

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



CLEAN AIR COALITION OF WESTERN NEW YORK

MISSION

CLEAN AIR builds power by developing grassroots leaders who organize their communities to run and win environmental justice and public health campaigns in Western New York

VISION

A WORLD where our environment promotes health and equity and where systems place communities at the forefront of decision making

VALUES

Leadership Development • Environmental Justice • Democratic Decision-making
Resident Knowledge • Race & Class Equity & Inclusion • Appreciation, Recognition and Celebration

Dear Friends of Clean Air,

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. Team 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.

With Hope & Justice,
JENNIFER CARMAN & EMILY TERRANA
CO-CHAIRS, CLEAN AIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

VISION & VALUES WHERE WE ARE GOING

SINCE CLEAN AIR WAS ESTABLISHED IN 2007, the organization, our membership, our region, our nation, and our environment have undergone significant changes. To reflect these changes, we are constantly challenging ourselves to adapt and shift to ensure our organizing strategy as well as our day-to-day actions are both meeting the needs of our people and effective tactics for winning justice.

OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS, communities demand and deserve a vision and strategy that...

...organizes from the belief that our struggles are bound together... and that they are effective, impactful, and also build power and political will.

THROUGH AN 18-MONTH PLANNING process facilitated by Anthony Armstrong of Make Communities, 60 members, staff, board members, and organizational partners, and facilitated by Anthony Armstrong of Make Communities, we are proud to announce our 2018-2023 strategic plan and revised theory of change.

“WE ARE all connected by irresponsible corporations, state agencies that have no power, and a court that is slow and shuts us out of the process.”

— DIANE LEMANSKI, CLEAN AIR MEMBER

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT are key mechanisms for how we transform our individual resources into the collective power we need to win. Prioritizing and building the leadership of working class people and People of Color are central to us to develop the political will to challenge and change unjust institutions.

IN 2018, we engaged over 75 people in fun, hands-on workshops and trainings that focused on developing tools to engage base-building, media strategy, political and economic analyses, advocacy tactics, grassroots fundraising, and local campaigns.

RESILIENCE THROUGH THE LENS: WE COLLABORATED with CEPA Gallery to hold an eight-week social justice and photography course focused on technical photography skills, social movement history and local inequality.

WHEN I received the application for Resilience Through the Lens, I knew I had to apply. For too long I've watched people in my community struggle under the weight of environmental, economic and social injustices. Change starts with the people, and by bringing attention to the obstacles we have in our face, we will be able to make that change.

I can no longer stand and watch those I love be hurt by these injustices.” — BETTY FAERY, CLEAN AIR MEMBER

RUNAWAY INEQUALITY TRAINING: WE COLLABORATED with the Communications Workers of America to build a shared analysis around the expanding power of corporate America; how that power has harmed working-families resulting in greater economic and racial inequality; and what we can do to upend the power grab.

THE GRASSROOTS INSTITUTE FOR FUNDRAISING TRAINING (G.I.F.T.) MONEY FOR OUR MOVEMENTS CONFERENCE: WE SENT a group of members to Atlanta to learn development practices to fund our organizing and build sustainable resources to increase the speed of our work.

ONE of the most pertinent and surprising things I took away from the conference had to do with the attitude of the fundraiser. Fear is one of the great killers of raising money. If we have too much trepidation in asking, we will not be successful.

If we assume that people won't give, that's lost money.” — GARY SCHULENBERG, CLEAN AIR MEMBER

SHARED SOLAR & ENERGY DEMOCRACY: WE CO-CREATED a training with the Energy Democracy Alliance to broaden our understanding of solar energy, models of solar ownership, and mechanisms to advance renewables.

CITY OF BUFFALO BUDGET WORKSHOPS: WE HOSTED workshops for residents to learn more about the City of Buffalo's \$500 Million annual budget, budget priorities, and who makes decisions on how the money is spent.

