



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & POLICY NEWSLETTER

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The EPA moves forward with the release of two new rules to improve air quality, public health of EJ communities



WE ACT for Environmental Justice and many communities across the country are hopeful that two proposed rules will improve the air and better protect the health of communities across the country.

Refinery Rule:

On May 15, the Environmental Protection Agency [proposed a rule to update the toxic air pollution standards for petroleum refineries.](#)

Many EJ communities live on the fence-line of these oil refineries that emit multitudes of air toxins on an hourly basis. This new proposed rule includes measures that would aim to reduce toxic pollution from flaring, require new monitoring requirements, specifically monitoring of

air concentrations of benzene around the fence-lines. The EPA estimates that toxic air emissions, including benzene, toluene and xylene, would be reduced by 5,600 tons per year. Volatile organic compound (VOCs) emissions would be cut by approximately 52,000 tons per year. EPA will take comments on the proposal for 60-90 days after it is published in the Federal Register and plans to hold two public hearings near Houston and Los Angeles. WE ACT, EarthJustice and other community partners met with the EPA and the Office of Management and Budget weeks before the refineries rule was released to reiterate the need for this rule and the importance of the process moving forward expeditiously.

The final standards should be completed in June 2015.

Continued on page 2

WE ACT, New Member of US Climate Action Network (USCAN)!

On May 1, 2014, WE ACT was voted as a new member of the US CAN, a network of 119 organizations. We are thrilled to be part of this network and contribute to its climate change work in the United States. Click [here](#) to see the full list.

WE ACT for Environmental Justice

Washington, D.C. Staff:

- Dr. Jalonnie L. White-Newsome, Federal Policy Analyst
- *Ms. Alaura Carter, Communications Intern
- *Ms. Dorthea Thomas, Climate Justice Fellow
- *Ms. Falon Shackelford, Outreach Intern
- *Ms. Mayra Cruz, Climate Accountability Intern
- Ms. Laetitia N'Dri, Toxic Chemical Safety Intern

- *Mr. Kyle Colonna, Research Health Intern
- Ms. Megan Griffin, Literature Intern

New York Policy Staff:

- Mr. Cecil D. Corbin-Mark, Dep. Director /Policy Director
- Ms. Peggy Shepard, Executive Director

*Internship completed

WE ACT for Environmental Justice is Northern Manhattan's proactive community health watchdog, vigilant in identifying conditions that threaten residents' quality of life and resolute in taking effective long-term action to address and correct these issues.

Continued from page 1, EPA new rules

GHG Rule/Carbon Pollution Standards:

In the next couple of weeks, the EPA is scheduled to release [another major rule](#) to reduce GHG that is part of the President's Climate Action Plan. Coal fired power plants are one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions, including carbon dioxide, nitrous oxides and other gases that contribute to climate change. This will be the first set of rules to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions, but also afford states to develop their own solutions like driving energy efficiency, increasing the amount of renewable energy sources and other mechanisms to reduce our reliance on fossil fuel derived power.

Next Steps:

WE ACT and the [Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change](#) (EJLFCC) will be gearing up to educate and empower EJ communities across the country to not only get engaged with this standard, but to work with state environmental agencies, public utility commissions and other environmental allies to insure that low income, communities of color are not disproportionately impacted by some of the strategies that will be employed to meet the new rules. There are various ways that communities and regular citizens can get engaged in both of these rules. Once a new rule is proposed and listed in the Federal Register (a daily publication of the US government that issues proposed and final rules for federal agencies) there is typically a 60-90 day comment period, and a series of public hearings. After the comment period –

specifically for the greenhouse gas standard, by next June 2015 (approximately), the final rule will be published and each state will be responsible for creating an implementation plan that will achieve the required reductions. Communities have a great opportunity to help shape the contents of these plans by engaging with state stakeholders. If you are interested in being engaged in either of these rules, please stay tuned to our website for specific opportunities and upcoming webinar after the standard is released: www.ejleadershipforum.org

In addition to the refinery and GHG rules, WE ACT continues to advocate for other rules that will continue to clean the air and improve public health: urban air toxins, start-up shut down malfunction rule (SSM Rule) and new Ozone regulations that will be coming out this summer.

