



New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance 2016 Annual Report



**(Left) NJEJA and Clean Water Action (Amy Goldsmith) at PlanSmartNJ
(Center) NJEJA and partners at Newark City Hall with Deputy Mayor Wilson
(Right) NJEJA with Dan Fatton at Work Environment Council Awards Dinner**

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Nicole Scott Harris, Newark Organizer

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NJEJA 2016 Annual Report

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Message from the State Director:

Thank you to our members and partners, leadership and staff, funders and friends for an exciting and prosperous 2016! I am honored to share this 2016 Annual Report of the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance with you. NJEJA members and partners will be reminded of their contributions to successful ventures, but hopefully will find opportunities to continue our relationships in new ways too. The Alliance's leadership and staff have shared our goals for 2017 to encourage our funders and friends to seek greater collaborations with us. Here are a few highlights of 2016 that I hope will inspire you to read more.

On the national stage, I represented NJEJA on **EPA's National Advisory Committee on Environmental Policy and Technology**, contributing to the publication, "*Citizen Science: Environmental Protection Belongs in the Public Realm*". The document includes recommendations to EPA that facilitate greater support for community voices in the protection of environmental and human health. The recommendations are supported by multiple case studies of citizen scientists from environmental justice communities working with local, state and federal government to improve environmental protection or trigger a response to an environmental threat. The report was presented to the EPA Administrator, forwarded to the President's transition team, and is now available to the public. Please see the full report: "*Environmental Protection Belongs to the Public, A Vision for Citizen Science at EPA*", <https://www.epa.gov/faca/nacept-2016-report-environmental-protection-belongs-public-vision-citizen-science-epa>.

Dr. Nicky Sheats, NJEJA Chair, provided comments to the Environmental Protection Agency on the draft U. S. Clean Power Plan, resulting in the environmental justice language that appears in the final publication. Dr. Sheats also presented EJ recommendations on the Clean Power Plan at the convening of EPA's **National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC)** and for the **Congressional Black Caucus** at the U.S. Capitol Hill.

We were reminded that partnerships really work! I accepted **PlanSmartNJ's Resource Efficiency Award** on behalf of NJEJA at the PlanSmartNJ's 2016 awards ceremony. The Newark Resiliency Action Plan (RAP) team: NJEJA, Ironbound Community Corporation and Clean Water Action received the resource efficiency award for the climate resiliency urban initiative undertaken by the partners. An excerpt from the program is as follows.

"[The] New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance along with Ironbound Community Corporation and Clean Water Fund are honored for their work in creating a more

efficient and resilient Newark through their *Newark Resiliency Action Plan (RAP)*. While the impacts of Superstorm Sandy were felt throughout the region, the devastation was disproportionately felt by Newark's low-income residents and communities of color.

Lois DeBacker of the Kresge Foundation noted that, "Without efforts to address equity concerns in resilience planning, climate change will reinforce and worsen socioeconomic disparities."

The Kresge Foundation provided more than a dozen grants to non-profits across the country, from a pool of more than two hundred applicants, who sought to address the issue of climate justice. The *Newark Resiliency Action Plan* was the only grant award in the state of New Jersey.

NJEJA presented the Newark Resiliency Action Plan at the 2016 EcoDistricts conference in Denver, Colorado. EcoDistricts promotes sustainable neighborhood- and district-scale development, like NewarkRAP, 'empowering city makers to put people and planet at the center of every urban development decision.' NJEJA designed a panel discussion titled, **A Just Transition to a Clean Energy Future**. Dr. Nicky Sheats led off the presentation with a description of the implications of the federal Clean Power Plan and Clean Energy Incentive Program (CEIP) for session attendees. I followed by outlining local demonstration of the federal CEIP in the West Ward of Newark through NewarkRAP. Ruth Story, NAACP representative, closed the panel presentation with a description of enhanced green job opportunities through the NAACP Energy Justice Practitioner Certification Program.

