



PEOPLES CLIMATE MOVEMENT: A STORYBOOK

14 STATES . 17 POWERFUL STORIES



PEOPLES
Climate
MOVEMENT

PEOPLES CLIMATE MOVEMENT: A STORYBOOK

In the fall of 2019, the Peoples Climate Movement invited people from across the United States to share stories of winning bold climate action.

Told individually or together, these stories are connected by a deeply-felt, grassroots commitment to addressing climate change through a lens of racial justice and economic equity.

Working individually and together, these people are building power - and they are winning.

THEY ARE WINNING
HEARTS AND MINDS.



Nicole Horseherder
ARIZONA

“What are we going to do to save these elements of life, that literally bring health, and happiness, and life to each and everyone of us...we can't give up on these things.”



Nicole Horseherder is an advocate with To Nizhoni Ani in Arizona, which is preparing the Diné people for the end of the Navajo Nation's fossil-fueled economy. As Nicole puts it, "If you want to eat coal when there's no more water and your elements of life are destroyed...that's just not going to happen".

To Nizhoni Ani advocates for the diversification of Navajo Nation's economy by developing renewable energy, and building capacity within local communities to have full ownership in sustainable energy projects, while seeking to keep their traditional Diné life-ways, language, and culture alive.





Dennis Dougherty is the Executive Director of Colorado's AFL-CIO. He helped fight for a package of laws that will cut emissions 90 percent by 2050, restrict new drilling for oil and gas, and establish an "Office of Just Transition" to help workers in coal-dependent communities.

When asked about the impact of organized labor being involved in the legislation, Dennis said "I actually testified in front of the legislature in support of the carbon reduction bill. That's a huge shift from two years ago. It's a testament to the coalition we have built, and the leadership from Colorado labor leaders."



“Being at the Peoples Climate Movement table was not just about being heard, but also a chance to hear those stories and hear how this affects communities.”



Dennis Dougherty
COLORADO

**THEY ARE LEAVING
NO ONE BEHIND.**



April Sims is the Secretary Treasurer of the Washington State Labor Council. She helped pass Washington State's ambitious new law that will move it to 100 percent clean power by 2045. Her work leverages state incentives to create more green, union jobs while making sure that government investments in clean energy are equitably distributed to impacted communities. April is part of a coalition that demonstrates the broad political power that comes from working together, and making climate solutions work for everyone.

As April says, "We have to change the narrative or workers will get left behind. The face of the climate fight is changing to the faces of folks on the frontline and people of color. It's not the predominantly wealthy and white-led movement that some may have thought it once was."



April Sims
WASHINGTON



“Victories like this lead to deeper levels of trust, and it is those levels of trust between workers, frontline communities, and environmental communities that we really need to pass bold policy.”

