




# CLEAN AIR COALITION OF WESTERN NEW YORK 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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*This year's annual report is dedicated to all of those we lost in 2020. We will continue to tell your stories, keep you in our hearts, and keep building a movement for a kinder and more just world.*

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# 2020 GROUNDING

**2020 was hard to endure** and almost as hard to describe: we heard the word *unprecedented* so much between May and December, it seemed to lose any meaning. We call this *semantic sanitation*: when you hear a word too many times in a row, it loses its power, gets reduced to just a collection of syllables that don't seem to add up to anything.

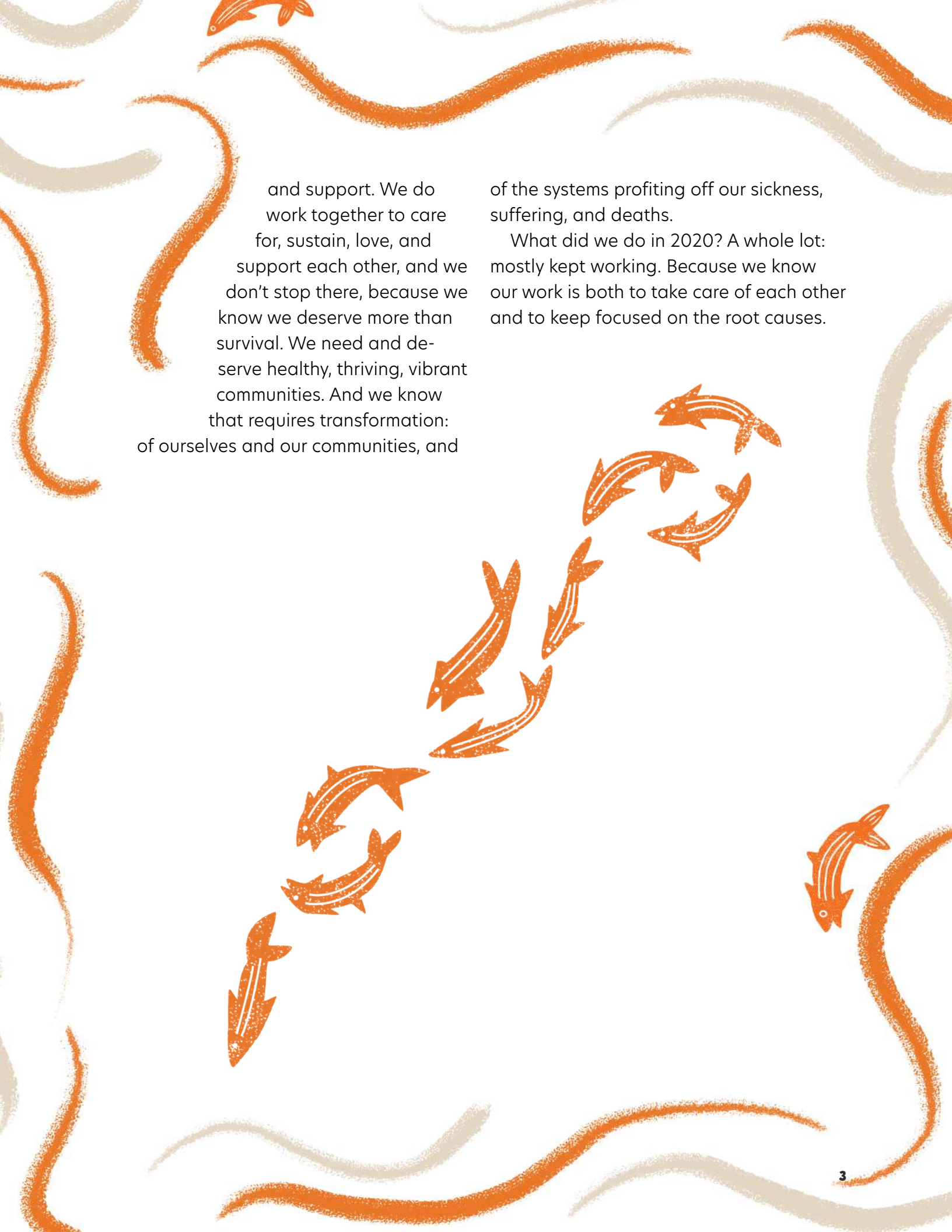
The pandemic took more from us and our communities than we were able to make sense of, losing the routines and rituals of our lives, from the mundane to the holy. We've missed a year of graduations, birthdays, weddings, holidays, births, and deaths. The ways we fill our lives with meaning were paused, and it was both tragic and disorienting: is today Tuesday or Wednesday? What is Tuesday, anyway?

The crises that shaped our lives in 2020 have been shaping our lives

and communities for generations. They weren't created by the pandemic, but they were strengthened by the pandemic, with our for-profit healthcare system, structural racism, structural poverty, ableism, and the cruelties of capitalism made visible in new ways, even to many of us who have been impacted by them for many years. The things we are fighting have always been killing us. COVID built on the systems of death and exploitation we've been fighting to dismantle for years.

When news broke that people living with higher rates of air pollution faced higher risks of illness and death from COVID, we were furious, but not surprised: we've been in this work for more than a decade, and we know why environmental justice is urgent. When the federal government suspended enforcement of air pollution regulations, we were angrier still, and did what we do best: we got to work.

We know our best shot at survival is in strong relationships with each other, anchored in deep love, community care,



and support. We do work together to care for, sustain, love, and support each other, and we don't stop there, because we know we deserve more than survival. We need and deserve healthy, thriving, vibrant communities. And we know that requires transformation: of ourselves and our communities, and

of the systems profiting off our sickness, suffering, and deaths.