Finally, we all know that recognition of your work by peer organizations is the highest honor. Nicole Scott-Harris, NJEJA's Newark Organizer, received the **New Jersey Work Environment Council's Rising Star Award** for her work with the City of Newark to advance the landmark Environmental Justice & Cumulative Impacts Ordinance. She was also recognized for her work with the Coalition for Healthy Ports to hold the Port Authority accountable for the pollution they produce in the community. Nicole organized a critical mayoral forum that put environmental justice issues front and center for Newark mayoral candidates.

NJEJA is looking forward to enhancing our reach in 2017. We humbly ask that you allow us to work with you to create healthy, sustainable and just communities by eliminating environmental injustices in low income and communities of color.

Thank you,



Laureen Boles, State Director
New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance

About NJEJA:

Mission:

NJEJA is an alliance of New Jersey-based organizations and individuals whose mission is to create healthy, sustainable and just communities by eliminating environmental injustices in low income and communities of color. We work with communities across four priority areas: (1) local, state, and national policy development, (2) targeted campaigns and organizing, (3) advocacy, (4) training and technical assistance.



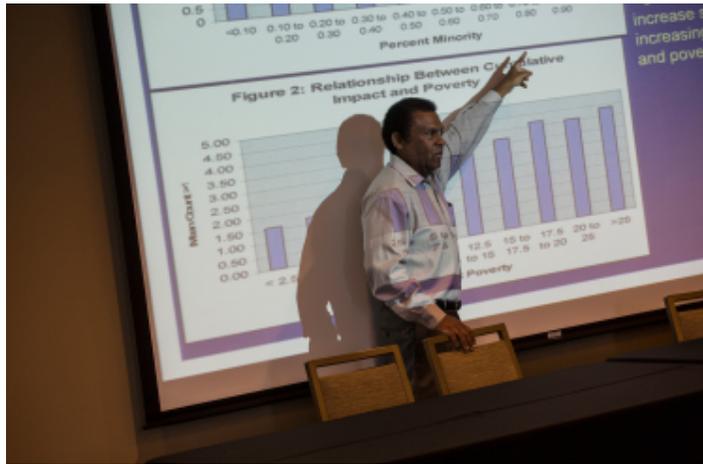
NJEJA Strategic Planning at Thomas Edison State College



NJEJA at the Clean Energy March in Philadelphia, PA

NJEJA History:

NJEJA, founded in 2002, is a recognized leader, on both the local and national levels, developing air pollution, climate change and public health policy from an environmental justice perspective. NJEJA is the only statewide organization in New Jersey that focuses on environmental justice issues and whose leadership and membership are predominately people of color. As a result of its unique leadership in the environmental arena, the Alliance has been successful helping to move environmental justice issues from the margin to the mainstream of environmental policy discussions.



Dr. Nicky Sheats on the relationship between Race, Income and Exposures



NJEJA Retreat: Mapping the Past, Present and Future of the Alliance

Our Impact:

- ***Policy Development***

- Cumulative Impacts:

The City of Newark adopted an Environmental Justice and Cumulative Impacts ordinance, and the accompanying Environmental Resources Inventory (ERI), which were the products of years of legal development and organizing on the part of NJEJA and its member and partner organizations. For the first time, the City of Newark must consider the cumulative impacts from existing pollution sources prior to issuing new permits.

The ordinance mandates that any new commercial or industrial project must make public the amount and type of pollution that will be associated with the proposed project, and the ERI must include demographic information to better ascertain the impact on environmental justice communities. Over the course of the year, the ordinance has triggered the review of several new development permits by Newark Environmental Commission.

NJEJA continues to participate in the monthly meetings of the Newark Environmental Commission as progress on the ERI is made. Development of the ERI, an electronic, living document, is being supported by the expert input of a team of academic researchers in and outside of New Jersey.