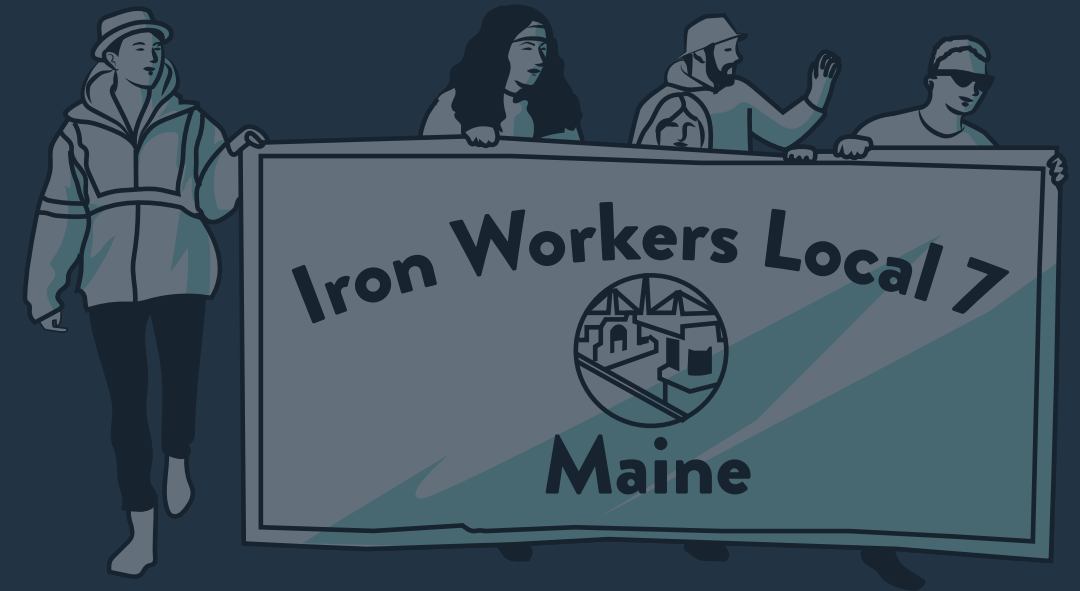


Andy O'Brien
MAINE



Andy O'Brien is the Communications Director for Maine's AFL-CIO. He worked with legislators, Ironworkers 7, IBEW 1253 and 567, and the Maine Building Trades to craft a version of a Green New Deal bill. When asked about their support of the bill, Andy said on behalf of Maine's workers, "In an era of austerity and ever-worsening income inequality, it is critical that proposals don't exacerbate this crisis and turn working class people against the climate justice movement."

Climate instability and skyrocketing income inequality pose dire threats to working people, but as Maine is showing, it's possible to tackle both crises at the same time. There is an opportunity to create thousands of high paying jobs while addressing climate instability, but that will only happen if workers and unions have a vision to address the climate crisis and have a seat at the table in crafting bold climate protection policies.



“ We need to rewrite the rules of the economy to tackle the climate crisis and build an economy that works for all.”



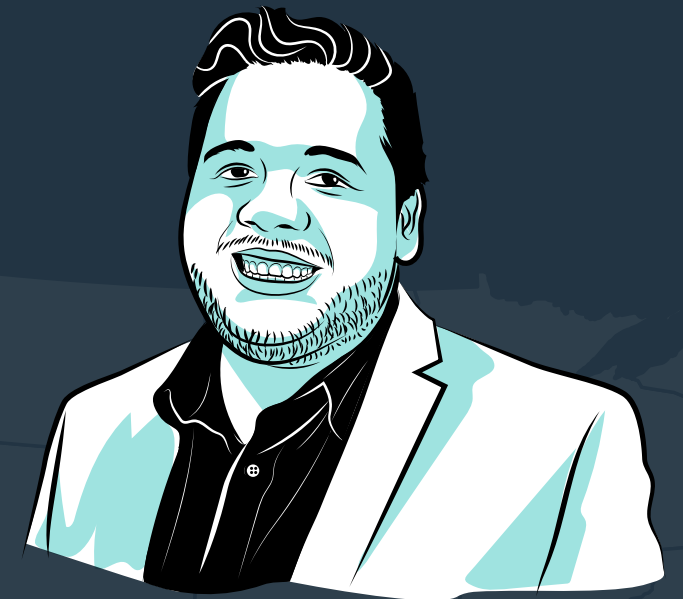
Hector Huezo, LA resident and Senior Workforce Equity Coordinator with Jobs to Move America, believes that we don't have to choose between good jobs and a livable climate.

Hector's work shows firsthand the power of strong climate solutions being combined with an inspiring investment in jobs that can sustain our families and justice for neglected communities and those hurt first and worst by the climate crisis.

JMA has been doing just that, building coalitions in key regions to urge cities and states to ensure our public dollars reduce emissions, advance equity, and lift up workers and communities through access to quality training and employment opportunities. In his words, "With the right tools, investments in cleaner technologies can spur not just the creation of good jobs, but pathways for folks in need of stable, high-quality employment."

Through his organizing, Hector is fighting to show how cities and states can use public money to ensure that climate change solutions also fight systemic economic disparities. "We work to center good jobs for women, African Americans, veterans, formerly incarcerated folks, and other people that have been historically left out. We ensure training pathways and opportunities for folks who otherwise would not have had access to a family-sustaining job."

