

STILL

# Growing STRONG



## 2021-2022 IMPACT REPORT





## WHO WE ARE

### Our Mission

The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice is dedicated to improving the lives of community members of all ages who are harmed by pollution and vulnerable to climate change, through research and policy studies, community and student engagement to impact policy change, and health and safety training for environmental careers.

### Our Vision

Shaping the future for climate vulnerable communities to thrive in a healthy and just environment.

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## WHAT WE DO

Our mission is to provide opportunities for communities, scientific researchers and decision makers to promote the rights of all people to be free from environmental harm as it impacts health, jobs, housing, education, and a general quality of life. The DSCEJ strives to achieve partnerships among universities and communities; as well as interactions among its various program components and legacy.

Research/policy, community assistance / education, and primary, secondary and university education are the components the Center uses to reach its objectives.

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# MEET OUR FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Dr. Beverly L. Wright

*Dynamic Visionary. Thought Leader. Advocate. Champion for Justice. Mother.*

These are just few words to describe Dr. Beverly Wright and her style and perspective as an environmental justice pioneer and global leader on climate issues.

Dr. Beverly Wright is an award-winning environmental justice scholar, advocate, author, civic leader, professor of Sociology, and the Founder and Executive Director of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ), the **first-ever environmental justice resource center in the United States.**

Based in New Orleans, Louisiana, the DSCEJ addresses environmental and health inequities along the Gulf Coast using community/university partnerships to provide education, training and job placement for underserved environmental justice communities throughout the U.S. Our **EJ Communiversality model** was created, developed and implemented by Dr. Wright.

DSCEJ also develops and manages **innovative research and policy studies that build knowledge and inform policies for achieving environmental, climate and economic justice.**

### FAST FACTS:

- Established the **FIRST-EVER Environmental Justice Center in Louisiana**
- Developed the **EJ Communiversality model**
- Outstanding Alumni **SUNY Buffalo**
- **Hines Award Winner**
- Co-Chair of the **WHEJAC EJ subcommittee**

Under the Biden administration, Dr. Wright was appointed to the **White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council (WHEJAC)** in 2021, through which she advises on how the federal government can address current and historic environmental injustices.

**She has decades of experience rooted in science, research, and personal experiences on the most pressing issues exacerbating the climate crisis.** Dr. Wright strongly believes that building a legacy of educated African-American climate conscious professionals will contribute to the viability and sustainability of our planet for generations to come.



Dr. Wright with EPA Administrator Michael Regan at the White House for the **Inflation Reduction Act Signing.**



Dr. Wright speaking at the **40th Anniversary of Warren County NC.**



Dr. Wright and VP Kamala Harris at the White House



Nancy Pelosi visited the **Climate Justice Pavilion at COP 27**



Dr. Wright and Former VP Al Gore at COP27 in Sharm-el-Shiek, Egypt.



# We **CULTIVATE** community leaders.

The main focus of our community engagement work is on building the capacity of organizations, people and communities as they fight against environmental and racial injustices in addition to the ill effects of climate change. In achieving organizational and collective goals, the Deep South Center engages in innovative, timely and practical trainings and workshops designed to uplift, inspire and increase the ability of these communities to advocate for themselves and take a seat at the decision-making table. With these goals in mind, the Center has created the HBCU-CBO Gulf Coast Equity Consortium.

*Pictured above: Children learning how to garden at the EJYES Unity in the Family Summer Program*

## HBCU-CBO Gulf Coast Equity Consortium

The consortium consists of **Historically Black Colleges and Universities** and **community-based organizations** using their collective strengths and assets to address health inequity, environmental racism, and the elevated vulnerability of children and families to climate-induced disasters.

DSCEJ has conducted trainings for CBOs to develop skills in obtaining grants to resource and sustain their work, secure funds to benefit their communities and we have assisted CBOs in implementing their strategic action plans.