What did we do in 2020? A whole lot: mostly kept working. Because we know our work is both to take care of each other and to keep focused on the root causes.

# WHO WE ARE



**Over the years,** but in particular, over this past year, we have seen over and over again that we are not just a staff of four; we are much bigger. *Clean Air runs deep.* We have six Campaign Teams, over 350 Members and Supporters, and dozens of partners across the country that not only have our back but are leading the work hand-in-hand.

This year, we did what we always do: we came together to care for one another through hard times and build a more beautiful and clear vision for the world that we all deserve. We were true to our values day in and day out: Leadership Development, Environmental Justice, Democratic Decision-making, Resident Knowledge, Race & Class Equity & Inclusion, and Appreciation, Recognition & Celebration. *The following Clean Air Campaign Leader testimonies capture these lived values.*

## **Resident Knowledge**

"What I like about working with Clean Air is that they help members carry out our vision to move our campaigns forward. Our experience and our ideas are always the foundation of our work together."

—*Diane Lemanski, Diane's Land*

## **Leadership Development**

"In order to be a leader or speak on leadership, you have to know what it means. To me, leadership is having positive and productive attributes to be a social influence, motivating others to put their best foot forward towards a common goal. Leadership requires us to be organized, have time management skills, and be role models. We build leadership by sharing our lives with each other during hard times, trying new things, offering uplifting and motivating feedback, and always pushing forward together. We always take the time to truly listen to each other. At Clean Air, we've learned to be resourceful and diligent in putting our leadership skills to use. Clean Air has helped me become more self aware, prioritize, think strategically and innovatively, and take action. When one of us takes a risk and shows up with courage, we all become stronger and braver. We make each other better leaders every day."

—*Tim Moore, Tesla Campaign Team*



## **Appreciation, Recognition and Celebration**

"It can be difficult to recognize and appreciate the work that we've put into

something because we get hung up on the things that could have been different, but that does not change what we've created. So often we build something out of nothing. The work that we do every day constantly pushes for a cleaner, more just tomorrow. We put time, effort, love, and hard work into manifesting a change we want to see in the world. And so we always stop to celebrate . . . we motivate ourselves to keep moving forward by appreciating what we have already done and taking rest so we don't burn out."

—*Robert Walsh, Clean Air Membership Team*

## **Environmental Justice**

"I am a member of Clean Air because of their values. I believe in living in harmony with the Laws of nature to keep our communities and people in a safe and healthy environment free of harmful chemicals in the air and water. We need to make sure this happens for our future generations to come."

—*Sue Kelley, Tonawanda Coke Campaign Team*

## **Democratic Decision-making**

"The power of a cause or movement is often measured by the results the

group is able to procure and the relationships the organization develops. The Clean Air Coalition excels at both. The list of accomplishments of Clean Air is substantial. They include the groundbreaking creation of the Tonawanda Community Working Group, the future dreams of Diane's Land, a seat at the table to fully realize the potential at the Huntley Site, and much more. Our Contact List includes government entities private parties, and of course the hundred of Clean Air Members/Supporters. Success and access to power are hallmarks and powerful reasons why I dedicate my time and energy to Clean Air. The path forward is always forward."

—*Gary M. Schulenberg, Huntley Campaign Team*

## **Race & Class Equity & Inclusion**

"This community deserves to live in a safe and protected neighborhood. Some of our team members live close to the site are dedicated to seeing the area cleaned up. As always, we welcome all interested individuals to join us in our efforts to clean up the American Axle site and return to a healthy neighborhood"

—*Ms. Della Miller, American Axle Campaign Team*




# A MESSAGE FROM CLEAN AIR'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Dear Members and Friends of Clean Air,

In the midst of a global pandemic, our work couldn't wait. This past year was not an easy one. While we couldn't share the same table to plan our actions and

reflect on our wins, our team found new shared spaces, welcoming one another into our homes over video chat. We made sure our members had what they needed and checked in on one another throughout the year. When others thought we were





no longer watching, we made our voices louder. We adapted, we came together, and we continued to organize. Our work in 2020 did not slow down. It showed us that our organizing is needed now more than ever.

We are grateful to share with you the work our teams accomplished over the past year. Our member-led campaigns brought the residents of Tonawanda to the table to ensure remediation is done in a way that benefits the community first and foremost and continues to fight to ensure the same representation is given to the residents of the Delavan Grider community. Former Tesla workers showed us that an economy built on climate justice cannot be divorced from racial and economic justice, that we cannot continue to subsidize billionaires and corporations at the expense of working-class communities and communities of color. Members in the Seneca-Babcock community reimagined an abandoned toxic site, utilizing Diane's Land, a community-controlled land trust, to continue the fight to 'green' their neighborhood. We reminded each other what it

means to be a member of Clean Air, creating tools like our Membership Handbook and Membership Cards to celebrate and recognize our work and our voices.

We ended 2020 with some big changes happening in our mighty little organization. As we said goodbye to our friend and comrade, Rebecca Newberry, we were surrounded by Members and Supporters that showed us over and over again that they believe in the power of our organization and our collective vision for a better world for all of us.

2020 was devastating, and we know that so many of our people will continue to feel its effects in the next year. As we continue to care for our people, organize for justice and reimagine what's possible, we are humbled by each of you who have joined us in that commitment.

We are looking ahead with hope and excitement to our next chapter as an organization as we continue to boldly build and organize.

**With hope and justice,  
Jennifer Carman  
Chair, Board of Directors**

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

## Clean Air builds power by

developing grassroots leaders who organize their communities to run and win environmental justice and public health campaigns. Our organizing work is planned and executed through campaign teams that consist of members who live in, and are inherently experts on, their communities.