MISSION VISION VALUES

THE TEAM
Gris Glover
Mary Blue
Doris Ford
Nick Reed
Sydney Brown

THE STRENGTH OF CLEAN AIR lies in our ability to leverage our power and effect change. The following is a closer look at our organizing work in 2018—why and how Clean Air's campaigns were established and what we have collaboratively fought for and won to make our communities stronger, healthier, and more equitable.

CLEAN AIR IN ACTION

Site contains hazardous oil, grease, and PCBs.

CONTAINS 44 GALLONS OF PCBs

“People in this area plant and grow gardens in the soil, we want to know if the soil could be detrimental to our health.”

— MARY BLUE, AMERICAN AXLE STEERING MEMBER

American Axle

THE CAMPAIGN
THE AMERICAN AXLE SITE LOCATED IN BUFFALO'S east Side Delavan Grider community is ground zero for contamination. The site at 1001 East Delavan Ave. is among almost 400 contaminated sites in New York State that contain PCBs. PCBs reference a group of chemicals called polychlorinated biphenyls. PCBs were banned in 1979 due to the connections to cancer, liver damage and nerve problems.

IN 2017, WE WON THE RELEASE OF \$2.8 million from the NYS Superfund Program to fund remediation on a portion of the site. Advocating for an expeditious process, we met numerous THE VICTORY

In 1991, GM reported a spill to the DEC that led to the discovery of PCBs at oil beneath one of its manufacturing buildings. Three years later, GM found that PCBs had leaked into a brick sewer line beneath the facility causing the chemicals to overflow into the Scogajada Creek during periods of heavy rains. According to state documents, up to 110,000 gallons of legacy waste exists beneath the site. GM sold the site to American Axle in 1994, who manufactured automobile parts before declaring bankruptcy in 2009. Developer Jon Williams and East Delavan Properties purchased the contaminated property in 2008, beginning a tug-of-war with state officials about who was responsible for site remediation.

partners conducted bi-weekly meetings with agency staff; and we held two events with local press. In the summer of 2018, the bold and uncompromising work of the Steering Committee came to fruition. By the fall of 2018, our work paid off and the DEC announced that remediation on a 5 acre portion of the site would be initiated through an enforcement action. The DEC committed to construct a pump and treat system to remove the contamination leaking into the sewer. This pump and treat system is set to start in the Spring of 2019.

In 2015, Clean Air joined the resident-based American Axle Steering Committee to organize to stop the toxic runoff and remediate the legacy waste.

In August, the Steering Committee held a community celebration to recognize the incredible progress and offer residents the opportunity to learn more about the DEC's remediation effort is complete as well as organize for the full remediation of the rest of the 40 acre site.

DEC's remediation efforts. Members will continue to ensure the DEC's remediation effort is complete as well as organize for the full remediation of the rest of the 40 acre site.

MISSION VISION VALUES

THE TEAM
Emily Terrana
Maria Tabby
Gary Schulerberg
Sue Kelley
Nick Reed
Lindsay Amico

Guilty of violating 11 criminal acts of the Clean Air Act.

“I didn't think this was going to come, we were preparing to do something totally different. But in a little bit of luck we were fighting for air in breathe on playgrounds during asthma attacks and during the time they were spraying the herbicides that we passed away from cancer and lost their babies.”

— ERIC TONAWANDA, CLEAN AIR BOARD MEMBER AND TONAWANDA COKE CAMPAIGN MEMBER

Battaglia

THE CAMPAIGN
RESIDENTS LIVING ON PEABODY STREET in Buffalo's Seneca Babcock neighborhood have organized for more than a decade to hold Battaglia Demolition, a waste transfer site that was illegally operating a concrete crusher, accountable. For over 10 years, the facility's operations caused nuisance, odor and noise. Strong vibrations shook the neighborhood in silica dust, a pollutant known to cause respiratory illnesses such as asthma, lung disease and lung cancer. Through tenacious organizing by the Seneca Babcock team, NYS Assistant Attorney General Jane Cameron filed a lawsuit against the company in 2016. New York State's petition includes a vast file of complaint history demonstrating Battaglia's impact on the neighborhood. Thirty resident's affidavits were included in this petition in addition to dozens of community petitions, complaints, pictures, and journals documenting the hundreds of trucks coming in and out of the facility at all hours of the day and night.