### COMMUNITY GOALS:

- Expand **knowledge**
- Shift **behavior**
- Build **power**
- Advance **policy solutions**
- Develop a **workforce** of skilled people to enter **environmentally sustainable careers.**



(L-R) Major Joe Womack of C.H.E.S.S., Tracey Stephens of ACTS, Rashida Ferdinand of Sankofa, Katherine Eglund of EEECHO, Dawn Hebert of ENONAC, Rev. Calvin Avant of Unity in the Family and Monique Harden, Director of Law and Policy at DSCEJ at the 8th Annual Climate Change Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana

## Achieving Community Tasks Successfully (ACTS)

Pleasantville community; Houston, TX

Leader: Bridgette Murray



(L) ACTS volunteers at the “Trees for Houston” Earth Day event  
(R) Bridgette Murray giving testimony at a state hearing on a report evaluating the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality’s effectiveness.

ACTS is a non-profit organization focused on community based social and environmental justice.

**The Win:** Reaching an agreement with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to install a **regulatory air monitor** in the Pleasantville community.

## Clean, Healthy, Educated, Safe and Sustainable (C.H.E.S.S.)

Africatown community; Mobile, AL

Leader: Maj. Joe Womack



(L) Maj. Joe Womack. (R) News coverage of Africatown’s Community Safe Zones

C.H.E.S.S. implements strategies and best practices to improve the quality of life in their region’s most underserved areas.

**The Win:** This community won the approval of the Mobile zoning board to establish a safe zone for the Africatown community that protects residents from the encroachment of industrial development.

## Economics, Education, Environmental, Climate and Health Organization (EEEECHO)

North Gulfport communities; Gulfport, MS

Leader: Katherine Egland



(L) Flooding in Gulfport, MS.  
(R) Katherine Egland speaking to officials about potential water contamination risks in her community.

EEEECHO focuses on racial equity in flood protection and wetland preservation.

**The Win:** EEECHO is working with the Consortium’s support to stop a proposed project that would risk contaminating waterways that flow through Black neighborhoods with arsenic and lead. EEECHO’s legal action continues to protect residents from harmful industrial developments.

## Unity in the Family Ministry

Wedgewood, Olive Heights and Rolling Hills communities; Pensacola, FL

Leader: Dr. Calvin Avant



(L) Dr. Calvin Avant speaking at a community meeting.  
(R) LaFayette Soles-Woods expresses her concerns about the Shortleaf Borrow Pit in Pensacola PHOTO: Gregg Pachkowsk

Unity in the Family joined the DSCEJ family in order to become more empowered to address the toxicity harming the well-being of the people it serves.

**The Win:** The organization won the approval of the Escambia County Board of Commissioners to develop new permit requirements for borrow pits and construction and debris landfills to address flooding and other adverse impacts on communities after applying the principles, training and practices.

## Coalition Of Community Organizations (C.O.C.O.)

*Fifth Ward and area communities; Houston, TX*

**Leader: Rev. James Caldwell**

C.O.C.O. was founded in order to address the toxic presence of creosote used by Union Pacific to preserve rail ties. Residents have called for the removal of creosote, believing it has been causing cancer in their neighborhoods.

**The Win:** After visiting and meeting with residents of the Fifth Ward neighborhood while on his **Journey to Justice**

**Tour** in 2022, EPA Administrator Michael Regan pledged to take action on behalf of these beleaguered communities.



(L) Rev. James Caldwell with community members in Houston. (R) EPA Admin Michael Regan's visit to the Fifth Ward in Houston. PHOTO: Elizabeth Conley

## East New Orleans Neighborhood Advisory Commission (ENONAC)

*New Orleans East neighborhoods; New Orleans, LA*

**Leader: Dawn Hebert**

ENONAC seeks to aid the community in managing the inevitable growth of New Orleans East, promoting homeownership as well as attracting a state of the art hospital and healthcare, quality retail and amenities, while serving the goal of sustaining an increase of property values and preserving the quality of life and the natural resources of the New Orleans East Community.