Resources:

[EPA Refineries Fact Sheet](#)

Anticipated Timeline for GHG Rule:

- Green house gas standard (i.e. carbon pollution standard) for existing power plants release date: June 2, 2014
- Public comment period: 60 -90 days after it is published in the federal register
- Final rule published: Approximately June 2015

WE ACT Crafts Resolution to Acknowledge EJ Executive Order 12898

On February 11, 2014, Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) co-Chairs Reps. Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ) and Keith Ellison (D-MN) introduced [House Resolution 479](#): Recognizing the 20th anniversary of the Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations to commemorate the achievements of the EJ movement and honor the 20th Anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 12898. This resolution, drafted and cosponsored by WE ACT, recognizes the continued importance of addressing environmental justice concerns at the congressional and administrative level.

In addition to the resolution, WE ACT and the Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change (EJLFCC) launched a campaign called “Close

the EJ Gap”. During this campaign, WE ACT and members of the EJ community undertook several initiatives to urge President Obama to specifically address environmental justice concerns in his Climate Action Plan. As a part of this campaign, WE ACT spearheaded a letter to the President asking him to commit to focus on greater oversight and to support Federal agency advancement of environmental justice; and to work with tribal leaders and communities to address their unique environmental justice concerns. The letter was signed by 53 members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus and was delivered to the President on March 6. A copy of this letter can be found on the [EJLFCC website](#).

*President Clinton signing Executive Order 12898.
(Photo courtesy of Drrobertbullard.com)*



Cutting Carbon Pollution

Public Comments

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been crafting carbon pollution standards for both new and existing power plants that burn fossil fuels for energy.

Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome testifying at the EPA on the implementation of new power plants standards. Washington, D.C.



For new power plants, the EPA extended the public comment period until May 9, 2014. For existing power plants, the next comment period will begin after the release of the rule on June 2. While many industry representatives have been meeting with the EPA about the new standards, groups like Moms Clean Air Force, a community of parents united against air pollution to protect children's health, also delivered comments to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy about the importance of the new power plant rule.

WE ACT is working on developing a new campaign to make sure local EJ leaders are engaged in the crafting and implementation of these two rules to make sure that mitigation solutions will not negatively impact EJ communities.

Taking Action to Implement the Rules for Existing Power Plants

US Climate Action Network (US CAN) convened a 2-day conference, bringing together diverse groups to discuss goals, strategies and activities to support and strategize around moving the standards for existing coal-fired plants. All participants were also encouraged to testify at the EPA public hearings on carbon standards for new power plants held on February 6th.

The meeting began with an overview of the legal landscape behind carbon emission standards and the rule-making process for enforcing standards. The message behind the session was to help enforce "strong and enforceable standards that would result in a large reduction of carbon and in result a major increase clean energy will take a massive effort." Specific presentations were provided by conveners on current campaigns, and engaging allies around the standards.



Cecil D. Corbin-Mark, WE ACT Deputy Director/Policy Director presenting at the US CAN conference



From left to right: Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome, WE ACT; Shalini Gupta and Dr. Cecilia Martinez, CEED; Dr. Ije Kilimanjaro, East Michigan Environmental Action Council



EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy Tweeted about Moms Clean Air Force visit at the EPA. Dr. Newsome and her 2 children, Arielle and Jeannelyn (pictured in the front on the right) Attended as well.

Tier III at OMB : Motor Vehicle and Fuel Emissions Standards

On March 3, 2014 the EPA released new standards to reduce tailpipe and evaporative emissions from cars and trucks, as well as lower the sulfur content for gasoline, which will make emission control systems more effective for both existing and new vehicles. WE ACT's Executive Director Peggy Shepard released this statement to applaud EPA's actions: ***"For the past 25 years, WE ACT has worked to improve the health of Harlem residents by advocating for cleaner buses and bus depots in Northern Manhattan. Working together with our academic research partners, we have documented over the years the health impacts of particulate matter and other pollutants on our community. While we have successfully helped convert the fleet of diesel buses in Manhattan to clean hybrids, there is still a need to continue to reduce emissions from other mobile sources that emit harmful air toxins that exacerbate health disparities in our community and across the country. Tier 3 will reduce the levels of asthma and other respiratory related diseases that impact our children and our elderly and it is a great next step to helping all Americans – despite race or socioeconomic status – breathe a little bit easier."***



20th Anniversary of Executive Order 12898: Recognizing Past and Future EJ Leaders

February 11th marked the [20th Anniversary of Executive Order 12898](#). Twenty years ago, President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations", to focus federal attention on the environmental and human health conditions of minority and low-income populations with the goal of achieving environmental protection for all communities. One of the outcomes of the executive order was the establishment of an Interagency Working Group (IWG) on environmental justice chaired by the EPA Administrator and it is comprised of the heads of 11 departments or agencies and White House offices.