THE TEAM
Diane Lemanski
Della Miller
Jackie Wagner
Norm Weaver
Nick Reed
Sue Kelley

“The shutdown of Battaglia is a great victory, but we still have a long way to go to clean up the site.”

— DIANE LEMANSKI, BATTAGLIA CAMPAIGN MEMBER

IN APRIL 2018, AFTER YEARS OF DOCUMENTING violations, protesting, picketing, writing letters, making phone calls, knocking on doors, holding press conferences, and holding public officials accountable, Seneca Babcock residents scored a major victory. Erie County Supreme Court Justice Deborah A. Chimes ordered an injunction on the Battaglia Demolition facility, forcing the facility to halt all operations. Additionally, the court held owner Peter Battaglia personally liable for damages caused to the surrounding community. Fines may total in excess of \$8 million.

“A waste transfer site illegally operated a concrete crusher.”

Even though the company has suspended operations, the site still remains full of concrete, dust and debris. In 2019, Seneca-Babcock team expects a penalty hearing, where they plan to demand justice through a court order. The vision of members is for a remedy that restores control of the site in the community's hands. Members hope to pressure the site to natural use and restrict any further industrial or commercial activity behind their homes. Justice means that residents can be confident that their community and environment are safe and healthy without class inequity. Justice means that damage is acknowledged and remedies are put in place to right these wrongs. Justice means relief is granted to families who have suffered; including restoring the industrial site to natural use.

“They didn't invite us to their table, so we set our own.”

— MARIA TERRY, HUNTLEY JUST TRANSITION MEMBER

MISSION VISION VALUES

THE TEAM
Tessa workers
United Steelworkers
Elect Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Coalition for Economic Justice

We teamed up to organize for job security and collective bargaining.

“Well-paying, family sustaining jobs and environmental protection are the only way to ensure a better future for our children. In Buffalo, we have been at the forefront of the fight for jobs that need to continue to be the model of how this state works.”

— DAVE WADSWORTH, UNITED STEELWORKERS

Tonawanda Coke

THE CAMPAIGN
IN MAY 2018, AFTER CLEAN AIR WAS CONFIDENTIALLY notified that a waste heat tunnel at Tonawanda Coke collapsed, we publicly called on the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to examine potential toxic emissions being released into the surrounding community. One of the main chemicals of concern was benzene, a known human carcinogen. Clean Air members documented black smoke coming from the facility and submitted hundreds of complaints to the DEC, drawing further attention to the gravity of the situation. Members also held four community meetings, submitted numerous petitions for a full investigation into the tunnel collapse, and called on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Justice to take enforcement action.

THE TEAM
Diana Stablow
Andy Leath
Ron S.
Maria Terry
Gary Schulerberg

“100-year-old NRG Energy coal burning power plant was retired.”

As a result of the shutdown, benzene that posed a 75 in 1 million lifetime cancer risk in neighborhoods in the Town and City of Tonawanda in 2008 dropped to 7 in 1 million. But there's more work to be done. Concerns on the site include chemical moats and coal tar consisting of benzene as well as toluene and xylene. Clean Air will continue to hold Tonawanda Coke accountable and call on the DEC to refer the site to the U.S. Superfund Program to initiate remediation.

“They didn't invite us to their table, so we set our own.”

— MARIA TERRY, HUNTLEY JUST TRANSITION MEMBER

MISSION VISION VALUES

THE TEAM
Jennifer Carman
Bill Wachob
Della Miller
Natasha Soto
Sydney Brown
Frank Gage

Residents decide how to spend a portion of the city's budget.