While the system and people that are currently in power regularly devalue and underestimate the power of our people, Clean Air's leadership development work uplifts our members' truths and lived experiences and the power of collective action and organizing.

This work takes place through formal training and workshops, but also in everyday conversations, practices, and the loving and supportive ways of being that we embody.

## NON-PROFIT FINANCE TRAINING

Lacking confidence in financial governance is one of the top reasons that people don't want to join boards, but we

know that our people know more than they think they do.

Clean Air's and Allen Street Consulting's annual non-profit finance training reviews where our organizational resources come from and how to read commonly used financial statements. Twenty members attended our 2020 training, and are one step closer to supporting WNY nonprofits through serving on a Board of Directors.

## GRASSROOTS FUNDRAISING TRAINING

At Clean Air, we don't see fundraising as a necessary evil but as a fundamental part of our organizing work to build power in our communities. In 2020, we had 10 members hone in on the power of transformational grassroots fundraising over traditional transactional fundraising. These members hosted their own grassroots fundraising pages as part of Clean Air's end-of-year \$60K to Fight in Flight fundraiser and collectively raised over \$9,000.

## **ONE-ON-ONE TRAINING + ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WELCOME TEAM**

At Clean Air, relationships are the foundation for our work and our community. When we are in relationship with one another, we can share, plan, dream, create and get things done. In 2020, Clean Air established our Welcome Team: a group of five Members and Supporters who engage in radical hospitality to welcome new people into the organization. The Welcome Team participated in a one-to-one training to practice the skill of intentionally creating space for new people to join us and feel a sense of belonging through the power of connection and relationship building.

## **ZOOM TRAININGS**

Staying connected to each other and our work was one of our biggest challenges and opportunities in 2020. Once we all began to quarantine, it became clear that online meetings and social spaces were going to be our new normal. Through one-to-one support conversations and online tutorials, we were able to get dozens of our members connected on Zoom so that they could participate in our ongoing campaign team meetings and organization-wide events like our first ever Open House.

## **MUTUAL AID**

From the start of the COVID-19 crisis, Clean Air staff and members worked together with our partners at SURJ Buffalo to provide survival needs for our people through mutual aid. This looked like grocery and supply runs, financial aid when/if we could, and friendship and community-building through the many technologies and creative abilities at our disposal. We held an orientation for 15 of our members on the history of mutual aid in our movements, political education on the race and class root causes of our broken social safety net system, and how we can continue to care for one another in a loving and dignified way beyond the pandemic.

## **GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER: AN OPEN HOUSE TO ROOT OUR POWER**

In May of 2020, the Membership Team hosted our very first virtual open house! At the Open House, we unveiled our brand new Membership Handbook and shared campaign work updates from all of our teams. The Membership Team held this event to re-activate our current members and invite new people to join us! Our first Open House was a success with close to 100 people joining us on Zoom to learn more about Clean Air and connect with one another as we build the power we need to win the world we all deserve.

## **RAPID RESPONSE TO EPA CUTS**

In March of 2020, the EPA drastically suspended its enforcement regulations for polluting industry across the country, citing the COVID-19 pandemic. Clean Air members sprung into action to organize folks regionally and across the country to fight back against the cuts and demand that environmental justice communities be centered in the EPA's response to the pandemic. Through our organizing and leadership, over 50 environmental, community, and labor groups called on the New York State Attorney General Tish James to sue the EPA. In June of 2020, NYS led a coalition of nine other states in suing the Trump Administration for this suspension and their disregard for the health and dignity of communities across the country.

## **EPA REPORT BACK MEETING**

Core to our values at Clean Air is democratic decision-making and resident knowledge. When Tonawanda Coke shut down in 2018, the EPA took control of portions of the site to ensure it was safe and secure until formal cleanup could begin. In the summer of 2020, after months of organizing and pressure by the Tonawanda Coke campaign team, representatives from the EPA shared a summary of their work and findings on the site. Our members held the EPA and DEC's feet to the fire

to answer our questions about the site's history and future which allowed all of us to have a real say in the ongoing cleanup.

## **ANTI RACISM WORK**

During the summer's uprising for Black lives, a group of our white members began to deepen their anti-racist work. The Anti Racism Crew met bi-weekly starting in July to explore our understanding of race, identity, oppression, and what it means to do anti-racist work as white people. Clean Air has a racially diverse membership, yet we recognize that the majority of our membership in the Northtowns are poor, working, and middle-class white people. These members are taking on the responsibility to do the work that Black, Indigenous, and other people of color have been calling us to do for generations: organize our people to do anti-racist work and end systemic racism. In October, the Anti Racism Crew partnered with Anthony Armstrong of Make Communities to hold an online anti-racism and structural racism workshop, digging into WNY's history and creating space for people to explore their own stories around race, identity, and solidarity.

## **PHONE BANKING WITH SURJ: SWINGING GEORGIA LEFT**

Through our 501(c)(4) sister organization, Community Power for Health and Justice (CPHJ), we partnered with Showing Up For

Racial Justice (SURJ) on the Swing Georgia Left Campaign. The campaign made over a million calls to folks in Georgia to mobilize them to vote. Dozens of our members made calls, listened and shared stories, and organized to ensure a better future.

## **VOTE ON YOUR VALUES**

In November 2020, we launched our “Voting on Your Values” series outlining how our members planned to center Clean Air’s values as they cast their ballots. Our members shared their connections to our campaign work and values and reasons why they were committed to casting a vote in the 2020 election that promoted democracy and justice.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

We believe in employing skilled and experienced staff who know how to build permanent, multi-issue, membership-based teams. We provide our staff with the training and support they need to reach their full potential. In 2020, our staff team took part in the following leadership development opportunities:

### **GENERATIVE SOMATICS**

Staff participated in multiple Generative Somatics courses, learning and practicing embodied transformations. We learned the skills of cultivating resilience toward creating change, connection, and person-

al and collective skilled action. We continue to practice somatics in our everyday work because we respect and are committed to understanding and learning from the lived trauma and experiences that are in our minds *and* in our bodies.

