



GREEN CORPS

The country's most respected training
program for environmental organizers

2018 PROGRAM REPORT

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TURNING BIG, BOLD IDEAS INTO CONCRETE ACTION

To solve our ecological problems, each new generation needs to master the skills and strategies which can turn big, bold ideas into concrete action.

It’s no simple task. But there are three elements in particular that bear emphasizing today.

1. Winning social change requires strategic thinking, starting with the seemingly simple but often difficult task of setting a clear goal. Whether the change we seek is one we think we can win tomorrow or one that will take years of effort, we must clearly articulate what we want to accomplish, why it matters and, crucially, how we can win.
2. Winning change requires building and sustaining a coalition where everyone doesn’t agree on everything: With lots of issues different people care most about, what can everyone in our coalition agree on? We’re usually more likely to win change by working to fix one thing we all agree is a problem than we are by trying to tackle a long list of problems around which, by definition, there is less agreement and a much smaller coalition.
3. Winning change requires respecting people. We must approach each person we hope to organize with openness—openness to their knowledge, their life experience and their humanity. Listening is not a “skill” or a “tactic” for winning people over; listening is about learning and respect. Before we can expect anyone to listen to us, we need to listen to them. Once we do that, we have a chance of connecting, and from there, a chance to move forward together.

These are just a few of the things that make for good organizing. It takes dedicated practice to master them and discipline to apply them, especially when big challenges and turbulent times conspire to pull us off course.

All of us must keep doing all we can to save our planet. As each new generation prepares to run the next leg of this race, I’m thankful that you’re helping Green Corps better equip them for the challenges that lie ahead.



Doug Phelps
Chair, Green Corps Board

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Fifty years ago, as Apollo 8 orbited the moon, human beings saw the Earth from space for the first time. The astronauts saw no lines dividing the United States from other countries, no lines demarcating liberal cities from conservative countryside. They saw only our small blue marble of a planet, the only sign of life within a vast solar system.

The United Nations' sobering 2018 climate report reminds us that our fate, and the fate of all life on our planet, depends more than ever on our ability to see past the political or cultural boundaries that might otherwise divide us. We are one species on one planet, and the actions we take, or fail to take, in the coming decade will have profound effects for generations to come.

The good news is that, as Green Corps organizers crisscross our country, they find people from all walks of life willing to help reduce plastic pollution, protect public lands and take other steps to restore our environment to health. They find people of goodwill in every corner of America, ready to move past what divides us and work together.

With your support, Green Corps will keep training young people in the skills it takes to reach and organize these good people, while making a difference on today's most pressing environmental issues. Thank you for making it possible to train tomorrow's environmental organizers to build a better, more sustainable future.

Onward,

Annie Sanders

Annie Sanders

Executive Director

Green Corps Class of 2018



YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION: TYSON AGREES TO CURB WATER POLLUTION

Green Corps organizers from the Class of 2018 helped convince Tyson Foods Inc. to clean up pollution in its supply chain. The groundbreaking initiative from Tyson commits the company to adopt more sustainable farming practices for 2 million acres of grain (more than half of its U.S. supply chain!) by 2020 in an effort to curb water pollution.

Throughout the country, big agribusinesses are contaminating our waterways, our drinking water and our oceans with unchecked runoff pollution from their farms—in particular, farms used to grow the corn and soy that feed the animals we eat. Last summer, fertilizer runoff pollution contaminated drinking water and waterways throughout the heartland, and has led to the largest dead zone—an area where animal life cannot survive due to lack of oxygen—in the Gulf of Mexico measured in U.S. history. To tackle this problem, a global

environmental campaign organization called Mighty Earth partnered with Green Corps to convince Tyson Foods to clean up water pollution in its meat supply chain.

We knew that Tyson would only act if it saw widespread public concern, especially from people in places near their headquarters and facilities. So fresh out of August training, we sent Green Corps organizer Jessye Waxman to Fayetteville, Arkansas, to convince Tyson to clean up its act. Jessye had never been to Arkansas before, but was thrilled to be sent to Tyson's headquarters—or as she put it, “the belly of the beast!”

Jessye and her fellow Green Corps organizers hit the ground running, from Fayetteville to Kansas City to New Orleans. Over the course of three months, they recruited and trained hundreds of volunteers and built a coalition of



268 local groups. At least 8,766 people signed the petition circulated by our organizers, and our campaign work earned coverage in at least 74 stories in the news.

Celeste Pepitone-Nahas generated 143 calls into Tyson's headquarters in Chicago; Audrey Beedle's TV interview in New Orleans highlighted the issue to thousands of viewers, Shana Gallagher signed on 56 coalition partners in Dallas, and Jessye garnered 23 media hits from Fayetteville campaign events.

Tyson responded throughout the fall to our efforts to say that it was reviewing its sustainability plans but made no public commitments to address water pollution in its supply chain. So, in the spring of 2018, Green Corps organizers continued their work with Mighty Earth to keep up

the pressure. Organizers fanned out from Fayetteville to Omaha and Des Moines and to Virginia's eastern shore, gathering more than 360 coalition sign-ons, 140 media hits and 12,700 petition signatures. More than 150 people turned out to meetings to kick off our campaign. Green Corps organizers also passed on the organizing skills they learned during the year to dozens of local community members at activist training workshops.

On the very last week of the campaign, their work paid off when Tyson announced its significant commitment to addressing water pollution in its supply chain. As Tyson follows through with its promise, America's meat industry will have to follow its lead. We're excited to continue working to spread more sustainable practices throughout our agricultural system in the years to come.



POWER FROM THE GRASSROOTS

(Left and middle) Green Corps organizers work with Mighty Earth at a press event in April, celebrating Tyson's commitment to improving farming practices on 2 million acres of grain by 2020.