“ This is how we make visionary frameworks like the Green New Deal a reality. This is how we prove that we don't have to lose jobs at the expense of investing in clean energy.”



Hector Huezo
CALIFORNIA



**THEY ARE ACTIVATING
THE POWER OF PEOPLE.**



Amy McMorrow Hunter
ILLINOIS



Amy McMorrow Hunter is a Mom of two from Carbondale, IL, who started her organization CLEAN after seeing a gap in climate education for all ages and populations. She wants the everyday person to not only understand but to care. Her gig is turning apathy into action.

"In these crazy times it feels good to be a part of something, to pursue our passions, to help those who may feel scared or helpless because of climate change. We're flipping it all to a positive thing where we're more connected to ourselves, nature, and our fellow humans."

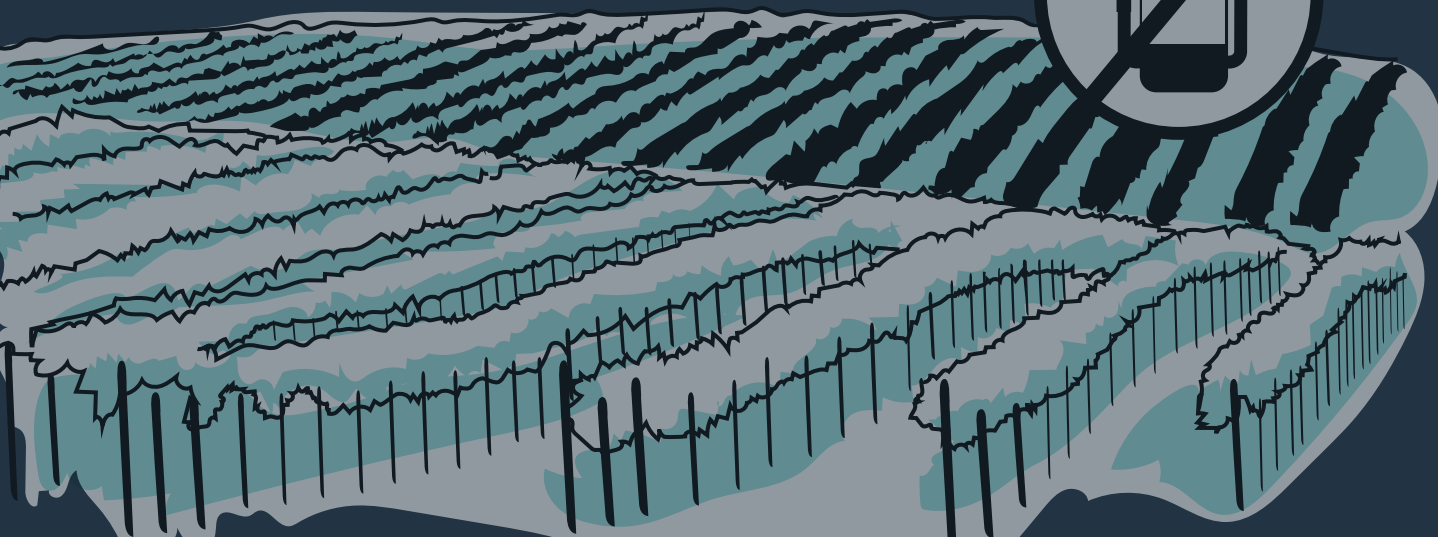
“My work is about empowering people through community building and individual education about all the opportunities in the Climate Economy for every single person in their everyday lives, not just big businesses and government.”





Guadalupe Casco is a bilingual organizer with the North Bay Organizing Project, and Land Paths in Sonoma County, California. Through community organizing, outdoor activities, art campaigns, and more, she is using strategic political moments and momentum to "bring people back to the earth" and build out a strong initiative that wins. The goal: building safer communities through the Rights of Mother Earth Campaign. A campaign that will center women, people of color, and indigenous groups in seeking to ban pesticides in all of Sonoma County.

The key, Guadalupe says, is that "the initiative itself is being drafted by community members, not politicians. We are learning together and focusing on our people power. It will be written for and by the communities most impacted by pesticide use: this is truly grassroots organizing.