**The Win:** ENONAC collaborated with other community stakeholders (Community Legion and New Orleans East

Matters) and residents in hosting a rally against negative quality of life issues in New Orleans East and subsequently submitted a resolution to City officials regarding the same. ENONAC is a driving force in New Orleans East communities.



(L) ENONAC leader Dawn Hebert (R) ENONAC's Members

## Sankofa Community Development Corporation

*Lower Ninth Ward; New Orleans, LA*

**Leader: Rashida Ferdinand**

The Sankofa Community Development Corporation is a partner in our Gulf Water Justice Project. The project supports the Sankofa development of the Sankofa Wetland Park and Nature Trail, a long-term recovery project to improve protection from hurricanes and flooding in the Lower Ninth Ward while creating a community asset that provides space for health, wellness and climate resilience as a green infrastructure.

**The Win:** Sankofa has worked to transform the region from an area of blight and illegal dumping to a vast ecological wonder with Louisiana native wildlife, flora and fauna returning in droves. Currently they're partnering with the City of New Orleans to develop the remaining 32 acres, providing a space for outdoor recreation and education programs with fishing, canoeing, biking, walking, and other physical activities.



(L) The 2-acre park has undergone a transformation in the last several years. (R) Rashida Ferdinand shared the Sankofa story at COP27 in Sharm-el-Sheik, Egypt.



# National Black Environmental Justice Network (NBEJN)

NBEJN, a project of the Center, is a national coalition of environmental justice organizations and activists of African descent. Founded in 1999 by the late Damu Smith and relaunched in 2020, the NBEJN is dedicated to improving the lives of Black people and addressing the systemic racism that harms and denies Black people equal access to environmental, climate, racial, and economic justice; health equity; political power; civil rights; and human rights. The Network provides technical and financial assistance for solutions-based community work, science, and research with the potential to break long standing barriers and injustices, uplifting and improving the health and well-being of struggling communities.



## April 2022 Hub Leader Announcement

In April 2022, NBEJN launched its Membership Outreach Program and announced the first cohort of Hub Leaders, representing seven U.S. community based organizations. Hub Leaders are directly involved in advancing the work of the Center's Justice40 Initiative-based programming, community education, and recruitment efforts of the Network.



## August 21, 2022 Hub Leader Orientation Meeting

First in-person convening for new Hub Leaders took place in August of 2022. During this event, members from across the country got to share like stories, best practices and learned more about their duties as an NBEJN Hub Leader.



Damu Smith in the 1990s



NBEJN Network Manager Asti Davis at the White House.



Former VP Al Gore at the COP27 Climate Justice Pavilion in front of Damu Smith's Memorial Wall

## November 2022 NBEJN represented at COP27

NBEJN was represented at COP27 at the First Climate Justice Pavilion in the Blue Zone. The NBEJN sponsored delegates who sat on panels, volunteered and networked with EJ activists and colleagues across the world. **Damu Smith's legacy was memorialized on one of the CJ Pavilion walls, where visitors could read his biography and learn of his contributions to the EJ movement.**



Hub Leader orientation meeting



# We **DEVELOP** a workforce in environmental careers.

The Center has operated hazardous waste worker training for over 28 years through programs funded by the **National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences**. Headed by DSCEJ and Texas Southern University, in conjunction with its collaborative partners in four states, the project operates a **unique Training Consortium** conducting programs designed to **provide model occupational safety and health training** for workers who are or may be engaged in activities related to hazardous waste removal, containment or chemical response and the more recent public health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## UNIQUE TRAINING GOALS:

Emphasis is on underserved populations in its HWWTP and ECWTP in addition to populations critical to disaster and post-disaster recovery.

*Pictured above: DSCEJ's Technical Training champions Kim Dunn and Bruce McClue with our 2021 CARE partnership cohort*

## Environmental Career Worker Training Program ECWTP

The Environmental Career Worker Training Program takes place at 4 sites delivering comprehensive worker training to increase the number of underrepresented and disadvantaged minority adults employed in the fields of environmental restoration, hazardous materials and construction; all incorporating safety protocols for COVID-19 into program administration and instruction. The ultimate goal is to uplift families by providing training and career placement opportunities thereby improving financial stability and their overall quality of life.



