



ORGANIZING for
HEALTH and JUSTICE

52 Linwood Ave.
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cacwny.org

Clean Air Connection

SEPTEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

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WNY



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Lessons learned from Montana

Clean Air was thrilled to welcome Kate French from the Western Organization of Resource Councils, a seven-state network of grassroots, community-based organizations in the West.

Kate is the author of three reports on the economic potential of the coal cleanup economy in partnership with the Montana Department of Labor, and IBEW Local 1638 of Colstrip, Montana. Colstrip, which recently announced its retirement, is currently the home of one of the largest coal power plants in the West.

Kate held a workshop for members working on Clean Air's remediation campaigns, and learned that the research shows that good cleanups — those that excavate and remove hazardous materials — create twice the jobs than less thorough cleanups, such as capping. We look forward to using this research with decision makers locally!



Sydney Brown speaks at American Society for Engineering

In June, Clean Air Board Secretary Sydney Brown was a keynote speaker at the American Society for Engineering Education. Her panel, "Community Engagement Ethics: First Steps in a Conversation with Af-

ected Communities," focused on the engineering profession's general inattention to community voices, how engineers approach community engagement, and the severe and negative impacts these approaches can have.

Sydney joined community leaders from Flint, Michigan, Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Tampa, Florida, who highlighted their on-the-ground experiences with engineers and shared their insights into the types of community engagement that work for communities.

2019 ASEE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
KEYNOTE speaker
SYDNEY BROWN
 Clean Air Coalition of Western New York
 WED. JUNE 19, 2019 9:45 AM - 11:15 AM
 Room 19 Tampa Convention Center
 ASEE For more info visit: www.asee.org/icp

Clean Air represents at Climate Action Network annual meeting

Have you seen our Annual Report?



30th Anniversary USCAN 2019

MIDWEST SOUND
DJ ENTERTAINMENT

Clean Air staff members Shontae' and Julia traveled to Minneapolis for US Climate Action Network's Annual Meeting to share Clean Air's work and learn from incredible climate and environmental justice organizers from across the country. Shontae will be working closely with USCAN partners from across the country to build grassroots power to fuel our work for the long term.

Clean Air's 2018 Annual Report is available online. You can check it out at: <https://www.cacwny.org/about/2018-annual-report/>. Here's what Clean Air Board Co-Chairs Jennifer Carman and Emily Terrana wrote in their opening:

"In 2018, we faced great uncertainty.

With the current administration crippling environmental regulations and corporate accountability, we knew that our work would be harder than ever.

Despite these challenges, we kept organizing. We are grateful to share with you the results of our demonstrated power in our 2018 Annual Report. Our organizing won Buffalo's first-ever Budget Proposal Day; helped ensure a stronger economy in Tonawanda through a coal power plant transition; secured a state commitment to clean up toxic pollutants in the Delavan Grider community; supported Tesla workers and local labor to organize for job security as well as public subsidies that meet the real needs of our community; and held the owners of companies like Tonawanda Coke and Battaglia Demolition accountable for their disregard for public health and the environment.

Throughout this report, we will feature the work of our dedicated campaign teams. Teams matter at Clean Air. That's because we build our skills and power through group learning. Organizing is the heart of Clean Air's work, but just as central is how we build our capacity to organize and lead. We believe that leaders invest time to build relationships, handle conflicts in a constructive manner, and share control. Teams matter because collective action is how we can move decision-makers and control the decisions that impact our lives.

We know that the world we want to see can only happen if we continue to organize, if we continue to build power, and if we continue to shift our culture to one of equity and justice."

*Thank you to our
community partners!*



*Mercy United
CWA Local 1133*

*Communications Workers of America Local 1133 • AFL-CIO
821 Elk Street • Suite A • Buffalo, New York 14210
(716) 828-1133 • Fax (716) 828-1158*



Campaign Updates

(Want to get involved? Call 852-3813 or email info@cacwny.org)

Communities call on DEC to refer Tonawanda Coke to federal Superfund Program

For decades, Tonawanda Coke caused tremendous quality of life issues in the community, including air and water pollution, workers' safety and health issues, employee fatalities, and now a legacy of contamination.