Nicole Scott Harris on the EJ and Cumulative Impacts Ordinance and her role as NJEJA Newark Organizer

FACT SHEET:

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

- Newark suffers from many different sources of pollution. For example, Newark is home to New Jersey's largest garbage incinerator, the largest seaport on the East Coast, and thousands of permits to pollute.
- All this pollution leads to health problems like asthma, cancer and heart disease. Newark's asthma rate is among the highest in the state; at 27% it is more than double that of Essex County suburbs.
- Newark also lacks environmental resources like green spaces that many wealthier, whiter suburbs in New Jersey enjoy. For example, Newark is 70% paved land with only 15% tree canopy coverage.
- This combination of environmental and individual stressors, such as poverty or stress, can increase one's vulnerability to the toxic effects of pollution.
- The Environmental Justice & Cumulative Impacts Ordinance gives the City of Newark and its residents the opportunity to fully review projects with the potential to negatively impact their health and environment.
- The Ordinance requires proposed industrial or commercial projects that require environmental permits to provide a detailed set of information about their potential to impact the local environment and quality of life.
- It educates planning and zoning board members about the existing burdens in a project area and any additional and cumulative burden from the proposed project through the submission of an Environmental Resources Inventory "Checklist".
- It allows the City to develop an environmental mitigation fund where applicants for new projects with potential impacts can contribute funds that will offset or mitigate negative impacts in the project area.
- It allows the public and city officials to be fully informed of a proposed projects' potential benefits and burdens on the local community.

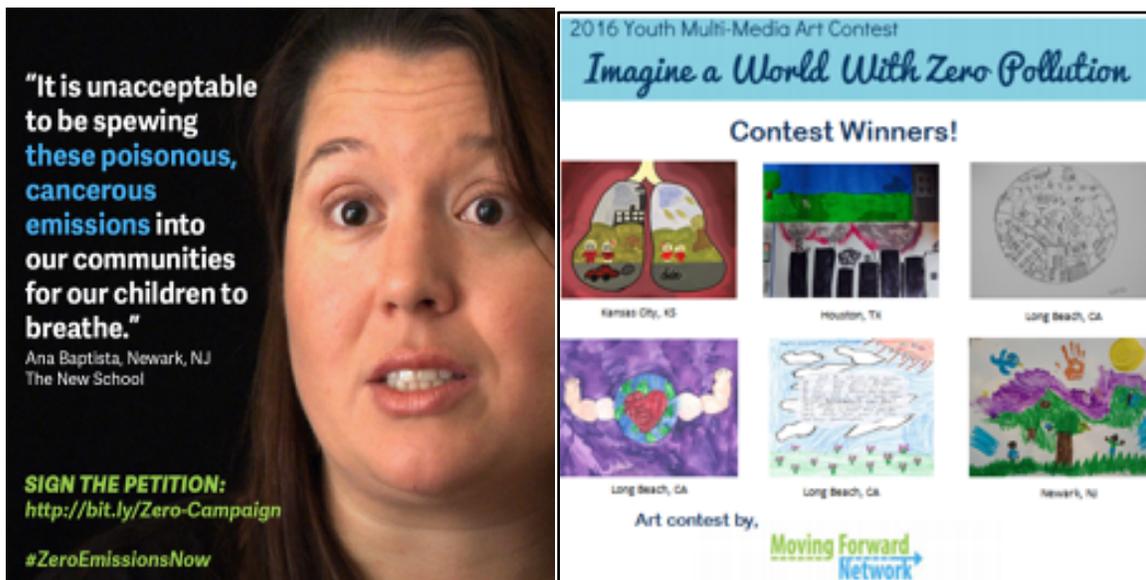
- **Targeted Campaigns and Organizing**

- Good Jobs, Healthy Neighborhoods, & a Clean Environment

As a member organization of the Coalition for Healthy Ports (CHPs), NJEJA is actively supporting the campaign for equitable, transparent operations at the Port Authority of New York-New Jersey. While broadly promoting environmental and economic justice in PANYNJ operations and related industries, some specific objectives of the campaign includes: equitable compensation for the city; environmental mitigation policies like a ban on dirty pre-2007 diesel trucks; and a Zero Emissions standard for port operations. In an effort to achieve these aims, NJEJA has regularly participated in direct engagement with officials from EPA Region 2 and PANYNJ to express our concerns and desired outcomes.