The ECWTP Graduating Class of 2021 with Program Manager Dr. John Warford and Founder & Exec. Director Dr. Beverly Wright.

## Site: Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

New Orleans, LA

Leader: Dr. Beverly Wright

**Success Story: Kendra Graves**, a class of 2020 ECWTP graduate is the founder and owner of **HER Restoration Solutions, LLC** based in LaPlace, LA. She is a Louisiana state licensed mold remediation contractor who infuses green skills into all of her business practices. Water restoration, home gutting, and mold treatment are provided services that have allowed Kendra to apply skills and knowledge gained from our program. She began establishing her business only two years after graduation, She hires and educates citizens seeking to save and sanitize their homes and properties. In a few months following the Hurricane Ida and being licensed, **Kendra grossed almost \$150K doing mold remediation and water restoration work. Her business continued to grow in 2021 and 2022 as did her continued relationship with the DSCEJ.**



**"The program, to me, was a life changer and THE BEST THING I COULD HAVE EVER DONE. I would recommend it to anyone because it's not just a program to get you a job, but it actually teaches you a different way of living and it did that for me."**

*Kendra Graves, HER Restoration Solutions, LLC.  
ECWTP c/o 2020, New Orleans, LA*

## Site: The Bullard Center for Environmental & Climate Justice at Texas Southern University

Houston, TX

Leader: Dr. Robert Bullard

**Success Story: Brandyn Duff** is a 2021 graduate who has greatly excelled. He secured a job prior to his graduation with Clean Harbors Environmental & Industrial Services, and has since worked in six different U.S. states for companies including Lockheed Martin, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy, and the Polish Military. Brandyn has worked with a variety of environmental companies, including Koch, Eastman, Flint Hills, BASF, and Safety Clean. He's also worked with energy firms – Conoco Phillips, Valero, Occidental Chemical, Lyondell Bassell, and the Renewable Energy Group. He has performed well in a range of jobs, from hole watch to crew leader, and hazardous material handler to atmospheric monitor. He is currently working overseas in Europe.



## Site: Green Door Initiative

Detroit, MI

Leader: Donele Wilkins

**Success Story:** When **Starnisha Ashford** entered the Detroit program, she was in search of a better future for herself and her children. The last two years were filled with a series of low wage jobs while she attended school in the evenings. Starnisha left her part-time underemployment to join us and has made great strides. Upon graduation, she began working for BDS Environmental as an asbestos abatement worker with a starting salary of \$22 dollars per hour. She was promoted to a supervisory position at the end of her 90-day probation period.



## Site: Unity in the Family Ministry

Pensacola, FL

Leader: Dr. Calvin Avant

**Success Story: Kenneth Criddle** entered the program hoping to overcome a past that included jail and substance abuse. He was in a precarious position while enrolled in the program - homeless, sleeping in the woods and in abandoned cars. The program was able to help Kenneth find a place to live. We contacted Waterfront Mission who allowed him to live in their facility rent free until he completed the program. Upon graduating in 2022, he began working for Southwest Construction Group at \$15.00 per hour. Since obtaining this job, he has been able to rent an apartment and get off the street.



## Hazardous Waste Worker Training Program HWWTP

The DSCEJ conducts a Hazardous Waste Worker Training Program (HWWTP) targeting Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), small businesses, municipal workers and first responders.

### Our Partnerships

In the **aftermath of Hurricane Ida** (August 2021), several new partnerships were developed. The DSCEJ, with the help of community partner **Mt. Horeb Baptist Church** in Houma, LA, **provided mold awareness training to community members and volunteers working in heavily storm-impacted areas.** DSCEJ trainers were introduced to representatives from **bioPure Houma**, an environmental services company, and partnered with the company to deliver a blended 24-Hour mold remediation worker course.