“Participatory budgeting can be the eyes and the ears of what's going on in the community.”

— DELLA MILLER, PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING CAMPAIGN MEMBER

Huntley Coal Plant

THE CAMPAIGN
IN 2016, THE 100-YEAR-OLD NRG ENERGY Huntley coal burning power plant in Tonawanda, Erie County's largest polluter, was retired. Two years before that, Clean Air began leading a broad coalition to organize for a Just Transition of the facility in a way that provides family sustaining jobs and consistent tax revenue, while improving the environment and public health. Clean Air successfully secured the first state transition fund for energy plant retirements. In addition, we collaborated with labor partners to create the Town of Tonawanda's economic transition plan, called Tonawanda Tomorrow, to provide a pathway for the town to recoup lost revenue and improve water-treatment. The plan was shaped by the voices of nearly 1,000 Tonawanda residents, business owners and community stakeholders.

OUR PROGRESS
In March 2018, more than 200 residents packed the Common Council Chambers to voice their opinions on how the city should spend the \$500 million budget.

IN 2018, CLEAN AIR TOOK A LEADING role on the Implementation Team putting the plan into action. A key aspect of the plan is ensuring the soil on the Huntley site is tested to determine adequately toxicity levels. This is the first step to determining how the site can be remediated and repurposed.

“Participatory budgeting can be the eyes and the ears of what's going on in the community.”

In March 2018, NRG Energy placed the facility up for sale. The Campaign Team recognized this as an opportunity to advocate for the remediation and redevelopment of the site in a way that would meet real community needs. Tonawanda members staged a sit-in at the facility and held a press conference in City Hall before the hearing. In March 2018, more than 200 residents packed the Common Council Chambers to voice their opinions on how the city should spend the \$500 million budget.

“Participatory budgeting can be the eyes and the ears of what's going on in the community.”

Hundreds of residents requested that a portion of the budget include: (1.) 1% or \$5 million for participatory budgeting, (2.) Increased funding for education, and (3.) A stop to the limitless increases to the Buffalo Police Department budget. We are frustrated and angry to share that the 2018-2019 budget released in mid-May 2018 did not meet any of these demands. Furthermore, the Buffalo Common Council shut the door on transparency by refusing to allow residents to ask questions during the city's budget workshops.

“Participatory budgeting can be the eyes and the ears of what's going on in the community.”

MISSION VISION VALUES

THE TEAM
Gary Schulerberg
Maria Tabby
Sue Kelley
Rose Sackler
Andie Moyes

We develop grassroots leaders who organize their communities to win environmental justice

“Grassroots fundraising is based in relationships. That's why I take the time to call all of our members and connect with people to make our movement for change stronger.”

— SUE KELLEY, MEMBERSHIP TEAM CAMPAIGN MEMBER

Participatory Budgeting

FOR THE CITY OF BUFFALO'S 2018 budget, the campaign team advocated for resident input before the budget's adoption—a demand that seemed sensible, yet had never actually occurred during a budget process. When the city announced it would hold its first-ever budget proposal day, Clean Air members and partners capitalized on the opportunity through extensive outreach to the community and held a press conference in City Hall before the hearing. In March 2018, more than 200 residents packed the Common Council Chambers to voice their opinions on how the city should spend the \$500 million budget.

OUR PROGRESS
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“Participatory budgeting can be the eyes and the ears of what's going on in the community.”

MISSION VISION VALUES

THE TEAM
Diana Stablow
Andy Leath
Ron S.
Maria Terry
Gary Schulerberg

“Grocery and gas gift cards to support them through the unexpected crisis.”

At Clean Air, we're imagining a world where public money translates to real opportunities for poor and working class folks and communities of color. We're imagining a world where public money benefits our friends and neighbors, not billionaires. The workers organizing at Tesla are on the front lines of making this happen.