NJEJA is leading the coordination of a Gubernatorial Briefing Book for CHPs. The briefing book will address four main areas: (1) Clean Air, (2) Good Government, (3) Community Benefits, and (4) Good Jobs. The objective of the briefing book is to present to New Jersey’s gubernatorial candidates the coalition’s recommendations for equitable and just port operations.

In 2016 NJEJA also participated in CHPs solidarity actions with the City of Newark, Newark Environmental Commission, community based organizations, and concerned residents. These actions served to highlight inequities related to employment opportunities, poor environmental conditions, and a lack of transparency and accountability at the port.



(L) Dr. Ana Baptista on emissions in the Ironbound community of Newark (R) Moving Forward Network’s Youth Multimedia Contest: featuring a Newark submission that ranked 3rd place for the age group 5 to 9.

- Climate Resiliency

Minority and low-income communities are particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of climate change and are subject to reinforced social inequities during disasters and disaster recovery. Post Hurricane Sandy, community organizations provided the first response to underserved areas. Through the Kresge Foundation’s Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity Initiative, NJEJA and its partners, the Ironbound Community Corporation and Clean Water Action, have been engaged in climate-resiliency planning, policy development, and implementation efforts to advance the needs and priorities of low-income and minority people, purposefully working in conjunction with the City of Newark, community leaders and residents.

NJEJA, and its partners on the Newark Resiliency Action Plan (RAP) team, engage residents and businesses to work with community organizers, city planners, city officials, and climate scientists to ensure that everyone, especially low-income and minority communities, benefits from collaborative planning. We also engage those who consider their concerns tangential to climate change issues as we want to foster social networks, across disciplines and in different sectors, which communities can rely on in times of disaster.



NewarkRAP Press Event with Newark Mayor Baraka and Council President Crump

- **Advocacy**

- Sandy Climate Justice Roundtables

In 2016 NJEJA hosted the Climate Justice Roundtables to discuss the results of the three regional roundtables in northern, central and coastal New Jersey. Three subcommittees were formed to implement the recommendations: Community Mitigation and Adaptation Planning, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, and Climate Curriculum in Schools.

- *Community Mitigation & Adaptation Planning Subcommittee:*

The subcommittee proposes to produce a template for community-led mitigation and adaptation planning. The template advances climate-resiliency, policy development, and implementation according to the priorities and needs of low-income and minority people.

- *Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Subcommittee:*

The energy efficiency and renewable energy subcommittee of the Roundtable proposes to form a partnership that includes several New Jersey-based organizations and the Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy (CEED) to conduct energy-needs mapping then advise New Jersey urban municipalities on which federal energy efficiency and renewable energy programs would best meet community needs.

- *Climate Curriculum Subcommittee:*

The subcommittee proposes to produce climate justice curriculum for youth and adult learners, which can be utilized also as educational material for environmental and social organizations as well.



NJEJA at Regional Sandy Climate Justice Roundtables

FACT SHEET:

SANDY CLIMATE JUSTICE ROUNDTABLES

- The Sandy Climate Justice Roundtables brought together residents of environmental justice (EJ) communities in New Jersey, i.e. communities of color and low-income communities, as well as representatives of groups that work with them, to discuss climate change adaptation from an EJ perspective.
- In the fall of 2013 and spring of 2014, NJEJA organized the roundtables and produced a set of recommendations and findings that would protect, and help EJ communities recover, from the detrimental impacts of Superstorms like Sandy and climate change in general.
- The Roundtables produced three priority recommendations:
 - Creation and implementation of community level emergency and climate adaptation plans should be a collaborative process.
 - Climate change and climate justice curriculum should be developed for New Jersey schools.
 - Mitigation and adaptation strategies should be developed to increase the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy, especially in urban areas.The full set of recommendations, a description of the Roundtables, and a set of findings may be found on the website of the Rutgers University New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance and on the NJEJA website.
- We propose to conduct Roundtables in the cities of Newark, Trenton, and Long Branch during the Fall of 2015 as part of NJEJA's Kresge resiliency work in order to gain additional endorsements for the recommendations and to recruit new thought leaders on climate resiliency.
- NJEJA has played a prominent role on both a state and national level in helping the EJ community develop positions on climate change mitigation policy, especially on carbon-trading and EPA's Clean Power Plan.
- Future Roundtable meetings will discuss state and national policy so that New Jersey EJ communities are substantively prepared to participate in the development of the state implementation plans mandated by EPA's Clean Power Plan and in discussions on the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and the Global Warming Response Act.