The DSCEJ partnered with the non-profit organization **CARE** to provide mold remediation training. CARE and DSCEJ deployed a workforce of 20 underemployed women to undertake paid resilience work in affected communities. **After training and certification as mold remediation specialists, the task force completed more than 2,000 hours of remediation work.** They focused on preparing the facilities of community and faith-based organizations to provide shelter and other critically needed services. This special partnership with CARE allowed a woman-owned remediation contractor and past ECWTP trainee, Kendra Graves of **HER Restoration Solutions, LLC.** to employ



10 women from the cohort to conduct mold remediation on a full time basis for 4 weeks after they completed training. These women conducted remediation at a storm-damaged church in New Orleans and a home in LaPlace.



DSCEJ also conducted a Muck and Gut Workshop for volunteers, small business and homeowners. The **LA Just Recovery Network** invited four River Parish EJ groups, impacted by the storm, **Rise St James, Inclusive LA, Descendants Project, and Concerned Citizens of St John the Baptist Parish,** to attend the training to learn about hazards present after a hurricane, potential health effects, and hands-on training on donning PPE and how to muck and gut a home.

These partnerships allowed our program to reach storm-impacted people who didn't have the resources or knowledge to address the problems. They learned how to protect themselves and conduct hurricane related activities properly. **Relationships, partnerships and mutually beneficial connections are the hallmarks of our work.**





We **INSPIRE** young scholars and future community leaders.

DSCEJ has a special place in its collective heart for young people. Dr. Beverly Wright, our Founder and Executive Director, has dedicated much of her professional career to the mentorship and development of student leaders in the Environmental Justice field, recognizing that they are our future. Consequently, much of the Center’s programming integrates young leaders and researchers as an integral part of our work.

*Pictured above: Student attendees at the 8th Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference*



## HBCU Climate Change Consortium

Drs. Beverly Wright and Robert Bullard founded the HBCU Climate Change Consortium in 2011 to sponsor activities that provide opportunities for HBCU students to learn about climate change science, policy and advocacy and to present their research projects on topics relative to climate change issues.

Since its inception, **33 HBCUs** have participated in consortium initiatives and activities. Our reach continues to grow, noting the promise and effectiveness of our students, community leaders and residents impacted by the consortium

### HBCU CCC GOALS:

1. To help raise awareness about the disproportionate impact of climate change on vulnerable/marginalized communities.
2. To develop HBCU students as leaders and advocates for environmental justice.



Clockwise from left - (1) Meghan Franklin and DSCEJ Director of Community and Student Engagement Mary Williams. (2) Peggy Shepard of WE ACT receives the Damu Smith Power of One Award. (3) Lincoln University students next to their poster presentations 4) Student presenters Hiba Abdelaziz, Stephen Pinkney, and Karimah Preston

# Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference

One of the consortium's major projects is the **Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference**, designed to educate and train students, empower communities and build the capacity of HBCUs to work within their communities. The Center, with the help of its generous partners, donors and supporters, has convened **eight conferences since 2013**, going on hiatus due to COVID-19. **Our next conference will take place in October of 2023.**

Student researchers from HBCUs command a large portion of the program, presenting their research to EJ industry leaders and experts, their peers, community residents, middle and high school students and scientific researchers in academia. The wealth of knowledge they gain through interactions with conference attendees is invaluable.

## Eighth Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference 2022

The DSCEJ, in collaboration with the Bullard Center, hosted the Eight Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference April 13 - 16, 2022 at the Marriott Hotel in New Orleans. The conference addressed issues related to climate justice, adaptation, community resilience, global climate issues, and other major climate change topics (i.e. transportation, energy sources, carbon emissions, green jobs/green economy, just transition, and community economic development). **Close to 300 persons attended with 18 HBCUs and MSIs represented, taking part in 5 student panels and 18 poster presentations.**

**generation NEXT** our youth component for middle and high school students, , took place on the last day of the conference. Students were able to present their own research alongside their HBCU student counterparts, giving them the opportunity to learn from and engage with other presenters as well as conference attendees.