Tonawanda Coke purchased the site from Honeywell, formerly Allied Chemical, in the late 70s. Honeywell is now responsible for remediation of this site.

The Federal Superfund Program is a robust enforcement program designed to remediate large, extremely toxic sites. Under this designation, the Environmental Protection Agency has the legal authority to begin remediation and pay for the cleanup by recovering costs through the responsibly party, in this case Honeywell.

Conflict arose when Honeywell hired e3communications earlier this year for \$3,750 per month and began lobbying commu-

nity members, environmental organizations, and elected officials to push for the Brownfield clean up designation for the site.

The Brownfield program is a tax credit program for developers, and would leave taxpayers on the hook for the remediation, not Honeywell, a fortune 500 company.

We think this is wrong and polluters should pay for their mess. The Federal Superfund Program will make Honeywell pay for this clean up, but we need New York State to refer it, and right now they are refusing.

If you think Tonawanda Coke should be referred to the Federal Superfund program, call New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos at 518-402-8545 and tell him to refer this site to the Superfund program.

DEC begins remediation on part of former American Axle site

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has begun remediation on a portion of the former American Axle site in the Delavan Grider community in Buffalo.

The site at 1001 East Delavan Ave. is one of almost 400 contaminated sites in New York State that contain PCBs. PCBs are a group of chemicals called polychlorinated biphenyls. PCBs were used widely in electrical equipment like capacitors and transformers, and were banned by the federal government in 1979 due to the connections to cancer, liver damage and nerve problems.

In addition to the legacy waste, the site is home to several new industrial manufacturers.

Residents joined with Clean Air in 2015 to escalate pressure to expedite remediation. The American Axle Steering Committee had numerous meetings with the property owner and local and state officials over the course of three years. Last fall, their work paid off and the NYDEC announced that remediation on a 5 acre portion of the site will be initiated through a Superfund enforcement action.

A Pump and Treat System was constructed and began to remediate contaminated groundwater in late April. This system focuses on 5 acres of the 40 acre site.

If you live in the area and want to learn more about the pump and treat system, contact the NYSDEC at 716-851-7000 and ask for Chad Staniszewski, Project Manager.

Upcoming leadership trainings: Finance training Sept. 17

Are you a member of Clean Air who wants to learn how your membership dues are spent? Are you on a nonprofit board and find that only one person asks all of the finance questions...you have no idea what they are asking, and their term expires in 4 months? Do you love good snacks and the team at Clean Air and want to play a few games about nonprofit finance?

Then this training is for you! Join us on Tuesday, September 17 from 5:30-7 p.m. at 394 Franklin St., Buffalo, NY 14202. This training is open to current Clean Air members, donors, board members, organizational partners and staff.

Refreshments will be provided. Childcare is available if requested by September 1st. Questions or to RSVP, contact Rebecca@cacwny.org or call 716-852-3813.

Clean Air

52 Linwood Ave.

Return Service Requested



Become a sustaining member of Clean Air today!

Clean Air works to build the power of everyday people to make our communities healthier, safer, and more equitable places to live. **Becoming a monthly sustainer helps us continue to hold corporations and agencies accountable to putting our health and environment first.** Choose to give \$5, 10, or \$20 per month! For more information, call Julia at (716) 852-3813, or *send your support directly* to:
Clean Air, 52 Linwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14209.

¿No eres miembro? ¡Inscríbese hoy mismo! Clean Air trabaja para desarrollar el poder de la gente para que nuestras comunidades sean más sanas, y lugares más seguros para vivir. Envíe su apoyo de \$ 10, \$ 20 o \$ 50 a:

Clean Air, 52 Linwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14209