- The Federal Clean Power Plan and New Jersey Energy Policy: Dr. Sheats, NJEJA Chair, has been an important part of a national team that has conducted trainings and developed EJ recommendations on the integration of environmental justice into the Clean Power Plan. Since the enhanced use of energy efficiency and renewable energy tools and mechanisms in environmental justice neighborhoods is an adaptation strategy as well as a mitigation policy, these trainings have helped EJ organizations move their communities towards resiliency.

NJEJA helped to develop the environmental justice recommendations through conversations with EJ communities across the country. The recommendations focus on mandatory emissions reductions for EJ communities but also touch on the prioritized use of energy efficiency and renewable energy in EJ neighborhoods. Thus far the CPP trainings have been conducted in Minnesota for the Climate Justice Alliance; in South Carolina for the EJ Leadership Forum on Climate change; in New Mexico and Delaware for the Environmental Justice Health Alliance and in Texas for the Bringing Equity into Alignment (BEA) Clean Power Plan Forum.

In addition, Dr. Nicky Sheats of Thomas Edison State College, Dr. Ana Baptista of the New School in New York, and Dr. Cecilia Martinez of the Center for Earth, Energy and Democracy in Minneapolis wrote papers, hosted a panel, and conducted two national webinars highlighting the collaborative EJ position. The panel was held at the New School and included Dr. Jalonnie White-Newsome and Mr. Cecil Corbin-Mark of WEACTION for Environmental Justice. The papers were sponsored by the New School and published by the William and Mary Environmental Law and Policy Review. The webinars were conducted for the philanthropic community and public at large and were sponsored jointly by the New School and BEA initiative. The papers and webinars can be accessed at http://blogs.newschool.edu/tedc/2016/07/11/cpp_ej/)



NJEJA and partners provide Clean Power Plan training at the New School in New York

- ***Training and Technical Assistance***

- Environmental Justice Leadership Training:

In Spring 2016, NJEJA trained 14 residents in its third cohort of the Environmental Justice Leadership Training Program. The 8-week program includes in-class training as well as field work, such as community mapping, air monitoring and a climate justice bus tour. Graduates of the training program have become champions of environmental justice in their communities, through organizations, and at city council. A full description of the program is available on the NJEJA website at www.njeja.org/EJLeadershipTraining.

New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance's (NJEJA's) Environmental Justice Leadership Training Modules

Ethnicity, Money and Environmental Justice: Through interactive exercises, students examine the roots of EJ, including its underpinnings in the Civil Rights Movement, and the interchange of racism and economic inequity in the strive for this socioeconomic goal.

Advocacy and Organizing: This course is an introduction to the Elements of Organizing, with a focus on EJ issues. Students will learn and how to apply the organizing elements in real world scenarios.

Healthy Ports Tour: Students will tour a site with an unsustainable legacy of environmental pollution in order to view prime examples of environmental injustice and learn about the community's response.

Recycling and Solid Waste: Students will be introduced to trash as a valuable natural resource as well as a waste audit, a tool for creating better recycling systems and moving towards zero waste.

Food Justice: This course is an introduction to the Food Justice Principles and how activists across the country are applying them to reshape the local food landscape for EJ communities.

Air Quality: This course is an introduction to particulate matter air pollution, its composition, sources, and health effects, as well as the emissions reduction policies

developed by the NJ EJ Alliance.