### **NYS HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT COURSE**

In our work we are often told that we do not know enough, that we are not experts, that we should let the real people in charge take the lead. We know that is not true. In 2020 our Environmental Justice Organizer, Emily became certified in Hazardous Waste Management in New York State. She is now trained in New York-specific rules for typical managers and supervisors of hazardous waste compliance activities at both large and small quantity generator sites in New York. So, the next time that someone at NYSDEC tells us that we don’t know what we’re talking about, we have another tool in our toolbox to prove them wrong!



# CAMPAIGN TEAMS



**At Clean Air**, we organize because we refuse to be silenced, dispirited, or hopeless. To transform isolation, we put forward community visions for what our neighborhoods, workplaces, and government should be. In an unimaginable year where we experienced the stark realities of a global pandemic and visible state violence against Black lives, we responded by coming together and organizing for justice. *When everything in the world seems uncertain, you can be sure that our hard work will continue.*

In 2020, we came together to care for one another through hard times and build a more beautiful and clear vision for the world that we all deserve. We are proud of the work that we have collectively accomplished. Our members and communities find the strength every day to stand up for their lives and for the lives of people they do not know. Together, we build out a practice of care, of beloved community, and of fierce commitment to shared liberation.

*Note: For full campaign history, please visit [cacwny.org/campaigns](http://cacwny.org/campaigns).*

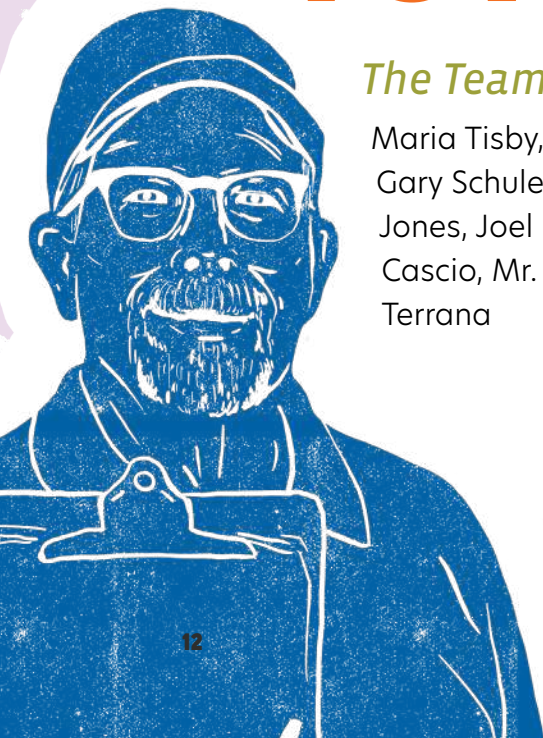
## TOWANDA COKE

### *The Team*

Maria Tisby, Sue Kelley,  
Gary Schulenberg, James  
Jones, Joel Bernosky, Kristen  
Cascio, Mr. Red, Emily  
Terrana

### *What leads us to one another?*

What leads us to one another is our passion to right the wrongs of over 100 years of the toxic history of Tonawanda Coke. Together, we are building power for the next 100 years of people in our community. We all believe in the necessity of transparency by industry and state agencies, having a real decision making role in our



neighborhoods, and the power of grassroots organizing.

### *What sustains us?*

In 2020, we learned to Zoom together! We had many meetings online with one another to strategize, learn, share, and take action for health and justice with the larger community. We found time to celebrate our big wins as well as the day-to-day work that we have done together during this unprecedented year. We found ways to laugh with one another, check-in on each other, and really take the time to deepen our relationships with each other.

2020 was a big year for organizing for our team. Together, with our technical team, [we submitted a full environmental site assessment and thorough technical comment](#) to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) on the ongoing Superfund and Brownfield cleanup work being done at Tonawanda Coke. We organized with our fellow members in the Delavan-Grider community for Community Advisory Groups at both Tonawanda Coke and American Axle so that we can have a real seat at the table during the remediation work on the sites. Our teams won two unanimously passed resolutions in support of our calls for democratic decision making and transparency by the Erie County Legislature, which paved the way for future wins! Together, we organized and won the first

of its kind Community Advisory Group (CAG) on cleanup at the Tonawanda Coke site, creating a real seat at the table for community members and stakeholders in how this toxic site will be cleaned up! However, when our team was granted a CAG and American Axle was not, we stood together with our American Axle team partners and demanded equal treatment and an end to the state's ongoing environmental racism.

What brings us back to one another and supports us is our love for each other and our vision for a better future that centers our dignity, health, and justice.

### *What are we taking on next?*

Our team is excited to work across Clean Air's campaign teams to get to the root of problems at toxic legacy sites and fix the system that exists to clean them up. We will center our voices and the voices of people across the state living in environmental justice areas as we organize for better remediation programs that for too long have been underfunded and made to benefit developers and not the community.

Our team is also committed to continuing our ongoing work to address and end white supremacy and how it shows up in ourselves,



our institutions, and society at large. We will continue our anti-racist organizing work and bring more of our family members, friends, and neighbors onto the side of history that is about justice and equity.