Guadalupe Casco
CALIFORNIA

“ We are the experts in our own experience.”

**THEY ARE EMPOWERING
COMMUNITIES.**



Christopher Jones
TEXAS

“ Let's seek solutions that can be presented to our local governments...rather than them telling us what's best.”



Christopher Jones, resident, organizer, and flood survivor of Beaumont County, and the current President of the Charlton-Pollard Historic Neighborhood Association is fighting to bring positive attention back to his community; a county adjacent to various industries and international trade. In his own words on community empowerment, "we are the residents and stakeholders of where we live, and we do have a say in how things operate. It is our lives and our future."

Through Christopher's work with the neighborhood association, he is growing the number of connections amongst community members, building working relationships with local government, school districts, local municipalities, port authorities, the railroads, and private industries alike. "To live in such an industrialized community, we need to be transparent with each other about how we live, how we build, and how we produce.... building relationships creates doors and windows of influence and no corporation is too big or too far to hear the cries of the residents they effect."



Reverend Michael Malcom
ALABAMA



Reverend Michael Malcom of Birmingham, Alabama is a pastor and the Founder of the Peoples Justice Council, leading the effort to organize the Southeast Faith Leader Network. The network aims to convene 250+ interfaith leaders in 2020 to discuss environmental justice through a faith lens.

As Rev. Malcom puts it, "I want to build a campaign that can speak to the issues associated with the fossil fuel industry, ending carbon emissions, and address the environmental concerns that most impact the communities I serve. We need to reach the faith community and the general population at large... and we need to bring in healing from a spiritual perspective."

“ Building power in my community looks like helping those who suffer move into positions of leadership and then organizing that leadership based on the communities' response.”



**THEY ARE CHANGING
THE NARRATIVE.**



Jessica Girard
ALASKA

“Without acknowledging and moving from these shared histories, we are only bound to repeat them.”

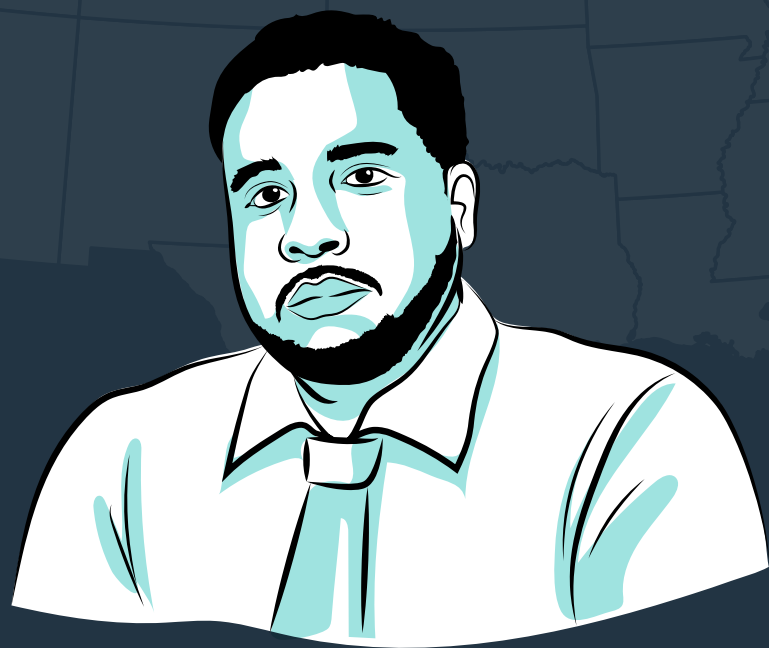


Former combat veteran and resident of Fairbanks, Alaska, Jessica Girard has seen firsthand the interconnectedness of the military industrial complex, climate change, and the oil and gas industry. As she puts it, "I know how many veterans have lost our lives for the continued imperialistic quest in the name of oil and gas. That is what started my path towards climate justice organizing."