(Right) Former Green Corps organizer Jessye Waxman (GC '18) runs a press conference outside of Tyson Foods headquarters near Fayetteville, Arkansas.



(Top) Green Corps alumna and PennEnvironment Climate Defender Field Organizer Flora Cardoni rallies in Harrisburg, Penn., for a clean energy lobby day with volunteers recruited by Green Corps organizers and PennEnvironment.

(Inset) Green Corps organizers Audrey Beedle and Shana Gallagher (GC '18) pose with volunteers at a "Climate Sweethearts" event they organized for Valentine's Day 2018.

YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION: PENNSYLVANIANS CALL FOR 100% RENEWABLE

For the past 100 years, Pennsylvania has powered itself and the country with fossil fuels, including dirty coal, oil and gas—major sources of the climate changing pollution that's devastating our environment.

But wind power has grown fivefold over the last decade, with new wind farms popping up from the fields of western Pennsylvania to the Poconos. Moreover, solar now generates enough electricity to power 34,000 homes across the commonwealth, and recent polling shows that 82 percent of Pennsylvanians support climate solutions.

To translate this support into policy change, PennEnvironment hired a team of Green Corps organizers in the spring of 2018 to move Pennsylvania closer to 100 percent renewable energy and help build support for clean energy legislation in the U.S. Congress.

Three Green Corps organizers hit the ground in early January and immediately began recruiting volunteers for State of the Union watch parties, which served as a launch pad for the campaign. Organizers recruited 60 people to these events, who then signed petitions, wrote letters to the editors of local and national newspapers, and started making plans to defend federal environmental programs and promote good climate policy in Pennsylvania.

More than 1,000 people signed petitions circulated by our organizers, and more than 548 people participated in Valentine's Day-themed "climate sweetheart" photo petitions. Organizers also lobbied federal officials and held climate exhibitions in key cities that educated and engaged more than 300 people. All of this work will help move Pennsylvania, and the country, toward a clean energy future.

YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION: GREEN CORPS, OCEANA TEAM UP TO STOP OFFSHORE DRILLING

After three weeks of classroom training in August, the Green Corps Class of 2019 ran four different campaigns in the fall of 2018 to stop water pollution by big agribusinesses, protect South American forests, fight offshore drilling, and prevent overfishing off of our coasts.

Green Corps organizers Sarah Starman, Stephanie Prufer and Dylan Guydish shipped off to Bangor, Maine; Richmond, Virginia; and Vancouver, Washington; to partner with Oceana on their campaign against offshore drilling. Eighty community members attended meetings

to launch our campaign. And our organizers trained dozens of volunteers on petitioning, writing letters to the editors of national and local newspapers and generating media attention.

At the end of the campaign, organizers ran local activist trainings for community members to pass on the skills and knowledge they'd learned from Green Corps training and their field experience. Oceana is continuing to work with these volunteers into 2019 and beyond to protect our coasts and move our energy economy toward a more sustainable future.



CRAFTING WINNING CAMPAIGNS

Green Corps Organizer Stephanie Prufer and her Oceana volunteer team turned out 70 people to the Virginia state Capitol in November to ask elected officials to publicly oppose offshore drilling and protect our coasts.

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

GREEN CORPS BY THE NUMBERS

376

Green Corps graduates to date

242

Green Corps graduates still working in the social change and environmental movement

150

*More than
Campaigns Green Corps trainees have participated in, to date.*

STEPHANIE MILES, CLASS OF 2017 MAINE CONSERVATION VOTERS

Growing up in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, Stephanie fostered a love of and commitment to the conservation of our natural places. Stephanie brought the skills she learned at Green Corps to her current job as the advocacy coordinator for Maine Conservation Voters (MCV) and Maine Conservation Alliance (MCA).

Based in Augusta, Maine, MCV and MCA cultivate and use political power to conserve and protect Maine's environment, help pass laws that protect our environmental legacy, and hold elected officials accountable without regard to political party.



BEN EDGERLY WALSH, CLASS OF 2008 VERMONT PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP

A member of the Green Corps Class of 2008, Ben Edgerly Walsh is the Climate & Energy program director at VPIRG. Ben has led campaigns to establish one of the nation's strongest renewable energy standards, and to enact policies that have made Vermont consistently one of the top 10 states for solar and energy efficiency.

Looking ahead, Ben's top priority is working to pass the nation's first carbon pollution tax. "Someone needs to step up and show what a better path forward looks like," says Ben. "I feel incredibly lucky to be able to put my Green Corps training to work to ensure Vermont does just that."

DEBORAH LAPIDUS, CLASS OF 2006 MIGHTY EARTH

In her role as campaign director at Mighty Earth, Deborah Lapidus (GC' 06) fights big palm oil companies responsible for rainforest destruction, wildlife extinction and human rights abuses. Deborah has waged campaigns that have achieved the widespread adoption of "No Deforestation, No Peat and No Exploitation" policies within the palm oil industry and global agribusiness.

In her campaigns, Deborah applies a core skill she learned in Green Corps—how to find unique points of leverage against seemingly unmovable targets. "Green Corps taught me numerous skills, but perhaps most importantly, a mindset that strategic organizing can achieve major breakthroughs no matter the size of the opponent or the ambition of the goal," says Deborah.



SHAPING THE MOVEMENT

(Left) Stephanie (third from the right) with other members of the Maine Conservation Voters team in front of the Maine State House for conservation lobby day in April 2018.

(Middle) Ben Edgerly Walsh speaks with legislators outside of the Vermont State House for a lobby day.

(Right) Deborah Lapidus and Glenn Hurowitz (GC' 02), both with Mighty Earth, pose with activists at a protest in Korea against rainforest destruction.



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GREEN CORPS CLASS OF 2019