### *Earned Media*

[Tonawanda Coke site sampling plan: foundational, or cheap and fast?:](#) “In

environmental restoration, we really only get one chance in our lifetime to get it right. Doing it the cheapest and fastest way is not only disrespectful but unjust to ourselves and our future” —Jim Jones, Tonawanda Coke Team Member

[DEC, town setting up Tonawanda Coke public working group](#)

# HUNTLEY

### *The Team*

Diana Strablow, James Jones, Sue Kelley, Maria Tisby, Gary Schulenberg, Emily Terrana

life, new family-sustaining green jobs, and the hope of a better future for all of our people. We imagine a world where we all have what we need and where we dare to create new possibilities.

### *What leads us to one another?*

For our team, our vision for a fair and just transition that lies in the shell of the former Huntley power plant in Tonawanda is what leads us to one another. We see beyond the chain-link fence and red tape and envision a community and environmental asset to our futures. We see the possibility for new

### *What sustains us?*

In the summer of 2020, our team took the time to read Adrienne Maree Brown’s book, “Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds.” Through our collective study, we realized that our work is so much more than what we’re fighting against, but what we’re building for the future and how we are practicing those imagined futures now. We began to shift our thinking and pivot toward what is life-giving, what sustains us, and what





has the possibility to be shaped in service of more joy, liberation, and healing for ourselves and our more than human allies in this world. We have decided to be more like a flock of starlings or a network of mycelium (intricate mushroom roots); to adapt with intention, to be interconnected, to root in our resilience, to work toward new possibilities, and to see ourselves and our work as a responsibility to something bigger than ourselves while focusing on the small that we can hold and shape.

### *What are we taking on next?*

In 2021, we are committed to organizing for the future of this Tonawanda site and for all of us who value joy over corporate greed and inaction. We are blessed with

the world-class Niagara River in our backyard where the power plant worked for our community for 100 years. The land deserves our best work to heal and continue giving and so do our people.

What sets us apart is our unabashed belief that every day people have a right to make decisions about our future and shape what comes next.

### *Earned Media*

[Local officials frustrated at NRG's process to sell 'eyesore' Huntley site:](#) "I think it's been clear that NRG doesn't care about the will of the people in Tonawanda and Riverside. They are a business. They have a bottom line." Emily Terrana, Clean Air Organizer

# AMERICAN AXLE

### *The Team*

Ms. Shirley Stitt, Ms. Della Miller , Ms. Mary Blue, Ms. Shelda Cunningham, Ms. Sydney Brown, Alex Dombrowski, Chris Murawski, Rebecca Newberry



### *What leads us to one another?*

On our team, we believe in making this community whole. Making a community whole means full remediation of the former Amer-



ican Axle site and cleaning up all contamination that may have spread into the property of families living near the site. Making a community whole means the ability to garden, the ability for children to play in the dirt in their backyards, and the ability to be confident that where we live doesn't make us sick. Making our community whole isn't a luxury or an unreasonable demand; it is what we deserve. What brings us together is a common thread of commitment to health and wellness in all communities. We understand that communities deserve to live healthy lives. We also have built a respectful, trusting, and fair relationship among ourselves. We work together as a team on each and every campaign tactic, strategy, and action.

### *What sustains us?*

Our members stay connected to ensure all of our work happens in alignment. Our team felt it was so important to meet and to keep the momentum going that we found creative places to meet like each other's back yards or in parks (of course, using all protective measures). We are dedicated to win justice for our communities no matter what the COVID pandemic throws our way.

### *What are we taking on next?*

We will not accept the state's disregard for Black health and dignity, and we will

not be placated by an advisory group in Tonawanda at the expense of our lives and dignity in Delavan-Grider. In 2021, we will continue to organize our communities and we will carry on until we have a clean and healthy neighborhood where everyone feels safe, seen, and heard. We are currently building a framework for a community advisory group for the American Axle site and we plan to reach out, educate, and actively engage more residents to the critical state of the area and how they can join us as we organize for change. In our outreach endeavors, our team will stress health issues, possible contaminated soil for gardening, and other issues in the neighborhood.

This community deserves to live in a safe and protected neighborhood. We keep fighting for our health, dignity, justice, and wholeness because we know that we are on the freedom side.

### *Earned Media*

[\*Another Voice: Environmental justice must be done in Delavan-Grider:\*](#)

"If New York State says that 'Black Lives Matter,' they must stand for the health and dignity of all Black lives. Clean Air's membership in the Northtowns and city stand together with one voice in asking the DEC: Whose lives really matter?" Sydney Brown, American Axle Team Member and Jim Jones, Tonawanda Coke team member

[\*Community Advisory Boards to help\*](#)

[guide cleanup of American Axle, Tonawanda Coke](#): “Far too long, these sites have been negligent as far as making sure they do have proper cleanup or just functioning in a healthy and safe way, not only for employees but for the community,” Brown said, “and a Community Advisory Group

will help to keep things transparent, will help keep the community informed and the community has a say to make sure that it’s done in a thorough and equitable way.” Sydney Brown, American Axle Team Member

# TESLA



## *The Team*

Becca, Christina, Jeremy, Marcus, Tim, Linnea

speaking up for ourselves and other people, letting others know they’re not alone. We are driven to fight for real change.

## *What leads us to one another?*

We were led to each other first by shared workplace and shared experience of harassment, discrimination, and abuse. Our team is made up of folks who’ve worked at Tesla, and many of us are former co-workers. We have all been harmed by our experiences at Tesla, by the racism, sexism, and culture of white supremacy and abuse. But we are more than that: we are led to each other by the same traits that put targets on our backs in the workplace and by our commitment to

## *What sustains us?*

We are brought back together by our shared hurt and pain, but also by the care, support, and understanding that we have for each other. In 2020, we pivoted to Zoom, where we meet regularly and spent real time checking in with each other: we didn’t just focus on what was next on the agenda and business, but we made our meetings holistic by seeing if everyone was doing okay mentally and physically and how we were holding up through this daunting task of fighting for justice. We continue to find ways to make this work feel cozy and joyful, even when it’s painful.



