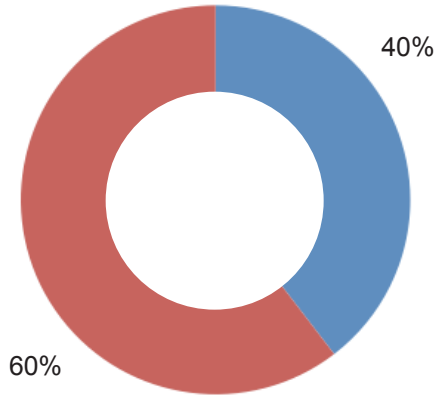


FINANCES

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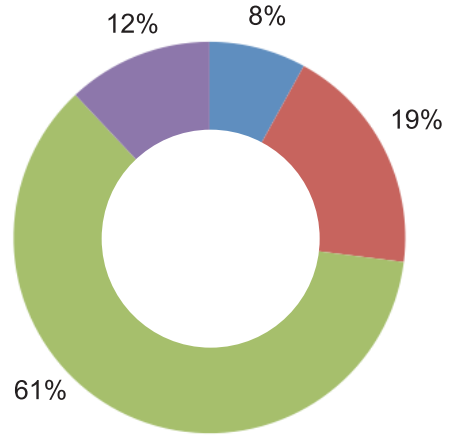
Income

Grassroots income	\$61,375.11
Grants	\$93,715.75
TOTAL	\$155,090.86



Expenses

Fundraising	\$17,104.77
Administration	\$38,286.92
Programs	\$121,380.71
Training & Planning	\$22,948.81
TOTAL	\$199,721.21



EDWARD A. RATH
COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING

95



CLEAN
AIR
COALITION

2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear Friend,

2011 was a remarkable year for the Clean Air Coalition of Western New York.

It was a year of explosive growth. The Coalition continued to develop leadership and demand emissions reductions in Tonawanda while expanding into several new, Western New York neighborhoods. We began organizing on Buffalo's lower west side to address the asthma crisis stemming from the diesel truck traffic coming over the Peace Bridge. And when several industrial facilities went up in flames we were there testing the air and organizing residents to ensure accountability in the aftermath.

In 2011 the Clean Air Coalition:

- Launched the E3 program in partnership with the EPA, DEC and the Town of Tonawanda that will provide pollution prevention audits to Tonawanda companies to reduce their emissions.
- Turned out over 100 residents to a presentation by the NYS DEC who reported that benzene levels in parts of the town have dropped by 86%.
- Graduated 15 leaders from our inaugural leadership development program, the Lois Gibbs Fellowship.
- Built a base of leaders on Buffalo's west side that did air testing at 5 locations around the Peace Bridge.
- Worked with the Buffalo Common Council to pass a resolution advocating for environmental justice to be integral to new Peace Bridge plans.

At a time when our environmental and public health agencies are at risk, the Coalition's skilled and committed membership is more important than ever. We need support from people like you to build a healthy society that is characterized by justice and equity.

In 2011 the Coalition made remarkable strides in combating pollution, fostering democratic participation and upholding public accountability for Western New York neighborhoods.

Together, let's make 2012 a year of continued campaign success and community building.



Erin Heaney
Executive Director

Special Thanks To:

Dr. Joseph Gardella
Dr. William Scheider
Clement and Karen Arrison
Lois Gibbs
Anne Rabe
Mike Schade
Erin Robinson
Steve Halpern
Betty Stanton
The University at Buffalo
School of Public Health
Tom Hersey
Ann Sciandra
Renata Pokrasky
Melissa Brinson
Ann Morelli
Catherine Schweitzer
Harvey Garret
Anthony Armstrong
Common Councilmember
Joseph Golombek
Goda Trakumaite
Squeaky Wheel
Vince Mistretta

Our Work In 2012 Was Supported By:

The Community Foundation
for Greater Buffalo

The Community Health
Foundation of Central and
Western New York

The Ben and Jerry's
Foundation

The Rupp Family
Foundation

The Baird Foundation

The New York State
Pollution Prevention Institute

The Environmental
Protection Agency

The Western New York
Service Learning Coalition

The Hahn Family
Foundation

A YEAR IN REVIEW.

We met with policymakers and demanded **CHANGE**

- Members from Tonawanda met with the NYS Department of Conservation Commissioner Joe Martens in Albany to share their stories and demand enforcement action and better permits for polluters. (1)
- Members also met with their state representatives to request stronger action to reduce emissions. (2)
- We held a summit with the NYS DEC, EPA, NYS Pollution Prevention Institute and 6 other agencies to develop a comprehensive plan to tackle air pollution in Tonawanda. Members made an impressive presentation on the ongoing challenges in the community and participated in negotiations.
- West Side members met with all nine members of the Common Council to educate them about the links between diesel, asthma and other chronic health issues. (3)



IMPROVED media coverage of environmental health and justice issues

- Our campaign against Tonawanda Coke was featured as part of the National Public Radio investigation *Poisoned Places: Toxic Air, Neglected Communities*. The Coalition's work was featured as the example of successful community organizing to reduce emissions and hold polluters accountable. Elizabeth Shogrun wrote: The "...larger lesson from the experience in Tonawanda: Communities get cleaner air when they dig in their heels and demand it." All Things Considered is the most listened to afternoon radio show in the entire country. (4)
- Our Executive Director, Erin was featured on the *Huffington Post* as the "Greatest Person of the Day."
- We kept the industrial chemicals fires a top news item throughout the summer. Our members and organizers worked with reporters to generate over 20 articles and opinion pieces about emergency response in Erie County.