There were many events across the country that took place to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of Executive Order 12898. On Wednesday February 26, the Environmental Protection Agency co-sponsored with the EPA's African American Male Forum the 20th Anniversary Celebration of EO 12898, in which they honored Congressman John Lewis and other environmental justice champions. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy honored Congressman Lewis for his dedication to environmental and social justice. Forum member Deeohn Ferris honored leaders, who helped craft and implement executive order 12898. Forum member Kari Fulton of the Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative and WE ACT's Jalonne White-Newsome were panelists in the discussion of how we can move environmental justice

forward in the next 20 years. The EJ Leadership Forum will also feature short video documentaries from members of the Forum on the forum website! Check them out [here!](#)



Congressman John Lewis exchanging gifts with EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy



Forum member Deeohn Ferris, President, Sustainable Community Development Group



Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome, Federal Policy Analyst WE ACT for Environmental Justice



Forum members and WE ACT Co-founder Vernice Miller-Travis and Kari Fulton, Interim Director, Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative and her young son Solomon

Urging President Obama to Close the EJ Gap



On November 29, 2013 WE ACT and the Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change officially launched the "Closing the EJ Gap," campaign. This campaign has been an ongoing effort to amplify the need for the President to make EJ a significant part of the President's Climate Action Plan (CAP), and to ensure that EJ leaders are a significant part of the implementation phase of plan going forward. WE ACT hired [Environics Communications](#), a public relations firm, to help with messaging and the social media aspects of the campaign. As a part of the campaign, WE ACT and the Forum initiated an online

petition through the White House's ['We the People'](#) website, publishing blog posts, sending tweets, writing articles for online magazines, and conducting outreach to congressional offices.

The "Close the EJ Gap" campaign continues as members of the Forum and WE ACT gear up to tackle the new standards to reduce carbon from power plants and meet with top White House staff. The efforts of the campaign were highlighted in a recent news article in the National Journal, "[Lawmakers to Obama: Do More on Environmental Justice](#)".

Campaign Goals

- To get the President's attention,
- To educate new constituencies
- To garner Congressional support and build new EJ champions

EJ Forum Meeting with White House CEQ

On March 27 2014, members of the Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change met with members of the White House Council on Environmental Equality (CEQ) staff. At the meeting, EJLFCC members identified pathways for working with the CEQ on solutions that are more informed by the EJ community experiences.



From left to right: Ms. Laureen Boles, Dr. Jalonne L. White Newsome, Dr. Charlotte Keys, Mr. Cecil Corbin-Mark, Mr. Tom Goldtooth, and Mr. Bryant Parras

EJ Forum members asked key leaders in CEQ to provide feedback on several key concerns: human rights, children's health, carbon capture and sequestration as a mitigation technology, the environmental impact statement around the Keystone Pipeline, energy efficiency, insuring that resilience funding is targeted for EJ communities to be better prepared for climate and creating a federal EJ scorecard.

From this point on, CEQ has agreed to meet with members of the forum on a quarterly basis to increase communication.

Clean Air Rulemaking: Cleaning up Toxic Emissions from Refineries



On April 22, 2014, EarthJustice, the NAACP, WE ACT and other community & environmental justice groups met with the White House Office of Management and Business (OMB) to discuss refineries air pollution and critical air standards that can be put in place to protect fence-line communities and safeguard public health. Refineries emit a myriad of toxic chemicals including carcinogens, neurotoxins, and hazardous metals that have serious health impacts including cancer, birth defects and asthma. Often, children and EJ communities suffer most from refineries pollution, which oftentimes go unreported. At the meeting, the groups urged OMB and the EPA to adopt a robust program to monitor the thickness of aging piping to protect communities from uncontrolled leaks, flaring, and explosions. The coalitions also asked the agencies to set strong and effective monitoring requirements, testing, and reporting which will help protect our communities and assure compliance with the emission limits.

According to the U.S. Chemical Safety Board, the latest refinery explosion in Richmond, CA could have been prevented by simply enacting a more stringent monitoring and construction system. This deadly accident is a warning that stricter regulations can save the lives of our communities.