## *What are we taking on next?*

We will continue to lift up our stories and connect with other workers to push forward our case, bringing more Tesla workers into the fight, both in Buffalo and across the globe. We will keep connecting and building relationships with community leaders and elected officials to invite them into our work.

We will force Tesla to acknowledge the harm they have caused and take responsibility for it, and demand justice and accountability for all workers. We're still amassing the stories and experiences of people like us, building power with our fellow workers, current and former, and continuing to blow the whistles. We are connected by Tesla, but we know Tesla is just a starting point in demanding justice and equity in the new energy economy and demanding systems of accountability and transparency for public investments.

You could say we're like pinky and the brain: we're going to take on the WORLD.

## *Earned Media*

[\*When it comes to race, Tesla looks like a throwback company\*](#): Some of our team members shared their stories with Rod Watson at The Buffalo News this summer, resulting in this opinion piece.

[\*Shareholders ask for Tesla factory work environment changes in Buffalo\*](#): Our stories inspired shareholder activist groups to center our concerns in proposals they made for changing company policies. We also attended the virtual shareholder meeting to share our demands ourselves, and our comment was read live on air!



# SENECA BABCOCK & DIANE'S LAND

## *The Team*

Diane Lemanski, Jarrett Steffan, Christine Slocum, Linnea Brett, Rebecca Newberry

## *What leads us to one another?*

This community has been united, for too many years, around suffering. The impacts of Battaglia Demolition's illegal cement-crushing operation in our neighborhood kept us sealed inside, avoiding the trucks, debris, and cement dust. Despite this isolation, we banded together to fight back. Since its closing, we've found new allies and a broader community, welcomed into this work by a vision for a cleaner, healthier, and quieter future: a community-owned land trust.

## *What sustains us?*

This year, through a ranked-choice voting process by Peabody Street residents, we unanimously decided to call our land trust Diane's Land, named for our tenacious and brilliant leader and caretaker, Diane Lemanski. We worked to create this land trust and to celebrate Diane's leadership,

rigor, sacrifices, and love, and we are fighting to win the transfer of the derelict and abandoned properties to create a carbon sink where plantings will clean the soil and surrounding air, capture carbon, and create a green buffer to offset the impacts of local industry and the 190 interstate. In creating this, we are making a powerful investment in our community's future.

## *What are we taking on next?*

We will continue to fight for the land transfer and for a comprehensive cleanup of the former Battaglia Demolition site. Through community control and carbon sequestration, we will model a grassroots way to fight climate change: by creating healthy, resilient communities of people and ecology.



# MEMBERSHIP

## *The Team*

Robert Walsh, Sue Kelley, Gary Schulenberg, Jenn Carman, Maria Tisby, Julia White

## *What leads us to one another?*

The Membership Team shares a passion for shared liberation for ourselves and for so many others. We are driven by the power of organized membership because we know that when we build bridges between each other and put forth people-based solutions, we are unstoppable. *In a world where the strength of our people and our commitment to our shared liberation is everything, we refuse to be divided. We create powerful community to organize for health and justice, but also to care for one another, center joy, laugh a lot, and celebrate often.*

## *What sustains us?*

Three years ago, we established our Membership Team. Well, we started as the Fundraising Team, but quickly decided that “fundraising” really didn’t encapsu-

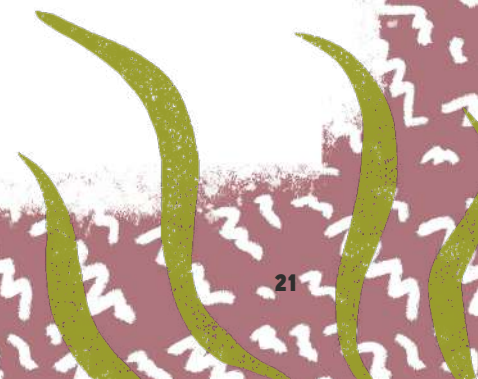
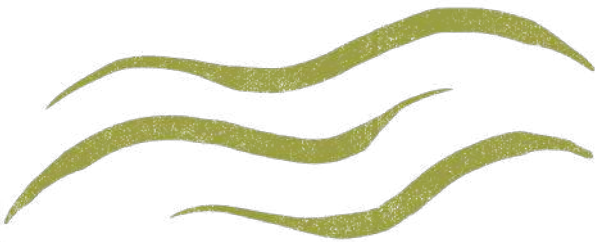
late or do justice to the work that we were actually doing. Yes, we agree . . . money funds our work, but we believe that it can be so much more than that. Money can actually be a part of how we organize for a better world. At Clean Air, we are in the business of building a movement for justice that cannot be defunded, broken, or stopped. And the core of that movement is our Members.

We are so proud of the work that we accomplished in 2020. We created Clean Air’s first-ever [Membership Handbook](#), hosted *Growing Strong Together: An Open House to Root our Power*, created Membership resources on our website, had hundreds of conversations with our friends, family, and comrades, and helped lead Clean Air’s \$60K to Fight in Flight end-of-year fundraising campaign, which raised over \$82,000! We are truly building a movement that is stronger, more creative, and more resilient than our enemies could have ever imagined.



## *What are we taking on next?*

We're only getting started. In 2020, we witnessed the fruits of our labor in real-time: the power and love of a membership community that has each other's backs in hard times and in joyful times. This year, we're going to keep building connections and deepening relationships with our neighbors and partners. We will bolster the work of the Tesla, Diane's Land/Seneca Babcock, Tonawanda Coke, Huntley, and American Axle Teams by creating intentional and welcoming space for people in our community and beyond to join us as we reimagine and will into existence a just, joyful, and caring world that works for all of us.