### BY THE NUMBERS:

- 300+** Attendees
- 18** HBCUs Represented
- 5** Student Panels
- 18** Poster Presentations
- 14** Plenary Sessions



Clockwise from left - (1) By the Numbers. (2) EVHYbridNOIRE presented an electric vehicle display event (3) Maia Payne of Tennessee State University giving her presentation *Mapping Away Food Insecurity with the Cowpea* (4) Drs. Bullard and Wright pose with the overall winner of the student poster competition, Aara'L Yarber of Penn State University.



## Our Students Moving Forward



**Steven Washington** first came to us as an HBCU student researcher at our 2013 HBCU Climate Change Conference. He was a first year Master's Degree student in the Urban Planning and Environmental Policy program at Texas Southern University. He was also an Environmental Justice Corps Fellow that year, working with Dr. Robert Bullard at the Barbara Jordan Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs. He continued his work at TSU, obtaining his Masters Degree while continuing as a Fellow and presenting at each conference. Steven's work was exemplary and because of his dedication to the field of Environmental Justice, he has been hired at the Bullard Center at TSU as the Community Engagement Director. Steven began working in that role on November 1, 2022. We are expecting great things from him.



**Simone English** attended her first HBCU Climate Change Conference serving as a student panel moderator. As a PhD Student of the Florida A&M University School of the Environment, she presented research, in addition to moderating student panels. Through the HBCU CC Consortium, she was part of the cohort of HBCU students participated in the UN Climate Change Conference COP21 activities in Paris, France in 2015. Prior to that, she was among students who participated in the Katrina 10 March held in New Orleans. The HBCU CC Consortium introduced Simone to the needs of, and opportunities to work with, community members in Environmental Justice communities. As a result, Simone worked closely with the DSCEJ as a student mentee and volunteer for a number of years, working with community members, HBCU students and mentors, before she was awarded the pre-doctoral fellowship with the DSCEJ in 2021 and 2022.

## Student Internships 2021 and 2022

**Storytellers Project: High School Interns Learn about Environmental and Climate Justice Challenges to Chronicle Community Stories in the Gulf Coast Region**  
*Funded by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine. (NASEM)*

Seventeen high school students from the Gulf Coast Region were selected to participate in the **Environmental and Climate Justice Storyteller Internship Program**. The five-year grant awarded to the Center will equip the next generation of environmental and climate justice leaders to chronicle the stories of marginalized communities. The interns worked with **five of our CBO partners** along the Gulf Coast Region in LA, FL, MS, AL, and TX. Three interns from Pensacola, Florida worked with **Unity in the Family Ministries**; 3 interns from Africatown Mobile, Alabama worked alongside **Clean, Healthy, Educated, Safe & Sustainable (CHESS)**; 3 interns from Gulfport, MS were placed with **Education, Economics, Environmental, Climate and Health Organization (EEECHO)**; 4 interns from New Orleans, LA had the opportunity to learn from and work with **Sankofa Community Development Corporation and Cancer Alley community partners**; and 4 interns from Houston, TX settled in with **Achieving Community Tasks Successfully (ACTS)**.



L-R: Landon Bishop, St. Augustine High School, Re'Kal Hooker, The Living School, Dr. John Warford, DSCEJ, Victoria Cager, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, Dr. Deb Morrison, CLEAR Environmental, Sharon Lavigne, RISE St. James, and Mary I. Williams, DSCEJ

The interns participated in an orientation, training sessions, community tours in their prospective communities, monthly meetings with the **DSCEJ, CLEAR Environmental and CBO leaders** to discuss reflections from the tours and updates on their digital stories. They also took part in a specialized GIS flood mapping workshop.

From these experiences, the interns have gained Environmental Justice and Climate Change knowledge and awareness of environmental problems in their communities.

They were able to complete a Digital StoryBoard to frame their work, gather additional information on their communities via research, and conduct

interviews with CBO leaders and community residents. The Flood Risks Mapping Workshop taught the interns how to create ArchGIS Story Maps to determine flood risks in their communities.