Following the leadership of Indigenous communities in Alaska, Jessica shows us what it means to be a better ally in this movement. In her own words, "My message is for us, white allies, is do better. We don't have time for false solutions or continued compromises on the backs of Indigenous and other Communities of Color in the name of urgency. Indigenous Peoples are leading this movement and it is time for non-Native allies to take that leadership and be accountable to that leadership. We must add to their work, fund their work, uplift their work, and step back when asked. A win for Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition looks like our continued ability to bring the community together and move the climate conversation towards climate justice and truly equitable solutions."



**THEY ARE IDENTIFYING
THE INTERSECTIONS
OF CLIMATE, JUSTICE,
AND EQUITY.**



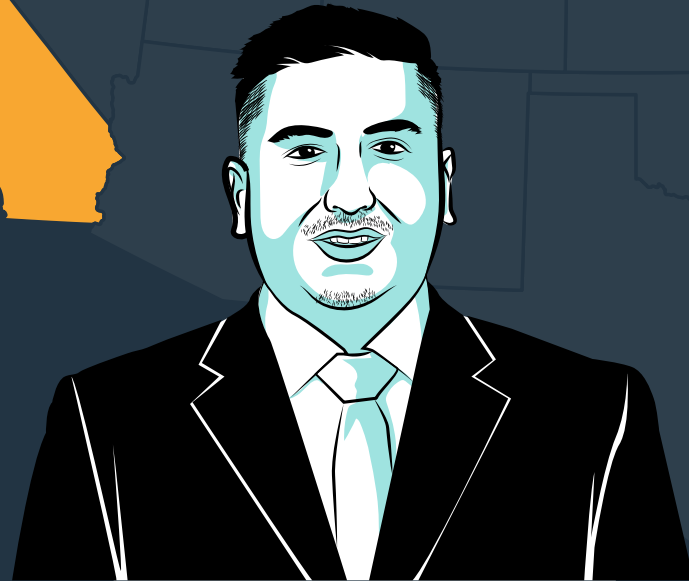
William Barber, III
NORTH CAROLINA



Born into deep environmental justice roots in North Carolina, William Barber, III now serves as the Ecological Justice Co-Chair for the North Carolina Poor People's Campaign. He believes that building power is working to help educate people on the urgency of this present moment - recognizing both the need for bold action as well as the intersections of the climate crisis with the additional crises of poverty and democracy.

"This work is rooted in the reality that we cannot win on climate unless we work together to fully understand the intersections and, that once we understand these intersections, the good news is that there are solutions in front of us. We know that by leaving fossil fuels behind and making a truly just transition to clean energy, we can avoid the worst of the climate crisis, and give all peoples and countries a chance at a healthy future."

“ We cannot win on climate unless we work together to fully understand the intersections.”



Daniel Penaloza
CALIFORNIA

“I want my brothers and sisters to be protected, granted documentation, or granted citizenship but I also want them to have a livable planet.”



Daniel Penaloza is a City Councilmember and community organizer in the city of Porterville, CA. Daniel started volunteering with CHIRLA in California at a young age, where he grew committed to politics, community empowerment, and immigrant rights issues. Through that work he came to understand the interconnected nature of migration and climate change, and how it will impact the lives of undocumented immigrants and low income latinx communities. It was these issues that motivated Daniel to run for, and win, a seat on the Porterville City Council in 2018.

As California faced its worst drought in history, Daniel's community of Porterville suffered through lack of access to clean water for months and for some, even years. Approximately 1,500 domestic wells had gone dry, impacting 3000+ family members. As Daniel puts it, "it took a village to get this work done. We held water meetings, conducted phone banks, and went door-to-door, doing necessary outreach to better understand the depth of this problem along with finding the necessary solutions."

For Daniel, the issue of water highlighted a much bigger challenge, intersectionality, and the need to connect the dots between social issues. "There's a connection between hotter days, droughts, the impacts of the climate crisis and immigration. I want my brothers and sisters to be protected, granted documentation, or granted citizenship but I also want them to have a livable planet, otherwise, what's the point? We must address these issues simultaneously. We cannot ignore or put one on pause versus the other."





“ We’ve got to start connecting the dots and looking at this as a bigger picture to find the right solutions.”