# 2020 FINANCIALS

Where our money came from &  
Where we spent our money

In addition to 449 Individual Members and Donors, Clean Air's work in Fiscal Year 2020 was generously supported by the following foundations and organizations:

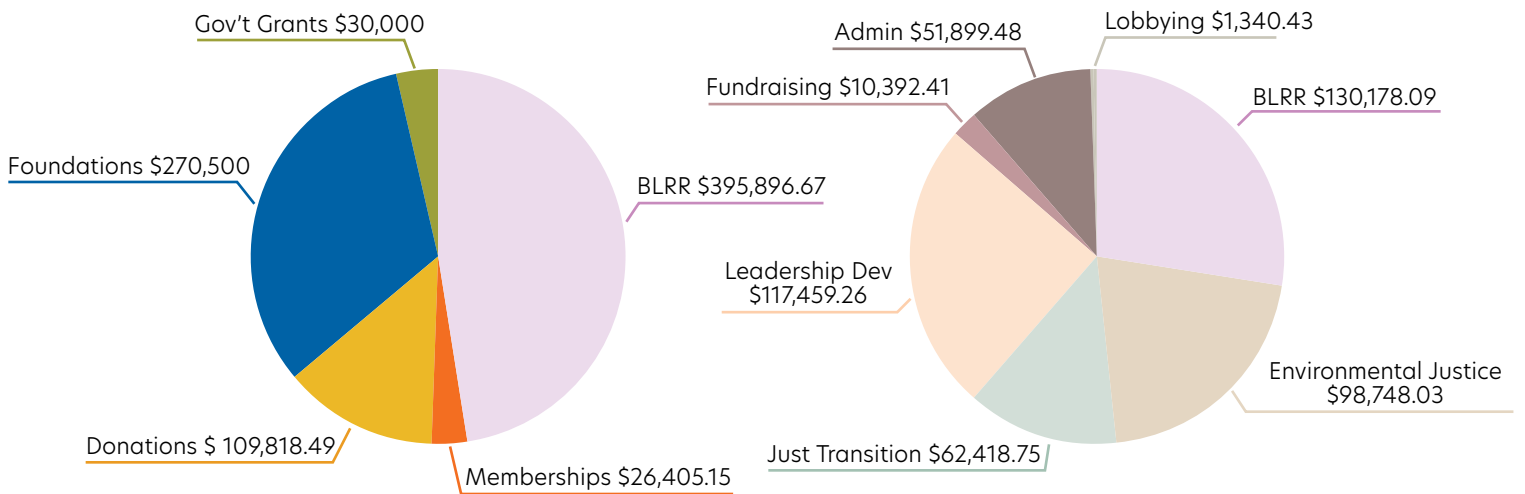
The Just Transition Fund	John R. Oishei Foundation
11th Hour Project	Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation
The Baird Foundation	The Western New York Foundation
Church of the Nativity	Rowboat Family Foundation
United Church of Christ	Pisces Foundation, Mosaic Amalgamated Foundation
Communication Workers of America	
The County of Erie	

## INCOME

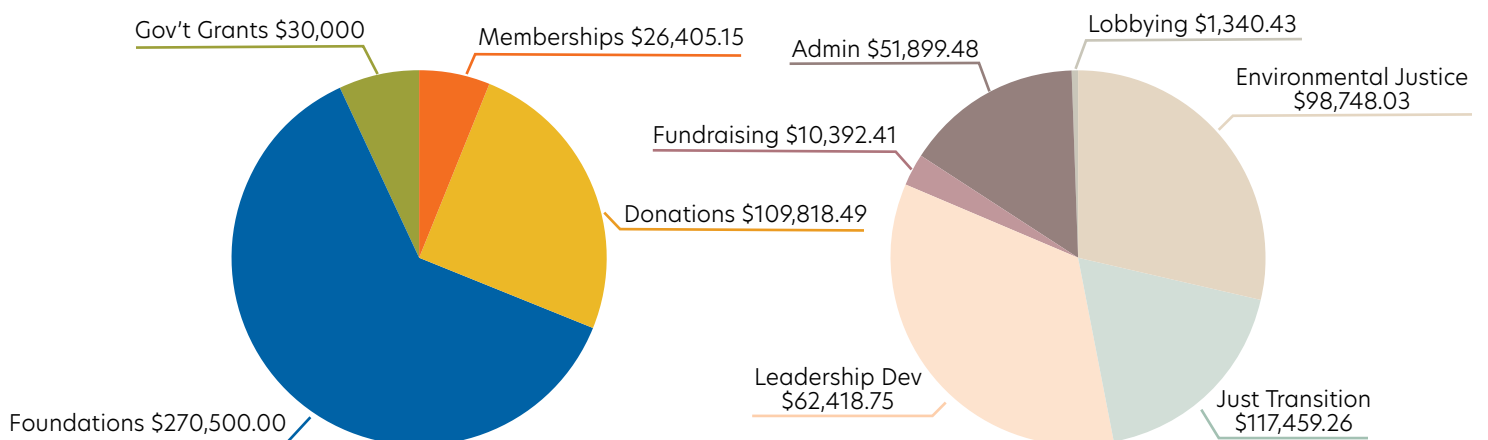
## EXPENSE

### 2020 ORGANIZATIONAL ACTUAL INCOME & EXPENSES

Includes Fiscal Sponsored Project: Black Love Resists in the Rust (BLRR)



