

**Community Engagement Report**  
**Growing Clean Energy Jobs in Oakland**  
**April 5, 2014**



Growing Clean Energy Jobs in Oakland was the first community engagement event organized by the Oakland Climate Action Coalition's Clean Energy & Jobs Oakland Campaign. It was a mid-day forum on Saturday, April 5, 2014, from 11:00 am till 3:30pm.

**Participants/Attendees**

The event drew approximately 100 attendees, approximately three-fourths of whom were people of color. Approximately 20 youth participated, representing four different high schools - Coliseum College Prep Academy, MetWest, Fremont, and Castlemont - and three youth leadership / green jobs programs - SUDA Works (Sustainable Urban Design Academy) at Castlemont High School, East Oakland Youth Boxing Association, and New Voices Are Rising.

This turnout reflected the target demographic of the Campaign: low-income communities of color from the flatland communities most impacted by poverty, pollution, and climate change.

**Purpose/Goal**

The goal of Growing Clean Energy Jobs in Oakland was to engage, inspire and educate residents of East Oakland on the potential of Community Choice energy as a vehicle for creating local clean energy jobs for the community, as well as other community benefits. The event took place at Youth UpRising with the specific intention of building community awareness and mobilizing support for Community Choice energy in East Oakland, and specifically in City Councilmember Larry Reid's district. Reid was not supportive of Oakland's Energy and Climate Action plan in 2012.

**Partner Organizations**

The Campaign partnered with Youth UpRising, Allen Temple Baptist Church (Prophetic Justice Ministry), Oakland's largest African American church, the East Oakland Boxing Association, Communities for a Better Environment, and PUEBLO (People United for a Better Life in Oakland), all of which are rooted in or organize in East Oakland communities. Additional partners included the Local Clean Energy Alliance, Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), Sustainable Economies Law Center, Planting Justice, Movement Generation Justice and Ecology Project, Energy Solidarity Cooperative (ESC), Emerald Cities Oakland, Bay Localize, RE-volv, Sierra Club SF Bay Chapter, Ecology Center, Roots of Success, and Artos Consulting.

**Program**

The day began with a welcome from event MC Ambessa Cantave, Campaign Coordinator Colin Miller, and an opening blessing by Mutima Imani of Green Mind Coaching and Consulting, who through music with singer-guitarist Fari Shields, invited the audience to bring their highest selves to this transformative work.

Campaign organizer Jay Jones, board member of PUEBLO (People United for a Better Life in Oakland), then gave a slide show presentation of the Clean Energy & Jobs Oakland Campaign, explaining how

Community Choice energy can serve as a vehicle for stimulating local economic development and clean energy job creation for Oakland residents.

The panel of Community Leaders that followed was moderated by Christina Medina-Martin, Coordinator of the OCAC (Oakland Climate Action Coalition), and featured the participation of Agustin Cervantes, lead organizer with the ILWU (International Longshoremen and Warehouse Union) Local 6, Dominic Ware, organizer with OUR Walmart (Organization United for Respect at Walmart), student leaders Jakhiyra McDaniel and Margie Castellano with SUDA Works/Youth UpRising, and Nile Malloy, Northern California Program Director at CBE (Communities for a Better Environment). Panelists stressed the significance of Community Choice energy as a driver for local job creation, and the need for respectful and dignified, family-sustaining work with benefits in jobs created by the program.



*Panel participants (from left): Dominic Ware, Margie Castellano, Agustin Cervantes, Jakhiyra McDaniel, and Nile Malloy.*

In the conversation that followed between panelists and the audience, the issue of who really governs a Community Choice program arose - highlighting the emphasis by the Clean Energy & Jobs Oakland Campaign on a participatory community-level governance structure for more direct community involvement in designing and implementing the program.

After the panel, Taiji instructor Alonzo (Zochi) Young led event participants in a mindful movement exercise to support embodiment of the transformative program being discussed. Attendees then broke into five breakout rooms for lunch and interactive workshops. Workshop themes were diverse enough to encompass a range of interests and age ranges.

There were two workshops for youth. Youth alumni Devilla Ervin, Christina McGhee and Pamela Tapia from the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment's New Voices Are Rising program facilitated a workshop on *Growing Youth Leadership*, inviting youth participants to explore how youth are stepping into their power as community leaders. Corrine Van Hook and Maiha McGee from Bay Localize co-led another youth workshop on *Growing Our Future*, asking participants to delve into "What

challenges youth face today and in the future, and what solutions youth have for economic & climate justice.”

There were three workshops for adults. Nile Malloy and Jose Lopez from Communities for a Better Environment led a workshop on *Growing Environmental Justice*, asking the question, “How can communities take back their right to a clean, healthy and safe environment?” Julio Madrigal and Haleh Zandi from Planting Justice co-led a workshop on *Growing Food Justice*, asking, “How can our community take control and ownership of food systems?” Colin Miller from the Local Clean Energy Alliance / Bay Localize and Jasmine Shephard from Energy Solidarity Cooperative co-facilitated a workshop on *People-Powered Solutions*, in which participants brainstormed “How can communities gain democratic control and ownership of energy to create local control, quality jobs, and climate action?”



*Workshop on People Powered Solutions*

Following the workshops, the event concluded with two original musical performances, “If” by West Coast Blues Hall of Fame-awarded singer and guitarist Augusta Lee Collins, and a climate justice anthem, “Seven Generations” by singer-songwriter guitarist Iamani I. Ameni.

### **Outcomes**

Overall, attendees were inspired, moved and motivated by the event to support Community Choice energy, as part of a broader agenda for more equitably shared wealth, and for cooperative, democratic, and participatory governance structures.

The event advanced several of the Campaign’s key 2014 strategic goals. It worked to build the Campaign’s organizational outreach, in the direction of developing a strong stakeholder alliance of 50 prominent Oakland organizations from different sectors with a center of gravity in working class communities, low income communities, and communities of color.

The event also worked to grow the Campaign’s individual outreach and community engagement, growing the database of individual supporters for the call for a Community Choice Energy program in Oakland

that reflects the multi-cultural and racial diversity of Oakland and its neighborhoods. The list of attendees can be called on to support establishing a community-development-focused East Bay Community Choice energy program through letter writing, attending City Council meetings, volunteering, and other forms of participation.

### **Follow-up**

Immediate follow-up from the event has entailed an email thanking participants for attending the event, including [photographs](#) and invitations to get involved with the Clean Energy & Jobs Oakland Campaign. Additional follow-up includes scheduling meetings with partnering organizations to invite them to join as Campaign supporters.

[A short preview “sneak peak” film clip of the event](#) has recently been completed by our filmmaker partner Beverly Markiewicz of Tree Ring Film Productions, which will also be shared with event attendees, in advance of a more polished short film release about the Clean Energy & Jobs Oakland Campaign.

Longer term follow-up includes a gathering to consolidate Campaign supporting organizations and another community-based even, possibly in West Oakland.



*Mindful movement activity led by Alonzo (Zochi) Young*