public and planet-saving solutions, that’s when we need the tough, the resolute and the resourceful to get going—by organizing.

And that’s why Green Corps’ work to train the next generation of environmental organizers has been so important.

For 30 years, Green Corps has equipped new organizers with the skills to launch, grow and run campaigns and organizations to protect the environment. After first learning the principles of organizing in the classroom, new Green Corps organizers earn hands-on experience in real-world campaigns. By the end of their year-long training, these new organizers will have learned how to create the change that the planet, wildlife and people need.

We’re proud to have launched the careers of more than 400 Green Corps graduates. From grassroots petition drives, to accountability meetings with elected officials, to educational media events to door-to-door canvassing efforts, Green Corps alumni have the skills they need to make a difference for the planet.

Thank you, on behalf of the Green Corps board, staff and other supporters, for making it all possible.



Doug Phelps
Chair, Green Corps Board

LETTER TO OUR MEMBERS

Throughout one of the most turbulent and challenging years in recent history, we at Green Corps have continued our work to train the next generation of environmental organizers. While last year's class navigated a digital world with poise and resilience, the Class of 2022 has resumed in-person organizing to advance solutions to some of today's most pressing environmental problems. We accomplished impressive work together this year, from protecting America's public lands to phasing out dangerous "forever" chemicals in our environment.

While we celebrate this 30th class of Green Corps, I can't help but feel inspired by their energy and enthusiasm as they put their values to work for our planet. Organizing isn't always easy, but the work done by the Class of 2022 continues to reinforce its importance. While more challenges are sure to come, we'll continue to adapt, improve and fight for our planet—because it's worth it. As always, thank you for your support, which makes our work possible.

Annie Sanders

*Annie Sanders
Executive Director*

Green Corps Class of 2022



YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION: WORKING TO ELIMINATE DANGEROUS CHEMICALS WITH TOXIC-FREE FUTURE

It's not breaking news that toxic chemicals are harming the health of humans, wildlife and the environment. But the proliferation of PFAS—a dangerous class of “forever chemicals” linked to wildlife degradation, cancer and other negative health outcomes—has largely escaped public scrutiny until recently. Highly persistent PFAS substances, used in a wide range of products from food packaging to stain-resistant furniture, have become emblematic of the failed regulatory systems that allowed them to contaminate our food, bodies, wildlife and drinking water.

Who bears the brunt of the problem? The people, often with lower incomes or people of color, who live or work near the facilities that manufacture or use these forever chemicals, as well as those who drink water from supplies contaminated by them. Yet nobody is immune from the problem. Nearly 100% of the U.S.

population is contaminated with these industrial chemicals due to exposure from everyday products like raincoats, makeup and food packaging. Meanwhile the costs keep piling up—in billions of dollars for cleanups and more sickness and death for people and wildlife.

The solutions to this problem exist—we just need leaders to implement them. Alternatives to packaging with PFAS are readily available and competitively priced. And because of growing concern, major retailers from Whole Foods to McDonald's have committed to phasing PFAS out of their packaging. Washington, Maine, New York and Vermont have all passed bans on PFAS in food packaging that will take effect soon. As retailers, municipalities and states continue to take the lead, momentum for congressional action is growing. That's why this past fall,





three Green Corps organizers teamed up with Toxic-Free Future to drive down the demand and use of PFAS by pushing for corporate and government policies to ban PFAS in food packaging.

In Raleigh, North Carolina, Sarah Hunkins held a press conference attended by local media outlets on the effects of PFAS and hosted a rally co-sponsored by local groups to raise visibility for the issue. She drove more than 30 people to the rally, which was also attended by multiple media outlets. In Seattle, Aya Hashem recruited volunteers to submit 20 letters to the editor in the span of just a few weeks, and she met with dozens of influential community leaders to build power for the campaign in the Pacific Northwest. Her team also generated 85 social media posts in favor of phasing out PFAS, raising awareness of the problem. In Miami, Ben Rowley organized in the backyard of Burger King's headquarters, putting pressure on the company to phase PFAS out of its food packaging and follow in

the footsteps of companies like McDonald's and Whole Foods. Ben's team delivered thousands of petitions to Burger King in the fall of 2021, and several months later, the company announced a global ban of toxic "forever chemicals" in food packaging.