Climate Change: This course is an introduction to climate change from an EJ perspective, including mitigation and adaptation policies, greenhouse gas co-pollutants, carbon trading, and EPA’s climate change rule (the Clean Power Plan).

Cumulative Impacts: This course is an introduction to the concept of cumulative impacts as well as the policies developed by the NJ EJ Alliance and its allies to address the issue.

Sustainability and Green Jobs: This course is an introduction to sustainable living in a green economy. Students will become familiar with a sustainability plan and learn how to contribute.

Community Mapping and Fieldwork: A Student Perspective: Students map community characteristics, ground truth data from city, state and federal databases, and explain variations.

Community Monitoring and Fieldwork: A Student Perspective: Students monitor air quality in the vicinity of community assets and liabilities, collect data and explain results.

Data Management and Course Evaluations: Students will analyze environmental data, discuss findings, draw individual conclusions, and make recommendations for improvements to EJ training.



Environmental Justice Leadership Training Program Instructors Prep for Class

Goals for 2017:

- ***Policy Development***

- Cumulative Impacts:

NJEJA proposes to continue participation in the monthly meetings of the Newark Environmental Commission as progress on the Environmental Resources Inventory develops. NJEJA also proposes to work with the Newark Environmental Commission to: evaluate the impact of the ordinance and ERI; address necessary modifications; and promote replication of the ordinance and ERI statewide and regionally.

- ***Targeted Campaigns and Organizing***

- Good Jobs, Healthy Neighborhoods, & a Clean Environment

As a member of the Coalition for Healthy Ports, NJEJA will promote the Gubernatorial Briefing Book in an effort to inform and provide guidance to New Jersey's gubernatorial candidates on policies, procedures, and standards for equitable and just port operations. NJEJA intends to highlight and call for the prioritization of environmental and social justice issues by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

- Climate Resiliency

NJEJA will continue to urge political leaders and major employers to consider the impact of policies on community climate resiliency and help us develop a common understanding of what local communities want and need. Ultimately, our goals are to integrate low-income and minority communities into the policy development and decision-making process, develop model, community-led methodologies and policies, and contribute to the field of climate change.

- ***Advocacy***

- Sandy Climate Justice Roundtables

In 2017 NJEJA proposes to enhance and adopt the Sandy Climate Justice recommendations throughout the state and region in order to rectify obstacles to climate resiliency, as well as better inform regional planning and policies that could threaten proposed outcomes.

- The Federal Clean Power Plan and New Jersey Energy Policy:

NJEJA plans to bring environmental justice and energy training to New Jersey in 2017, as part of a concerted advocacy effort aimed at ensuring inclusion of environmental justice in New Jersey state energy programs, and to prepare New Jersey communities for participation in discussions on the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and the Global Warming Response Act.

- **Training and Technical Assistance**
 - Environmental Justice Leadership Training:
NJEJA plans to continue Environmental Justice Leadership Training in 2017 and seek certification of the curriculum at a local college or university. The overall goal is to create EJ champions in New Jersey and in the region.

We know that you share our passion for community service; we hope that you support our vision for environmental justice in 2017. Become a member or a partner, or join us for our General Body meetings.

2017 NJEJA Steering Committee / General Body Meeting Schedule

1st Tuesday's: Steering Committee Meeting at 4pm; General Body Meeting at 6pm
Thomas Edison State College, 315 W. State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608

DATE	MEETING
1/10/17	Steering Committee / General Body
2/7/17	Executive Committee
3/7/17	Executive Committee
4/4/17	Steering Committee / General Body
5/9/17	Executive Committee
6/6/17	Executive Committee
7/11/17	Steering Committee / General Body
8/1/17	Executive Committee
9/12/17	Executive Committee
10/3/17	Steering Committee / General Body
11/14/17	Executive Committee
12/5/17	Executive Committee



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training program have become champions of environmental justice in their communities, through organizations, and at city council. A full description of the program is available on the NJEJA website at www.njeja.org/EJLeadershipTraining.