

GREEN CORPS

SUMMER REPORT 2020

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🌱 ORGANIZERS IN ACTION

ADVOCATING FOR 100 PERCENT CLEAN ENERGY WITH AUDUBON SOUTH CAROLINA

Green Corps is all about going where we're needed and meeting communities where they're at. After all, we can't achieve a clean energy future unless everyone comes together and advocates for a better way forward. Right now, the state of South Carolina has a real opportunity to help us move toward that clean energy future. In 2017, Audubon South Carolina helped lead a campaign to pass South Carolina's first landmark solar bill, which has led to a boom in the solar industry in the past few years. Since the passage of this legislation, an opportunity to close two coal plants and replace them with clean infrastructure has opened up.

With the momentum of the recent solar victory, two Green Corps organizers landed in South Carolina in the spring of 2020 to help make sure the two coal-fired power plants were replaced with clean energy sources. The organizers were tasked with bringing constituent voices to South Carolina legislators to ensure that they introduced and passed a bill. Our goal was to establish South Carolina as a clean energy leader in the South, and create momentum for more clean energy progress in the region.

Our organizers, Olivia Perfetti and Julie Johnson, were based in two key districts in the state: Julie organized in the city of Columbia, the capital and focal point of the state, critical to engaging lawmakers; while Olivia built power in Charleston,

the quintessential South Carolina city, home to the environmental base needed to put pressure on state legislators. The pair of organizers worked quickly to build up volunteer teams and grassroots pressure. With the help of dozens of community groups, they turned out nearly 50 South Carolinians to kickoff meetings by the end of their first four weeks on the ground.

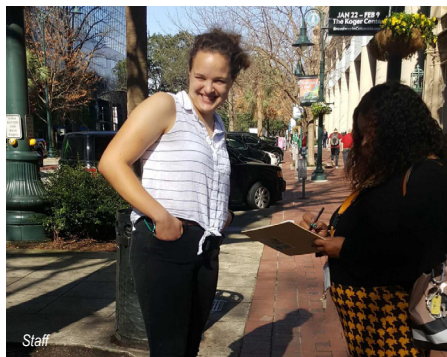
Legislators have introduced three options for the future of the state-owned utility that manages the coal plants, but no option shows the commitment to 100 percent clean energy that South Carolinians are demanding.

Though the legislative session has been suspended due to the coronavirus outbreak, the pair of organizers volunteers are prepared to support the state conservation coalition for a conservation lobby day when elected officials are back and it is safe to gather. They've worked closely with volunteers, business leaders, and faith leaders to engage citizen support in the form of personal video testimonials on the importance of clean energy, and signed over 65 businesses onto a support letter. They'll also deliver more than 1500 petition signatures and nearly 300 handwritten postcards that demonstrate the need to take large-scale, decisive action on the climate crisis by committing the state's utility to 100 percent clean energy.

Photo courtesy of a campaign volunteer



Olivia Perfetti's campaign kickoff meeting turned out 32 people after only four weeks of organizing in Charleston, S.C.



Julie Johnson collects petition signatures in downtown Columbia her first week in South Carolina.



Campaign volunteers write letters to state legislators asking them to support a 100 percent clean energy transition at a meeting in Charleston, S.C.

Staff

YOU MAKE GOOD ORGANIZING POSSIBLE



Staff

In the last few months, life as we know it has been upended. Shelter-in-place orders, mandatory business closings and social distancing have made the world feel like a science fiction novel.

Yet amid the social and economic upheaval caused by COVID-19, there remains good work to be done for our planet. Green Corps organizers are mobilizing people online across the country around some of the most critical issues facing humanity outside of the novel coronavirus, such as climate change. They're innovating new approaches, overcoming obstacles and building systems that will enhance environmental campaigns in the years to come.

If some good comes from this challenging time, it will manifest in a deeper appreciation for human connection, a renewed belief in collective action and a commitment to fast-moving ingenuity in the face of great challenges.

Thank you for making our work possible, in good times and bad. I hope you and your loved ones are finding the support you need in this moment, and that we all emerge on the other side stronger, healthier and more thankful for the stuff that matters.

Annie Sanders



Training the next generations of environmental organizers

Help train future generations of environmental organizers by including a gift to Green Corps in your will, trust or retirement accounts.

For information, call (800) 841-7299, or email plannedgiving@greencorps.org.