The fight to eliminate PFAS is far from over, but the strides made by Green Corps organizers this fall helped elevate this critical issue across the country. In November, U.S. Reps. Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and Don Young (R-AK) introduced the bipartisan Keep Food Containers Safe from PFAS Act in Congress. Companion legislation was introduced in the Senate by U.S. Sens. Maggie Hassan (D-NH) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK). With the momentum that organizers like Sarah, Aya and Ben built in the fall of 2021, we're hopeful that we'll see significant progress to phase out PFAS in the coming months and years.

Image courtesy of Aya Hashem



POWER FROM THE GRASSROOTS

(Page 3 left) Sarah Hunkins speaks at her press conference in Raleigh, N.C., surrounded by her volunteers and campaign mascot Polluted Polly.

(Page 3 right) Ben Rowley poses with a sign outside of a Burger King in Miami, FL.

(Left) Aya Hashem speaks at a rally in Seattle, WA, flanked by volunteers and Polluted Polly.



Organizers Emilee Brown and Jonah Kasdan host a virtual kick-off meeting attended by more than 60 volunteers and community members.

YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION: ORGANIZERS FIGHT FOR BOLD CLIMATE ACTION IN COLORADO

With record-setting temperatures sweeping the country, severe storms battering our coasts, and raging wildfires scorching our forests, the need to take bold climate action grows clearer and more urgent every day. As gridlock continues to prevent such action at the federal level, it's up to the states to act. In Colorado, a pro-conservation majority in the legislature gave the state a unique opportunity to make meaningful progress in the spring of 2021.

This was the impetus for Conservation Colorado to hire a team of five Green Corps organizers in the spring of 2021 for virtual campaigns across the state. Organizers worked to build public support and show that grassroots enthusiasm to a set of target legislators.

Over the course of the campaign, our organizers motivated the public to make 647 calls into key legislators' offices and write 108 social media posts about the campaign and other key grassroots actions that swayed legislators, such as the 11 letters to the

editor that the team successfully got published in local papers. Finally, they took advantage of opportunities to meet with their targets and center the conversation around climate action.

In late April, the state Senate passed the “Reduce Greenhouse Gases, Increase Environmental Justice” bill, focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting disproportionately impacted communities. A version of the bill was eventually signed into law by Gov. Jared Polis, marking a major step toward Colorado’s meeting its climate goals. Our organizers recruited more than 20 volunteers who continued working with Green Corps and Conservation Colorado through the rest of the legislative session. The success of the campaign, and the future leaders activated by Green Corps organizers, will strengthen the state of climate activism in Colorado for future campaigns in the years to come.

YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION: ORGANIZERS WORK TO PROTECT 30% OF NATURE BY 2030

Currently, only 12% of our nation's lands are protected, and every 30 seconds, we lose about a football field's worth of nature in areas without protection. What's more, human activity has severely altered three-fourths of the planet's lands and significantly altered two-thirds of the ocean. In order to solve climate change and reverse the decline of America's wildlife, waterways and natural places, scientists are urging us to conserve at least 30% of land and the ocean by 2030 — what we call 30x30. The good news is that 86% of American voters support setting a national goal of protecting 30% of our lands and oceans by 2030. To harness that public support for tangible change, the Wilderness Society hired Green Corps in the spring of 2021.

Four Green Corps organizers hit the proverbial ground running, organizing remotely from their homes across the country in key states like Colorado, Arizona and Nevada. Organizer Noah Offenkrantz made connections with community leaders

in Arizona, networked online to find the key environmental players in the state, and recruited volunteers on campuses from Phoenix to Flagstaff. Four weeks later, he turned out to his campaign kickoff meeting more than 80 people who were excited to convince U.S. Sens. Kyrsten Sinema and Mark Kelly to support the 30x30 platform.

Noah trained up those volunteers to run the campaign, and in just a few weeks they submitted 28 letters to the editor, with 16 published across the state, and recruited over 200 people to make calls into Sens. Sinema's and Kelly's offices about the campaign. Noah also spearheaded a coalition of environmental and tribal groups in Arizona that will continue to collaborate on this campaign into the future. Thanks to Noah's work, both senators responded with clear support of 30x30 and introduced additional legislation to protect the Grand Canyon region in March.



