

# GREEN CORPS

SUMMER REPORT 2024

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## ORGANIZING IN ACTION

### ORGANIZING BUILDS SUPPORT FOR CLIMATE ACTION

The Climate Action Campaign is a coalition of organizations ranging from Sierra Club to Environment America to Environmental Defense Fund and the Student PIRGs. This year, the Student PIRGs hired Green Corps to expand the coalition's youth organizing efforts to build momentum for recent progress in federal clean energy policy.

Successful implementation of new federal policies, including the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, could reduce our country's global warming emissions by up to 40% below our 2005 emissions by 2030, a major milestone in tackling climate change. Under these policies, Americans can take advantage of related tax incentives and discounts to invest in clean energy, electrify their homes and improve energy efficiency. As a result, they can save money and save the environment at the same time.

But, most Americans are unaware of the credits and discounts they're eligible for and there have been proposals in Congress to cut funding for these clean energy programs. That's why Green Corps has been working to educate the public about these policies and build the political support needed to protect these programs.

For example, Belle Sherwood started her Green Corps year in Texas, where she quickly recruited local student leaders at the University of Texas at Austin to mobilize the Austin community on this issue and call upon members of Congress to support the full funding of federal clean energy programs. Belle's team helped hundreds of young people register to vote, delivered more than 500 petitions and photo petitions to Rep. Lloyd Doggett's office in Washington, D.C., and sent students to attend the first-ever EPA National Environmental Youth Advisory Council meeting.

Belle also organized students in Michigan and Nevada, first through digital outreach and then doing more intensive organizing work in person at four universities. She built visibility for this campaign through digital outreach and then flew to do more intensive work with volunteers at four additional universities. At the end of a week in Nevada, at a rally headlined by Vice President Kamala Harris, Belle was able to tell the vice president how deeply the young people volunteering on our campaign care about climate change.

It remains to be seen how successful the Inflation Reduction Act and other federal policies will be in promoting clean energy and curbing climate-changing emissions. But with organizing help from Green Corps, young volunteers across multiple states are educating the public and making the call for climate action heard in Washington.



Staff

Texas students continue to organize for climate action with TexPIRG in 2024.

## YOU MAKE GOOD ORGANIZING POSSIBLE



Staff

Dear friends,

As we approach the end of another program year, I continue to be amazed by what a small, committed team can accomplish. At Green Corps, we talk a lot about the way strategic

organizing can allow us to have an outsized impact.

Impact can be hard to measure. On the one hand, we evaluate the success of individual campaign tactics and the success of short-term campaigns in reducing specific examples of environmental degradation. As a training program, we also consider the impact our alumni have over the duration of their careers. However, we also take pride in the countless volunteers we train and inspire to get involved in environmental causes each year, often for the first time, as well as the thousands of Americans we educate on the issues. In short, it is difficult to measure the hearts and minds that are inspired through intentional organizing work made possible by your support. No matter how we measure it, it is a privilege to do this impactful work. Thank you.

Onward,

Renee Wellman  
Executive Director

## ALUMNI UPDATE

### EAST PETERSON-TRUJILLO, GC'18



Justin Knight

### PUBLIC CITIZEN

East graduated with the Green Corps Class of 2018. They currently work with Public Citizen as their senior clean vehicles campaigner. East

pushes automotive companies to transition to zero-emission vehicles and advocates for strong clean car standards. Recently, they organized press conferences, rallies and leafleting outside of five North American auto shows calling on Toyota to stop greenwashing and commit to a fossil fuel-free future. They also coordinate Public Citizen's media work and coalition engagement on this issue.

Prior to that role, East worked as Public Citizen's climate financial policy campaigner, calling on financial institutions and regulators to end financing of fossil fuel projects and collaborated with the Stop the Money Pipeline Coalition. East honed their advocacy and grassroots organizing skills as an assistant organizing director and recruitment director with Green Corps before joining Public Citizen.



## Training the next generations of environmental organizers

Support the training of 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](mailto:plannedgiving@greencorps.org).



East organized an event outside of the L.A. Auto Show.

# FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZING



## ALUMNI UPDATE

### MARGARET KRAN-ANNEXSTEIN, GC'14

### SIERRA CLUB



Courtesy of Margaret Kran-Annexstein

Margaret organized as part of the Green Corps Class of 2014. She continued to serve on Green Corps' central staff to hone her organizing and strategy skills as a lead organizer and assistant organizing director. She continued in roles with Mighty Earth as a campaign director protecting

fisheries and tropical forests in southeast Asia and with OxFam America as a senior campaign advisor on climate policy.

She now serves as the Colorado director of Sierra Club. Margaret manages state staff as well as volunteer leaders across the state. She coordinates their work across program areas including climate and energy; lands, air, water and wildlife; elections; and environmental justice. Specific initiatives include working to reduce ozone pollution on Colorado's Front Range and working to permanently protect the region around the Dolores River in southwest Colorado.



Courtesy of Margaret Kran-Annexstein

The Colorado Chapter of Sierra Club participated in a press conference calling for stronger regulations to reduce ozone pollution in February 2024.

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## SUMMER REPORT 2024

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## MEET THE GREEN CORPS CLASS OF 2024



### ASHTON MERBACH

Staff



Ashton grew up in Apopka, Florida, and graduated from Northwestern University with an environmental science degree. In college she was involved in a capella and engaged in scientific research, but wanted to have a more immediate impact on environmental issues. Ashton started her Green Corps year in Salem, Massachusetts, organizing students to protect Cashes Ledge and then moved to Wisconsin to organize on behalf of the “Save Money, Save the Environment” campaign to protect funding for federal clean energy programs and educate Wisconsinites about available clean energy, electrification and energy efficiency programs.



### HANNAH MCGRATH

Staff



Hannah is originally from New Hampshire and graduated from the Hobart and William Smith Colleges. There, Hannah played on the school’s field hockey team and researched the impacts of microplastics. Hannah spent the fall organizing in south New Jersey calling on municipalities to strengthen regulations to limit the use of bee-killing pesticides as well as advocating for a statewide 100% clean electricity bill with Environment New Jersey. This spring, Hannah is working with student volunteers in Atlanta, Georgia, on multiple efforts including the “Save Money, Save the Environment” campaign and stopping the development of a mine near the Okefenokee Swamp.