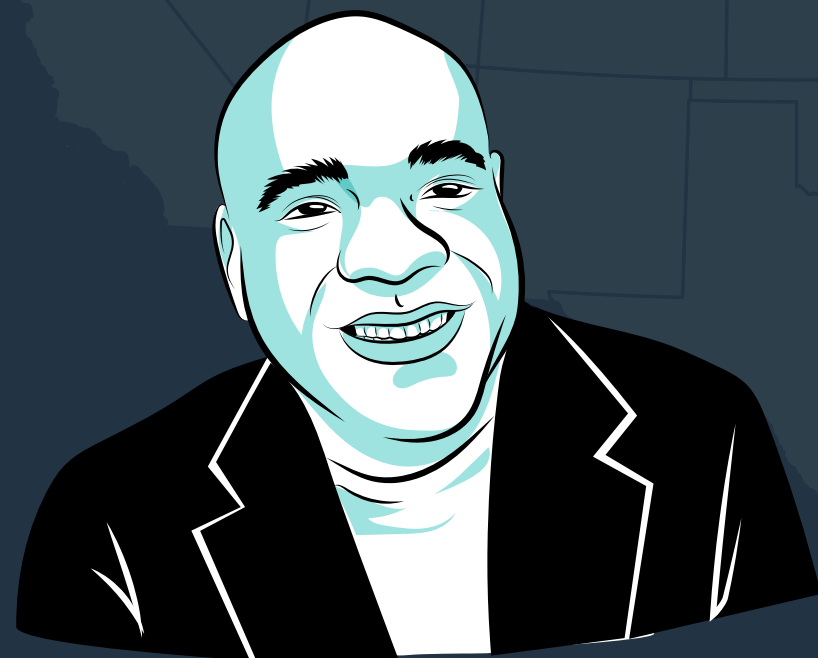
Camille Hadley is a mom, a flood survivor, and the founder of LittleGrowersInc. As a member of the Anthropocene Alliance, Camille said the impacts of climate change really became clear to her seeing the impact of extreme weather on her community in Florida. “My garden [for Little Growers Inc.] was destroyed. A whole community was flooded. It was that moment that I learned how connected these issues are.”

Camille is committed on working with community members and trusting that they are the experts in their own problems. “All of the issues around climate change are interconnected — extreme weather, food justice, racial justice — and so too can the solutions. We’ve got to start connecting the dots and looking at this as a bigger, whole picture to find the right solutions.”



Camille Hadley
FLORIDA

**THEY ARE SPEAKING
TRUTH TO POWER.**



Pastor Clifton McMillan
ALABAMA



The son of an activist mother, Pastor Clifton McMillan has devoted his work to fighting for good housing and employment opportunities for the African American community, and he now works to "raise awareness, guide policy, and educate my community on how their historical burdens are also connected to a changing climate."

Concerned about the physical health of those around him most exposed to toxins and pollution, in addition to the ongoing impacts of climate change, Pastor McMillan aims to "speak truth to power". In his own words, "This is a national crisis and a national shame. This is also a 'right-now problem' not just a long-term problem. We need to inspire and encourage one another to keep fighting for themselves and for their children. We've got to encourage people to seek solutions and stay organized and therefore in power."

“ We need to inspire and encourage one another to keep fighting for themselves and for their children.”



Siqiniq Maupin

ALASKA



Siqiniq Maupin is the Art & Youth Organizer with Native Movement, and a resident of Fairbanks, Alaska. After experiencing the extractive industry first hand as a shareholder of the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, some of whom are pro-arctic drilling, she witnessed its impacts on "the Inupaiq people, all the indigenous people of Alaska, and the world at large."

"It is a victory to be able to move this conversation forward in Alaska, to be able to speak out against this corporation that misrepresents us and encourage others to do the same. I don't speak for my people, I speak with my people. Through talking with my elders and relatives, I am fighting to change the stereotype that Inupaiq people are only for-profit. We are here fighting to be seen and heard against great odds. There are many of us that see climate change as a man-made issue that needs to be addressed through the lens of a just transition. I'm here to call out the actors at ASRC who act as indigenous peoples but don't actually represent the true sentiments of the indigenous peoples they claim to be."