SSM RULE: EJ Forum Call on Obama Administration to Protect Vulnerable Communities

On Earth Day, the EJLFCC sent out a letter to President Obama, asking him and his administration to take action on the Start Up, Shut Down, Malfunction (SSM) [rule](#). If implemented, the long overdue rule will have immediate and measurable benefits for EJ communities and public health. In fact, 36 affected states will have 18 months to submit revised plans to EPA that would include these special periods of startup, shutdown and malfunction so that facilities will have to comply with their pollution permits at all times. In their letter the members affirmed that, "a strong SSM rule will help improve air quality, contribute to healthier children and families, and save lives." The members also called out existing loopholes and the lack of compliance and enforcement, that leave entire neighborhoods with little capacity to make polluting industries accountable for the deadly emissions they produce into their air and water. Children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing heart and breathing ailments are particularly vulnerable to this pollution and taking action vital.

The effort was captured in an E&E News article, "[Environmental justice groups want swift finalization of EPA emissions rule](#)", and also in a Grist blog, "[Decades-old pollution loophole still burns people of color and the poor](#)".

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report Released

Last month, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its [Fifth Assessment Report \(AR5\)](#), which synthesized the most recent data and research on climate change and the role carbon dioxide (CO₂) plays as a leading contributing factor. The report presents the most updated information on the science behind climate change, the impacts, risks, adaptations and possible strategies that can be used to reduce the effects of CO₂ pollution. More importantly it sends out a clear message that as a global community, we have a lot of work to do as extreme weather events will be the onsets of industry and transportation carbon emissions. For more information on how to get involved with the IPCC, please see their international outreach calendar [here!](#)

National Climate Assessment: Coming Soon!

As mandated by the Global Change Research Act (GCRA), the U.S. Global Change Research Program has to produce a climate assessment report at least every four years and the Climate Assessment and Development Advisory Committee (NCADAC) delivered a revised draft of the [Third National Climate Assessment](#) report on May 6, 2014. The report is intended to inform the President, Congress, and the American people. To access the report please visit: <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>

President's Obama Methane Strategy

As part of his Climate Action Plan, President Obama ordered his Administration to develop a “comprehensive and interagency” strategy to cut methane emissions. Since June 2013, several agencies including DOI, USDA, EPA, and DOE have worked to produce a methane cutting method for landfills, coal mines, agriculture, oil and gas. On March 28 2014, The White House released the Climate Action Plan – Strategy to Cut Methane Emissions. Read [the full Strategy here](#).

Senate Climate Rally

On May 21, 2014, Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), both co-chairs of the Senate Climate Action Task Force led ["Wake up Congress for Climate Action Rally"](#). The rally was an effort to demonstrate their concern and also their commitment to take action on climate change issues. Speakers included: members of the Senate Climate Action Task Force, the Bicameral Climate Change Task Force, the House Safe Climate Caucus, and the House Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition, as well as House and Senate leadership.

Events

Women as Climate Leaders: Building Resilience Across Our Communities



On April 29, Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome participated in a 'Women and Climate' panel discussion. The event took place at the EPA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy gave opening remarks, along with Office of Air and Radiation Assistant Administrator, Janet McCabe. Other panelists included: Jane Nishida, Office of International and Tribal Affairs; Neha Misra, Solar Sister; Jean Sweeney, 3M; and Corinne Hart, Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves. The panelists shared stories that demonstrated why women are particularly well-suited to lead on climate change, the challenges that come with being a woman in this field, and gave advice on the most effective strategies to engage women in climate change work. Click [here](#) to watch the entire discussion.

Fostering the Next Generation of Women EJ Leaders

On May 15, Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome visited the Academy of the Holy Cross, an all-girls Catholic school in Kensington, MD. The event, in partnership with Sojourners, aimed to educate young women on careers and opportunities for women in Environmental Science. Dr. White-Newsome met with a group of rising high school seniors and lectured on environmental justice & policy, and the need for more women in the environmental science & policy field.



From left to right: Ms. Liz Schmitt, Sojourners; Holy Cross rising Seniors; Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome, WE ACT; Corky Logsdon, Holy Cross Environmental Science teacher

Building the Youth Climate Movement

Environmentalism, sustainable development, and labor are all a vital part of the solutions to help make environmental justice a reality. The inaugural [Youth Climate Caucus](#), sponsored by [NRDC](#) and [Blue Green Alliance](#) (BGA), brought together youth from groups from labor, justice and environmental movements to network, learn, and build alliances to build healthy sustainable communities together.