Clockwise from left (1) New Orleans ECJS Intern, Landon Bishop interviews St. John the Baptist Parish Community Leader, Robert Taylor. (2) New Orleans ECJS Intern Re’Kal Hooker interviews Gordon Plaza Community Leader, Shannon Rainey (3) Unity in the Family interns at a project site.



## HBCU Environmental Justice Climate Corps Internships

*Funded by Levi-Strauss*

In the summer of 2022, DSCEJ launched the HBCU Environmental Justice and Climate Corps Internship Program. HBCU Interns had the distinct opportunity to work with DSCEJ environmental justice partner communities along the Gulf Coast in Pensacola, FL, Mobile, AL, New Orleans, LA, to Houston Texas. The internships provided HBCU students financial support while they gained experience and knowledge through research and advocacy work with each EJ partner community.

These communities experience poverty and the lack of services and equal protection by regulatory agencies from pollution and inequitable government policies. During their internships, the students learned about the communities’ histories, identified community needs, determined community priorities, and developed and completed a research to action plan with their respective CBOs.





## Meet our HBCU EJ Climate Corps Interns



**Gerald Jones**, Biology Pre-med Senior at Xavier University of Louisiana  
**CBO: Sankofa Community Development Corporation Lower 9th Ward, New Orleans, LA.**

**Areas of Focus:** the 40 acre Wetlands Park Sankofa is developing to help reduce flooding in the Lower 9th Ward; technical support to several projects including the Tornado Research Assistance (TRA); use of the ISEE Change App and teaching residents how to use the App to report flooding and other environmental concerns in their communities.



**Nia Russell**, pre-nursing Junior at Florida A&M University  
**CBO: Unity in the Family Ministry Pensacola, FL.**

**Areas of Focus:** support to the EJ YES Summer Camp for middle school students in the Wedgewood Community inundated with eleven landfills causing major health problems for residents exposed to landfill contaminants; teaching campers how to handle hazardous waste and the terminology, Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping, gardening, and engineering through robotics, using these tools to help resolve environmental threats



**Heaven Pollard**, Biology Junior at Alabama A & M University,  
**CBO: Clean, Healthy, Educated, Safe & Sustainable (C.H.E.S.S.) Mobile, AL**

**Areas of Focus:** the history of Africatown where the last slave ship, the Clotilda, was discovered in the Mobile Bay; the identification of blighted homes and businesses in the community; strategies and actions designed to encourage local government and other philanthropist to invest in the historical community; development of a newsletter about the history and progress of Africatown that was distributed to the community



**Stephen Pinkney**, Urban Planning and Environmental Policy Ph.D. candidate at Texas Southern University

**CBO: Achieving Community Tasks Successfully (ACTS) Houston, TX**

**Areas of Focus:** The history of the Pleasantville community dubbed the “Triple Whammy,” of industry pollution from the Port of Houston, rail yards, and diesel truck traffic located near several elementary and middle schools in the community including the Port of Houston Elementary School; participation in community stakeholder meetings and activities regarding air quality concerns and air monitoring strategies while learning the history of how Pleasantville schools and businesses have collaborated to provide social and medical services to the community.



**Alise Henderson Brundridge**, Sophomore, Tuskegee University  
**CBO: Economics, Education, Environmental, Climate and Health Organization (EEECHO) Gulfport, MS**

**Areas of Focus:** Racial equity in flood protection; wetland preservation; campaign to stop a proposed project that would risk contaminating waterways that flow through Black neighborhoods with arsenic and lead.

All interns will present their research and experience on a student panel at the 9th Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference to be held in New Orleans, LA October 11 – 15, 2023.