“It is a victory to be able to move this conversation in Alaska.”





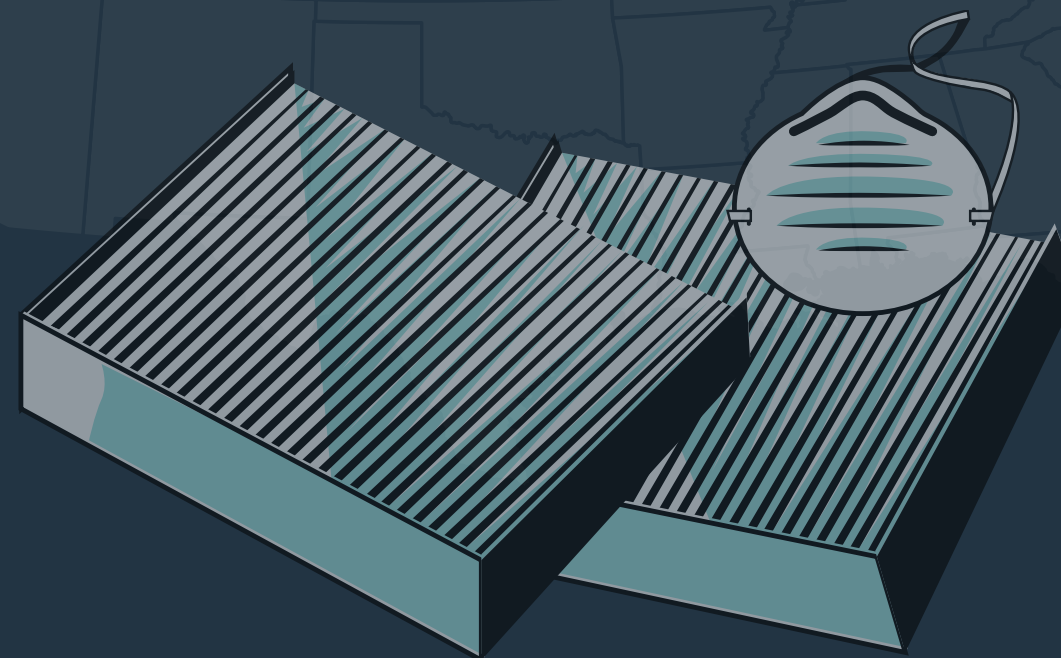
Arturo Orozco, a high schooler from San Bernardino, CA, was recently introduced to the climate movement while organizing around mental health facilities with the Inland Congregations United for Change. "Students from other high schools asked us to join the youth climate strikes, so we jumped on board." Since then, they've been striking at high schools every Friday, demanding clean air filters in every classroom. They strike silently with masks and costumes, creatively exposing the issues of clean air and the climate crisis. Initially, they received a lot of push back from administrators but the students stood up for their right to protest, and now administrators are in support.

The youth-led work happening in their community is largely done by Hispanic students, but they are reaching out to collaborate with other organizations and youth. Their goal is to bring awareness to the climate crisis, while demanding an immediate need for clean filters for classrooms, due to 87 consecutive bad air days in their district.

“We are not the generation of the future, we are the generation of now.”