Green Corps organizer Noah Offenkrantz facilitates a kickoff meeting with over eighty Arizonans for the Wilderness Society's Campaign for Nature to protect 30% of nature by 2030.

Image Courtesy of Staff

YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION: GREEN CORPS ALUMNI PUT THEIR SKILLS TO WORK



ELIOT ABEL, GC '04

Eliot began his career with Green Corps by running campaigns for the Sierra Club in New Hampshire and the Alaska Coalition in North Dakota (in the winter) and helping to direct a record-breaking canvass office in Washington, D.C. He now leads commercial sales and project development at Namasté Solar, an employee-owned B Corp based in Colorado that develops, designs, installs and maintains residential and commercial solar systems. Eliot serves on the boards of the Colorado Solar and Storage Association and Namasté Solar, holds a BA from Stanford University and an MBA from the Yale School of Management, and was the recipient of a 40 Under 40 award from the Denver Business Journal in 2020.



MELISSA WAAGE, GC'02

Melissa Waage had planned for a career in journalism until the 2000 presidential election changed everything—and a Green Corps recruiter gave her a call. In the months following 9/11, she spent her Green Corps year organizing Oregonians to fight drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, working to protect Southeastern forests from the logging industry, and rallying Virginians in support of early climate action legislation. Today, Melissa leads the campaign team at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and NRDC Action Fund. They're scoring victories at the state and municipal levels, like building electrification legislation in Colorado, drinking water cleanup in Michigan, and major clean energy legislation in Illinois, while also fighting at the federal level for powerful climate action.



SARAH STARMAN, GC'19 ENDANGERED SPECIES COALITION

Since graduating from Green Corps in 2019, Sarah has been working for the Endangered Species Coalition, a national nonprofit that uses education, civic engagement and grassroots organizing to protect our nation's at-risk species and safeguard the Endangered Species Act.

Throughout her three Green Corps campaigns in Maine, Iowa and Pennsylvania, Sarah developed a passion for training others and developing leadership. Now, as the national grassroots organizer at Endangered Species Coalition, she runs a training and mentorship program for people who want to learn more about grassroots organizing and make an impact in their communities. Sarah is not only using the skills she learned in Green Corps every day, but is also passing them on to a new generation of organizers. Sarah also manages an annual nationwide lobby day that engages hundreds of citizens each year and sends a powerful message to elected officials about the importance of wildlife.

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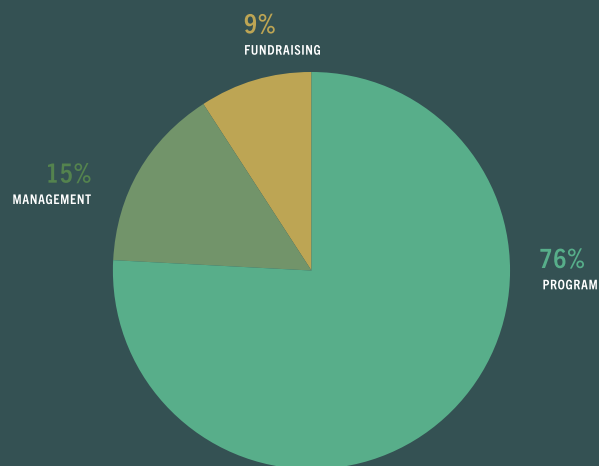
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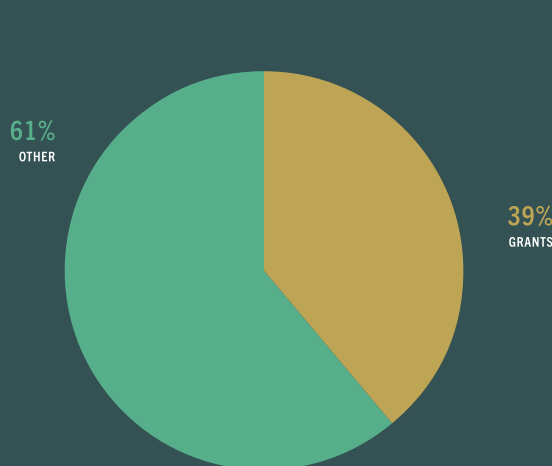
EXPENSES

FY20



INCOME

FY20



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GREEN CORPS

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