Membership & Grassroots Fundraising

ESTABLISHED IN 2018, THE MEMBERSHIP Team is organizing to develop resources that align with Clean Air's mission, vision and values. Clean Air bases our organizing in neighborhoods, addressing tangible, on-the-ground conditions that impact people's lives. Even though many of our members are not wealthy, member giving matters. Member giving ensures that the communities we work with are in control of the organizations and the campaigns we choose, run and win. The Membership Team is committed to continuing to develop a resource base that is secure, diversified, reflective of our constituency, and supports our work to build grassroots power. This work has been critical to upholding Clean Air's independence as well as its strong base of invested members.

OUR PROGRESS
ESTABLISHED an Ambassador Committee that activated Clean Air members and supporters through personal storytelling.

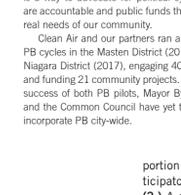
• FUNDRAISING for Clean Air's end of the year 40K for Justice in 40 Days campaign. The fundraising team joined a group of 20 members and supporters that set personal fundraising and new member goals. In all, the campaign raised \$59,620, nearly \$20,000 over our goal!

OUR PROGRESS
ESTABLISHED an Ambassador Committee that activated Clean Air members and supporters through personal storytelling.

• THE MEMBERSHIP TEAM is creating Clean Air's first-ever membership handbook. The handbook will be created by and for members.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM



- Memberships and Donations
- Foundations
- Government
- Nonprofit Organization Grants
- Special Events

MONEY DOES NOT AFFECT OUR strategy, but it does impact the speed of our work. Clean Air will continue to develop a resource base that is secure, diversified, and reflective of our base. In 2018, our work was supported by over 500 members, donors, and foundations. We also want to thank Erie County Legislator Kevin Hardwick and his team for their support.

WHERE OUR MONEY IS SPENT*



- Leadership Development
- Fiscal Sponsored Project: Black Love Resists in the Rust
- Fundraising
- Campaigns
- Administration

IN ADDITION TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND DONORS, Clean Air's work in Fiscal Year 2018 was supported by the following foundations and organizations:

- THE BAIRD FOUNDATION
- CHURCH OF THE NEWLY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
- COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA
- CENTER FOR HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND JUSTICE
- GRASSROOTS EXCHANGE FUND
- COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR GREATER BUFFALO
- JOHN F. OISHE FOUNDATION
- METTS GILMORE FOUNDATION
- WESTERN NEW YORK AREA LABOR FEDERATION, AFL-CIO
- WESTERN NEW YORK FOUNDATION
- JUST TRANSITION FUND
- US CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK
- AN ANONYMOUS DONOR ADVISED FUND AT NORTH STAR FUND

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LINDSAY AMICO • SYDNEY BROWN • YVONNE T. DUBOIS • DAVID HILLANDRE MAYES • NICK REED
THOMAS ROULLEY • EMILY TERRANA/JENNIFER WRABEL • JENNIFER YUHNKE • CATHERINE ZWEIG

“THIS WORK IS HARD, grueling at times, and pushes us physically and emotionally. All of you have taken on your governance role seriously and made space for creativity and care.”

DAVE HILL

2017-2018 MARKED DAVE'S SIXTH and last year on Clean Air's board. His term included serving as President for the final two years.

2018 STAFF
REBECCA NEWBERRY • JULIA WHITE
BRIAN BORNCAMP • LINNEA BRETT

2018 INTERNS
ELIZABETH RENNER
GRACE ZABIELSKI

IN MEMORY OF FRANK GAGE
FRANK GAGE WAS A DEDICATED MEMBER SINCE 2013. Frank was deeply committed to justice and willing to do the work to get there: knock on doors of people he didn't know, have hundreds of conversations with members over the phone, demand that decision makers do the right things, and dedicate his own time and resources because he believed in a better world.

FRANK, WE REALLY MISS YOU.

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