Arturo Orozco
CALIFORNIA



**THEY ARE WORKING
TOGETHER.**



Rabbi Julie Greenberg
PENNSYLVANIA



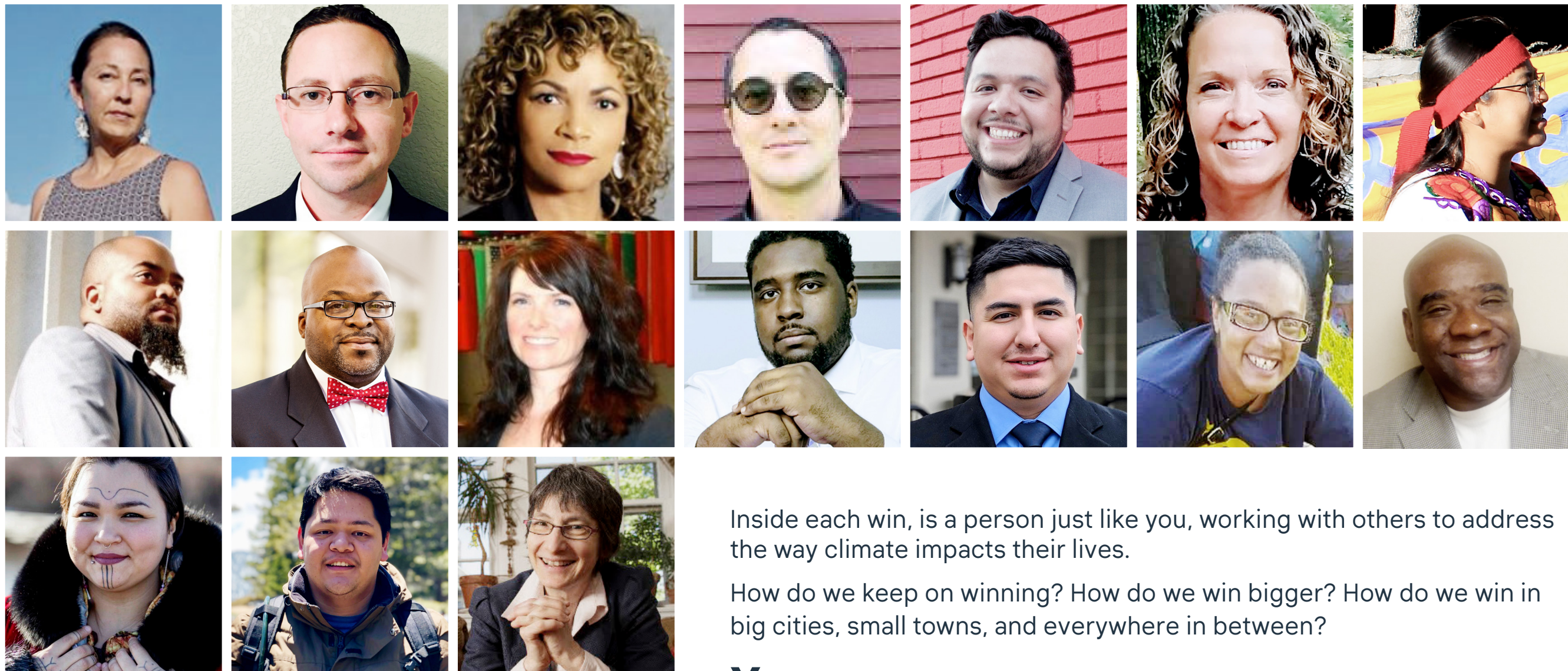
Rabbi Julie Greenberg, of Philadelphia, PA, is a long-standing social justice organizer and a founding clergy member of POWER, a multifaith movement fighting for racial and economic justice, and the intersection of those issues with climate justice. "Our communities are getting educated and organized. We've been taking on energy utility companies and our legislators as a collective. We are making our voices heard, as we are the public. We are the rate-payers. And we are the energy users here in our cities with our energy utilities... so we're really working to have a voice in what our future will look like."

The work they're doing in Philadelphia shows what's possible when strong climate solutions are combined with an inspiring investment in jobs that can sustain our families, and justice for those hurt first and worst by the climate crisis. As Rabbi Greenberg said "Three years ago, the people doing climate justice work and social justice work did not know each other. There were multiple organizations working on many issues separately. Now, we've built a deep coalition. We have found each other, and we're all in it together, and we all show up for each other. That's the win... the capacity of our own allies and partners to work together."

“ We are changing the sea in which our legislators have to swim. The climate crisis, and racial and economic justice, but most importantly – the intersection they are all in is on the agenda now.”

RIGHT NOW, ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY,
THE CLIMATE MOVEMENT IS **WINNING.**





Inside each win, is a person just like you, working with others to address the way climate impacts their lives.

How do we keep on winning? How do we win bigger? How do we win in big cities, small towns, and everywhere in between?

You.

Join us at www.peoplesclimate.org