The Youth Climate Caucus, a part of BGA's annual [Good Jobs, Green Jobs conference](#)—held February 9-12—was an event catered to give youth an opportunity to build authentic relationships and play a bigger role in solving our rapidly worsening climate crisis.

WE ACT's Federal Policy Analyst spoke about the



Dr. Jalonne White- Newsome and WE ACT Communications Intern Alaura Carter at the Good Jobs Green Jobs Conference

history of the environmental justice movement, the 20th anniversary of the EJ Executive Order, and WE ACT's recent campaign called "Close the EJ GAP", urging the President to address EJ concerns in his Climate Action Plan.

"Low-income neighborhoods, communities of color, and tribal areas suffer environmental burdens like contamination from industrial plants or landfills and indoor air pollution from poor housing conditions", stated Dr. White-Newsome. "Some neighborhoods, communities, and regions have become the dumping grounds for all kinds of toxins because of their race and/or class."



Dr. Jalonne White- Newsome offers wisdom and insight to youth in the labor, environmental and social justice movement. (BGA Youth Climate Caucus, DC)

Senate Climate Action Task Force

Senate Democrats have joined together for the Climate Action Task Force to address climate issues across the country. The Task Force is comprised of 22 senators from



Members of the Senate Climate Action Task Force Members

across the country, and is headed by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI).

In her remarks, Sen. Boxer said that the task force aims to "wake up Congress", and that we need to focus on the facts of climate change and find possible solutions to the issue. The Task Force efforts will include events, floor speeches and working with outside organizations and businesses to gain support. On March 10, the Senate's Democrats pulled an all-nighter that reaffirmed their commitment to progressively move forward with climate change issues at the national level.

United Methodist Women 2014 Legislative Seminar

On Saturday, February 22, 2014, Dr. White-Newsome presented at the Greater Washington District United Methodist Women 2014 Legislative Seminar. The seminar was held at the Silver Spring United Methodist Church in Silver Spring, MD. WE ACT's Federal Policy Analyst spoke on the topic, "The Power of Advocacy: Taking Environmental Stewardship from the Pews to the Hill". Approximately 40 leaders representing various chapters of the United Methodist Women were in attendance. The presentation provided an overview of environmental justice, with a specific focus on WE ACT's "Close the EJ Gap" campaign and ways to encourage advocacy at the state and federal level.



Dr. Kathleen Charters, registered nurse, health care expert and President of the United Methodist Women Central Maryland District, and WE ACT's Federal Policy Analyst, Jalonne L. White-Newsome.

“Managing Asthma While Living & Learning”

On May 13, 2014, the Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition held its 2nd annual statewide asthma conference. Several keynote speakers from various public health and medical affiliations shared their expertise on asthma prevalence in the state of Indiana. Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome presented on the national policy and local situation of asthma in the state. More specifically, she suggested ways to overcome asthma by reducing air pollution, building climate resilience, and enhancing the public health infrastructure. She also elaborated on the harmful cumulative impacts of environmental hazards and their connections to health disparities. She urged the audience to raise their voices to reduce these injustices.



From left to right: Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome, WE ACT; Members of the Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition staff.

Environmental Protection Agency: Clean Air Act Rulemaking and Training for Environmental Justice Communities

On March 18-20, 2014, a workshop was held in Research Triangle Park, NC at the USEPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, to train participants on using existing training materials to tailor community-specific programs and on how they can engage effectively in EPA's rulemaking process, both in state implementation of federal Clean Air programs, and in federal, state, and local air permitting processes. This training also provided a primer on Clean Air Act provisions and gave participants a chance to interact with key EPA staff as well as other NGOs and community-based organizations. Click [here](#) for the full agenda and more!

DMV EJ Coalition



On November 14th 2013, the DMV Environmental Justice Coalition held their 3rd meeting with members of the Dundalk, Maryland community at the Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center. Over 100 community leaders, residents, NGOs, students attended the meeting. The meeting, sponsored by WE ACT, The University of Maryland, The John Hopkins School of Public Health, the Maryland Environmental Health Network and members of the Dundalk, aimed to discuss key environmental concerns in the state of

Maryland – ranging from water quality, air quality, health disparities and the desire to engage in the political arena.