Our campaigns won **REAL CHANGE**

- In Tonawanda, we continued to see results from our vigilance at Tonawanda Coke. The NYS DEC reported that benzene levels closest to the plant have been **REDUCED BY 86%**.
- In response to visits from CAC members, the EPA, DEC and Clean Air Coalition launched a partnership to address air pollution in the town of Tonawanda. Partners launched the E3 program that will offer energy and pollution audits

“ Thank you for giving me the confidence to fight for what I think is right.”

to companies that will identify opportunities to reduce emissions. The audits will identify opportunities for companies to reduce their emissions and match them with the financing necessary to make the suggestions a reality. (5)

- In the aftermath of the industrial fire at Niagara Lubricants we knocked on hundreds of doors and organized several community meetings. Residents planned an accountability session attended by EPA, DEC, OSHA, and the City of Buffalo. Residents gained commitments from all agencies to agree to work with the community to develop an emergency response plan that **WORKS FOR REAL PEOPLE** and prioritizes public health.

- Residents in Blackrock also planned a rally at the Erie County Department of Health after the department repeatedly stonewalled the community's request for a meeting. The rally resulted in the Department of Health committing to work on the improved emergency response plan. (6)
In response to meetings with Clean Air Coalition members, The Buffalo Common Council passed a resolution in support for the *Reduction of Air Pollution on Buffalo's West Side*. The resolution promotes a Peace Bridge Plaza plan that **PRIORITIZES PUBLIC HEALTH.**





Developed GRASSROOTS leaders

- We hosted several events for our membership to learn about policies that have worked in other communities. We hosted Wilma Subra and Eboni Cochrane from Louisville, Kentucky to talk about the STAR program to reduce air pollution in their neighborhood. In December, we hosted a workshop on Pollution Prevention.
- We established a team of Tonawanda leaders who are working together to review upcoming air permit renewals in the town.
- We launched the Lois Gibbs Fellowship that trained 15 leaders in the activist skills necessary to advocate for change. Fellows received training in media, lobbying, campaign research and base-building. (7)
- We knocked on over 750 doors in Tonawanda, the West Side and Blackrock to recruit new members.
- Two West Side leaders, Eva and Julian attended the EPA's environmental justice conference in Detroit, Michigan to learn more about the EPA and from other activist organizations. (8)



“ At our meeting...
I felt proud to be
a Buffalonian.”



Using the Arts as a tool for **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Art has been used throughout history as a means of resisting and critiquing circumstances affecting communities.

This year the Coalition worked with west side residents to produce a photography exhibition that highlighted the community's assets and challenges. The photographs were taken by residents and sparked engaging conversations among the participants about the issues they wanted to organize around. The exhibition was used as a tool to educate policymakers about the need to reduce the number of trucks and diesel exhaust in the neighborhood.

In partnership with filmmaker Vince Mistretta, the Coalition developed a short documentary *You Are Where You Live*. The film featured members Renata Pokrasky, Ann Sciandra and Rosa Caraballo and their fight to improve their community's health. The film was premiered at the Birchfield Penny Art Center. Thanks to Squeaky Wheel for choosing the Coalition to participate in their Channel's program!



We did our **OWN** research

The Coalition worked hard to develop the information and evidence base necessary to support effective advocacy on behalf of our membership. The Coalition believes that research, community education, and community building are intertwined and promote the objectives of increasing the community's trust, increasing community engagement in environmental issues that affect it, and developing the "critical consciousness" necessary for community members to act in their own interest and organize for change. We accomplished this in 2012 by:

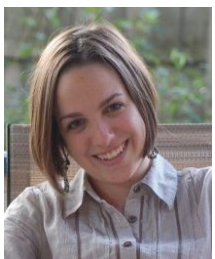
Air testing in **FIVE** neighborhoods

- Residents who live next to large dirty diesel school bus lots on Camden Avenue in north buffalo and Federal Avenue on Buffalo's east side took air samples. The testing results showed elevated levels of benzene, toluene, and styrene.
- West side residents tested at 5 locations in their neighborhood. The results showed elevated levels of
- We tested the air during two industrial chemical fires. The sample taken during the fire at Niagara Lubricants in Blackrock showed that benzene levels during the fire were 100 times EPA's short-term exposure limit.

GREW our organization and invested in our staff

- We went from a staff of 1 to a staff of 4. Welcome to Rebecca, Danielle, and Natasha!
- We launched our strategic planning process. Our board, staff and members spent a weekend dreaming big and developing a plan to grow and strengthen the organization.
- We sent Erin to the Institute for Conservation Leadership's Executive Director Training Program where strengthened her leadership skills through two week-long trainings and ongoing mentoring calls.
- Natasha participated in the Green for All Fellowship, a national program based in Oakland, California that identifies and cultivates local leaders from communities of color and low-income communities across the nation, helping them develop and apply their skills and resources to organize for change in their cities.
- Sent our staff to the EPA's CARE training program in Denver, Colorado and the EPA's Environmental Justice conference in Detroit.

Meet the Coalition Staff



Erin Heaney
Executive Director

Favorite moment of 2011: Listening to our staff, members and board talk about what motivates them to do this work at our strategic planning retreat.



Natasha Soto
Community Organizer

Favorite moment of 2011: Seeing our member's faces after the Common Council passed a resolution to reduce air pollution and advance environmental justice. We worked together for months on their testimonials and seeing their faces was incredible.



Rebecca Newberry
Program Coordinator

Favorite moment of 2011: The first meeting between residents from north buffalo and the east side. We brought residents who



Danielle Freeland
Community Organizer

Favorite moment of 2011: Watching our members Karen and Kathie speak at the rally outside the Department of Health.

both live next to huge dirty diesel school bus lots to review the results from the resident led air testing. Until that moment, both neighborhoods had been fighting alone - so it was a powerful moment to see them come together.