### 2020 CLEAN AIR ONLY ACTUAL INCOME & EXPENSES





# 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Carman, Chair

Tom Roulley

Sydney Brown, Treasurer

George Boger

Nick Reed, Secretary

Drew Canfield

# 2020 STAFF

Rebecca Newberry,  
Executive Director

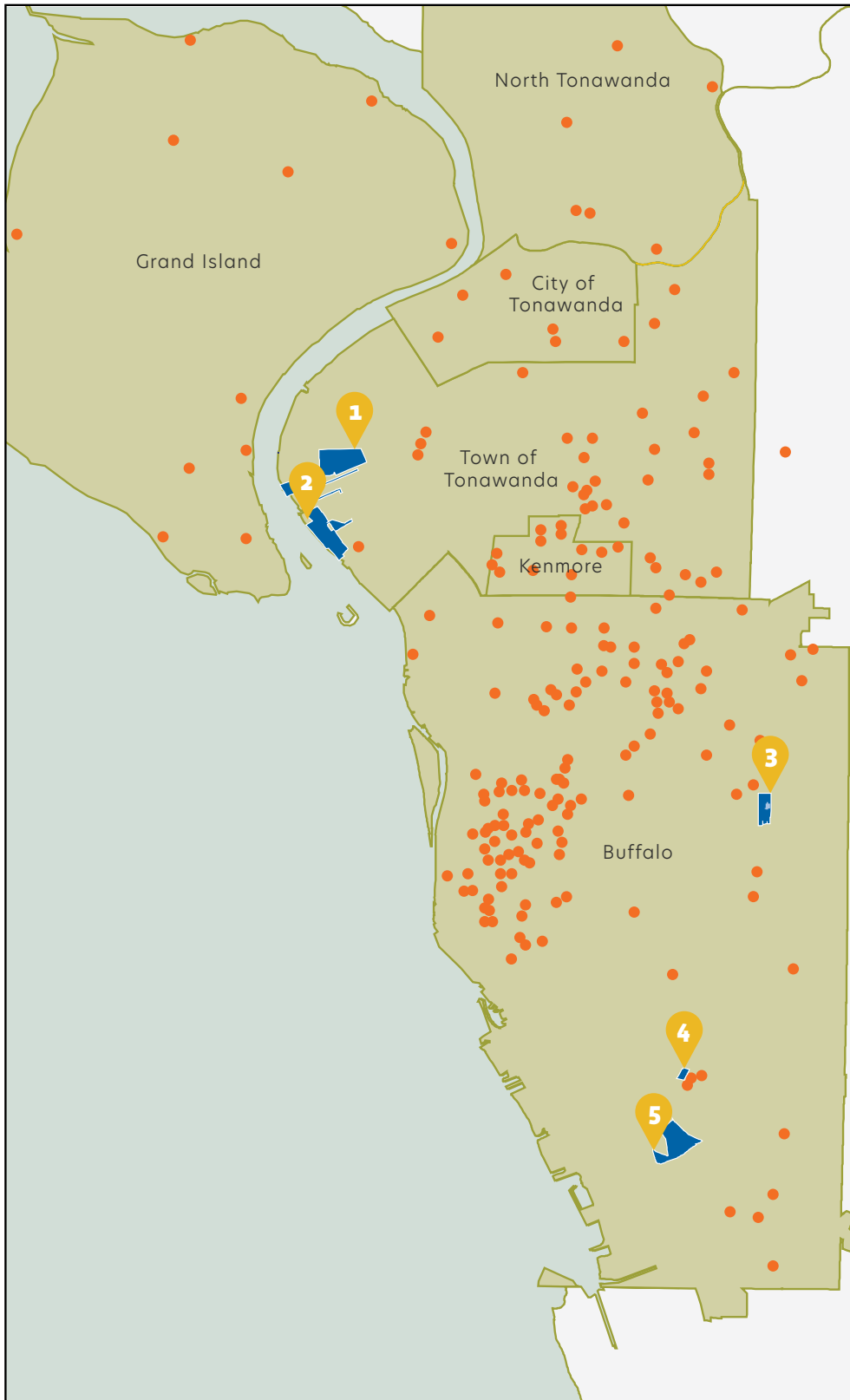
Robert Walsh, Climate  
Justice Policy Organizer

Julia White, Grassroots  
Development Organizer

Emily Terrana, Leadership  
Development Director  
and Environmental Justice  
Organizer

Linnea Brett, Community  
Organizer

Alexandra Dombrowski,  
Intern



# CLEAN AIR MEMBERSHIP

- Members
- Membership Areas
- Campaign Locations

## 1 **Tonawanda Coke**

Held Tonawanda Coke accountable for decades of disregard to community health and the environment. After the company shut down in 2018, we began organizing for the cleanup of the plant paid for by the company.

## 2 **Huntley**

After the retirement of the NRG Huntley coal plant, we helped lead the creation of an economic development plan for the town to recoup lost tax revenue, and we continue to organize for the cleanup of the plant and its reimagining as a community resource.

## 3 **American Axle**

The Eastside American Axle site is ground zero for contamination, with hazardous oil, grease and PCB toxins that have leached into the sewer system. In 2015, we joined forces with residents to organize to stop the toxic runoff and remediate legacy waste.

## 4 **Diane's Land & Seneca Babcock**

Organized with residents to stop Battaglia Demolition, a concrete crushing facility without proper permits, from polluting the Seneca Babcock neighborhood. After the company was forced to close, members continue to organize for adequate recourse to reimagine a healthy and vibrant environment and community.

## 5 **Tesla**

We need a renewable energy economy that provides generational sustaining careers that are just and equitable. That's why we're organizing with former Tesla workers to hold the corporation accountable for a workplace culture of sexual harassment and racism.



## OUR MISSION

The Clean Air Coalition builds power by developing grassroots leaders who organize their communities to run and win environmental justice and public health campaigns in Western New York.

## OUR VISION

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

## OUR VALUES

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

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716-852-3813

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[www.cacwny.org](http://www.cacwny.org)