The DMV EJ Coalition is an adhoc group of like-minded individuals that intends to remain engaged on environmental and social justice issues in the Washington DC metropolitan area (i.e. The District of Columbia, Maryland, and Northern Virginia). From several conversations that started in the Fall of 2012, key partners have joined as the coalition seeks to engage the capacity and voice of grassroots organizations, in the defined region, to inspire deeper participation in the broader political arena and undertake research and action to provide a safe, healthy environment for communities of color, and/or low income populations.

Building Health Equity

On March 12, 2014 Dr. White-Newsome attended and presented at the First Annual Health Equity Symposium hosted by Hofstra University school of law, NY. She shared her knowledge of environmental health disparities and of the importance of raising community voices at both the federal and local levels to protect the most vulnerable and to ensure that EJ communities are included in the decision-making process of all laws that could impact their health.

Other panelists including Dr. Martin Hackett from Hofstra University and Dr. Katie Martin from the University of St. Joseph presented on suburban health disparities and on nutritional disparities.

The symposium, organized by former WE ACT Intern Johanna Andrews, was rich in expertise on health disparities and participants left with a clear sense of how different communities and groups suffer from different burdens and on how they can take action to change this status-quo and protect the most vulnerable.



From left to right: Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome, WE ACT; Dr. Katie Martin, University of Saint Joseph; Ms. Johanna Andrews, Former WE ACT Intern and MPH candidate at Hofstra; Dr. Martine Hackett, Assistant Professor at Hofstra; Dr. Corinne Kyriacou, Graduate Director, Hofstra

Close the Gap: A Teach in on Environmental and Climate Justice



On March 6, 2014 WE ACT hosted its first Environmental and Climate Justice Teach-In at the Peace House in Washington DC. The Peace House is a center that fosters learning and activist excellence through the facilitating various individual, community, and world betterment projects; such as Teach-Ins, Non-Violence Training's and Direct action tactics for social change. The Teach-In introduced WE ACT to the activist community in DC by engaging attendees through presentations and games with an education component on environmental justice issues, and sought to highlight important local work as well as the 20th Anniversary of the Executive Order on Environmental Justice.



The featured guests included Ms. Shilpa Joshi, a Field Organizer with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) who presented information about the disastrous development of Cove Point, a liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility located right on the Chesapeake

Bay in Southern Maryland which is proposing such a dangerous and costly detour from our region's clean energy future; the Interim Director of the Environmental Justice and Climate Change (EJCC) initiative Kari Fulton helped educate participants about the



Kari Fulton, Director of the EJCC Initiative

guiding principles of Environmental Justice and how important it is for underrepresented communities to have a voice at the decision-making table. Attorney Marcia Cleveland from the Interfaith Moral Action on Climate (IMAC) explained how environmental stewardship is a moral responsibility for all religions and the dire importance of climate justice from an interfaith perspective. Ms. Leslie Fields, the Environmental Justice Director at the Sierra Club, shared with the audience detailed history of the Environmental Justice movement and the importance of Executive Order 12898, which urges Federal Agencies to focus on the needs and inclusion of environmental justice communities.

The teach-in allowed participants to learn about ways to get further engaged with other local events and opportunities to engage on the issues. The event gave participants an opportunity to fellowship with others while also spotlighting local organizing efforts for climate justice and national campaigns on environmental justice.



Leslie Fields, Environmental Justice Director; Sierra Club

Finally, the teach-in also introduced the Principles of Environmental Justice and other key documents that represent the importance and relevance of justice and an intersectional analysis to this work. WE ACT hopes to use this event as a means of connecting and collaborating with other environmental organizations in the D.C. area.



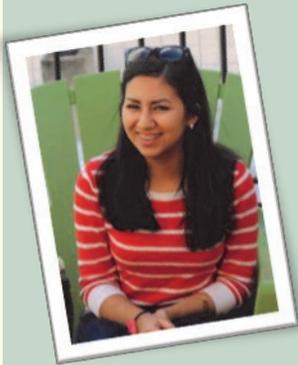
From left to right: Dorthea E. Thomas, Alaura Carter, Kyle Colonna, Dr. Jalonne L. White-Newsome, Falon Shackelford, Mayra Cruz; WE ACT DC at the Peace House, Washington, D.C.

Thank You WE ACT DC Winter/Spring Interns!

For the past six months, WE ACT was fortunate to have great, young talent in the office. We wish our interns the best of luck as they move on to future endeavors!