ALUMNI UPDATE

DANI NEUHARTH-KEUSCH, GC'13

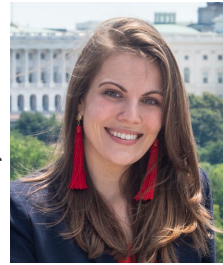


Photo courtesy of Dani

ORGANIZING EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

Dani Neuharth-Keusch from the Green Corps class of 2013 is a coaching specialist

with Organizing Empowerment Project (OEP), where she develops and delivers online trainings and provides one-on-one coaching support to organizations interested in doing relational organizing. Relational organizing—talking to people you know about the things that matter to you—is fundamentally about connecting with people where they are and moving them to take action, organizing principles that Dani learned during her Green Corps year.

Checking in on the people you care about is especially relevant in this moment in history, and right now, organizing people where they are means organizing online. Dani and her team are working to meet the needs of organizations across the country who have been forced out of their frames and campaign plans, and are seeking online resources and digital tactics that are accessible and impactful.

Dani's Green Corps year forged and strengthened her commitment to empowering grassroots organizations and movement leaders with the skills and resources to create change and build power to improve people's daily lives. It also taught her to always be recruiting, so if you or your organization is thinking about how to adapt your program to meet people where they are right now—whether that's alone in their apartments, in a house full of small children, or in their parents' basements—sign up to join OEP's Organizing from Home Academy at www.organizingempowerment.org.

FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZING



ALUMNI UPDATE

TOM MOOERS, GC'93

Courtesy of Tom Mooers



SIERRA WATCH

Tom Mooers graduated with the very first class of Green Corps organizers back in 1993. Since that sunny summer day in Boston nearly three decades ago, he's been applying what he learned in Green Corps to establish himself

in a leading role in land conservation in his native Northern California.

Tom currently serves as founding executive director of Sierra Watch, defending the integrity of great mountain places like Tahoe's Martis Valley, Donner Summit and Squaw Valley.

"Every day, I apply something I learned in Green Corps to the work we're doing now," said Tom. "Whether it's crafting a strategic plan, pitching a news story or asking for money, those skills provided the building blocks for a fulfilling career in conservation."

Under Tom's leadership, Sierra Watch has built an incredible track record of success turning development threats into conservation victories.

"Applying the basic, timeless strategies of grassroots organizing," said Tom, "we're able to prove that we can indeed work together to protect the places we love."

For more on Sierra Watch and Tom's ongoing work, visit www.sierrawatch.org and check out the cinematic version of Green Corps training at work in the world by streaming "The Movie to Keep Squaw True".



Courtesy of Tom Mooers

Tom Mooers of Sierra Watch speaks at a public hearing in Lake Tahoe.

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SUMMER REPORT 2020

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MEET THE GREEN CORPS CLASS OF 2020!



SAM PRESCOTT



Staff

Sam Prescott attended Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, where he received a B.A. in Government with a

minor in Data Analysis. During his time at Wesleyan, Sam worked as a coder for the Wesleyan Media Project, as a research assistant in the Government Department and as an intern in the Department of Stewardship. He was also the editor-in-chief of the Wesleyan Argus newspaper and played on the ultimate frisbee team. After graduating from college last spring, he spent the summer before Green Corps hiking and refereeing youth sports.



GWEN NAHNSEN



Staff

Gwen Nahnsen studied environmental studies and international studies at American University in Washington, D.C. During her

time at American, she worked as a FoodPrints Intern, where she partnered with elementary school teachers to provide environmental and nutritional education in the classroom, kitchen and garden. Gwen also worked as a special projects manager for the Business for Peace UN Global Compact. During her time with the Sustainable Energy and Environment department at the Friends Committee on National Legislation, she researched international and domestic environmental policy, drafted briefs and attended meetings with legislators.



JOSH SWIFT



Staff

Josh Swift graduated from the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, where he studied geography: environment and

health. Throughout his time at Western, Josh worked as a research analyst in the Leadership and Democracy Lab, where he conducted research into government reports and policy briefings, and specialized in the North American Free Trade Agreement Portfolio. He also worked at the Thames Region Ecological Association, designing and running a neighborhood pilot project to promote zero waste, which he presented at City Hall. The summer before joining Green Corps, Josh worked as the Head Instructor at the Western University Recreation Centre.