Dorthea E. Thomas is a Sustainable Technology Specialist and worked as a Climate Justice Fellow at WE ACT for Environmental Justice in Washington D.C. In her hometown of Detroit, she worked in the Detroit Public Schools Office of Energy and Sustainability as a Green School Coordinator. She is a Thomas Cooley Law School CLEO Scholar and a graduate of Eastern Michigan University with a Bachelor of Science in Public Law and Government, Women & Gender Studies, and Criminology/Criminal Justice and holds a college certificate in Sustainable Tech Specialization. She has a passion to educate and empower others about social justice issues pertaining to reproductive health and the environment.



Mayra Cruz is an intern at WE ACT and just completed her Junior year at The George Washington University. She is majoring in Public Health and minoring in Sustainability. After graduating she hopes to pursue a Masters of Public Health in Environmental Health Sciences. She comes from Houston, TX, where she has lived most of her life. She attended Power Shift in the fall of 2013, which is a conference for environmental youth activists. There, she heard many speakers from frontline communities that were adversely affected by climate change. Due to this eye opening experience she came to WE ACT to seek a better understanding of environmental justice.

Falon has organized with or supported the work of various environmental organizations such as Greenpeace, Environmental Justice and Climate Change Initiative, Energy Action Coalition and Green for All, and coplanning an environmental job fair with over 40 organizations. Her areas of expertise are curriculum development, community organizing and grassroots leadership development. She is an alumna of Howard University, with a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and History, and a minor in community development. She enjoys social justice event planning and DJing in her spare time.



Laetitia A. N'Dri started interning at the WE ACT DC office in September 2012 as a Toxic Chemical Safety Intern. Since then, her work expanded to include general support and planning of office events, website development, social media management, and assisting Dr. White-Newsome with the coordination of the EJ Forum. Currently, she is working on finalizing a literature review on Bisphenol-A (BPA) and phthalates exposures in EJ communities and on the need to have a TSCA reform. Laetitia graduated from the University of Maryland College Park with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and a Minor in Spanish. In the long run, Laetitia is interested in working at the intersection of public health & medicine with a focus on reducing health disparities.

Kyle Colonna just completed his Sophomore year at The George Washington University majoring in Public Health and minoring in Sustainability. He has been dedicated to his studies in the field of environmental health. Through experience he knows how important it is we seek to redress the inequitable spread of environmental issues so we can help build healthy communities. He is extremely lucky and grateful to begin his professional career with WE ACT and excited to be working with the team. He is also the Athletics chair for the Beta Theta Pi social fraternity, a member of the Delta Epsilon Mu professional pre-med/pre-health fraternity, a member of the Sigma Alpha Lambda honors society, the director of External Communications for the student-run public health organization known as GlobeMed, and a surf instructor at 7th Street Surf Shop.





Alaura Carter worked as the Communications Intern for WE ACT for Environmental Justice, handling social media, outreach and the "Closing the Gap," campaign. She has learned more about environmental justice through federal policy. Alaura has had the opportunity to work with several environmental non-profits doing organizing and advocacy work. She has B.S.

in Public Relations with a minor in Environmental Science from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. She will be attending University of Maryland in the fall to pursue her masters degree. She is native of Washington D.C.



Megan is four courses and a thesis defense away from an undergraduate degree in Comparative Literature from Georgetown University. Aside from the arts, Megan focuses on the intersections between gender equality and sustainability. Megan has worked as a research assistant and conducted original research along that theme, and hopes to gain insight while volunteering with WE ACT to convert her research to action. A

fledgling organizer, she hopes to learn strategies to work toward environmental justice. In her spare time, she enjoys many things, like dancing, biking and writing.



Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change

The Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change (EJLFCC) was formally organized in 2008 with the goals of *mobilizing and facilitating a national working group of environmental justice advocates who will interact with identified scientists/academics and representatives of mainstream environmental groups to catalyze and inform state and federal, political and legislative action that will result in the development of just policies and mechanisms that equitably reduce carbon emissions in all communities.*

Please contact the DC office if you know of organizations working on environmental justice issues and that might be interested in joining in on the work of the EJLFCC. We want to expand our reach and have the opportunity to elevate issues that can be moved forward at a national level. The membership application can be downloaded on our website: www.ejleadershipforum.org/get-involved.

For more information, please contact:

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WE ACT's mission is to build healthy communities by assuring that people of color and/or low-income participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health and protection policies and practices.