# DSCEJ sponsored three Graduate students to attend and speak at COP27



**Aara'L Yarber** (Howard University and Pennsylvania State University)

*"My experience at COP27 was very powerful...Having the opportunity to participate in the first-ever climate justice pavilion was a true honor, as we discussed climate justice more holistically with people from the African diaspora, small island states, and the global south. It felt like we collectively advocated in the belly of the beast and made it clear that there is no climate justice without human rights."*



**Alexa White** (Howard University and University of Michigan)

*"This is the first Climate Justice Pavilion... It was the first time there was really a large community where we could have a conversation about climate justice and what it really meant. It's also the first time that nations were actually pushing for climate justice to be discussed in the dialogue. The Loss and Damage Fund, which I think is as important as the Paris Climate Agreement, will provide the necessary funds to protect and rebuild physical and social infrastructure destroyed as a result of extreme weather events from climate change. That in itself is a major milestone."*



**Lauren Wiggins** (Tennessee State University and Yale University),

*"While in Egypt, I had the chance to leverage opportunities to learn more about community-oriented sustainable development, nature-based solutions for climate mitigation, and share the time, space, and energy with a diverse spectrum of thought leaders. Joe Biden's announcement of \$150 million in aid for climate adaptation efforts in Africa was exciting! I hope this initial, and also modest, amount will set a precedent for other wealthy nations to contribute climate aid."*



(L) Students presenting their graduate research at COP27 (R) Aara'L Yarber, EPA Administrator Michael Regan, Lauren Wiggins and Alexa White following their presentations at COP27.



# We **IMPROVE** the lives of communities impacted by Climate Change.

The work that the Center does in all of its facets is **interconnected**. We accomplish our mission by connecting communities, industry professionals, policy experts and academia to tackle the problems of underserved and marginalized communities. We weave our projects together with the goal of making significant impacts in the lives of individuals. We **CULTIVATE**, we **DEVELOP**, we **INSPIRE**, and we **IMPROVE** in all that we do; locally, regionally, nationally and globally.

*Pictured above: EPA Administrator Michael Regan meeting with DSCEJ leadership and Gordon Plaza residents during his Journey to Justice Tour*

## Research & Policy

### The HBCU-CBO Gulf Coast Equity Consortium Water Justice Project

Funded by the JPB Foundation

**Ruth Story**  
EEECHO

**Kathy Eglund**  
EEECHO

**Dr. Joan Wesley**  
Jackson State Univ.

**Joe Womack**  
CHESS

**Dr. Elicia Moss**  
Alabama A&M Univ.

**Rev. Calvin Avant**  
UFM

**Rev. Timothy Grier**  
UFM

**Co-Directors**

**Dr. Beverly Wright**  
Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ)

**Dr. Robert Bullard**  
Texas Southern University (TSU)

**Program Managers**

**Monique Harden**  
Community Engagement DSCEJ

**Dr. Denaë King**  
Interdisciplinary Research Texas Southern University

**Bridgette Murray**  
ACTS

**Dr. Glenn Johnson**  
Texas Southern Univ.

**Rashida Ferdinand**  
Sankofa

**Dawn Hebert**  
ENONAC

**Dr. Bernard Singleton**  
Dillard Univ.

Implemented in 2021, this project is a collaborative community-driven endeavor that focuses on Black, Gulf Coast communities disproportionately burdened by the injustice of environmental degradation and vulnerable to climate change. The DSCEJ partnered with CBOs who have organized and inspired community members to take action for environmental and climate justice while engaging governmental agencies and forming key partnerships to reach policy change on critical issues.

## Energy & Justice in New Orleans: Power to the People!

In September of 2021, DSCEJ and partner organizations in the Energy Future New Orleans coalition filed a motion for the City Council to hold Entergy accountable by ordering:

1. A full investigation of Entergy's massive power outage that contributed to the deaths of 12 New Orleans residents;
2. An independent management audit of Entergy companies;
3. A thorough examination of the costs Entergy bills New Orleans customers for the **new gas plant** sited near Black and Vietnamese American residents in New Orleans East that did not work on its own, as Entergy claimed to win Council approval for it.



DSCEJ's commitment to environmental justice led us to oppose the gas plant based on our research, data-analysis and facts showing Entergy did **not** implement best practices on site selection criteria to protect communities from the gas plant pollution, evaluate alternative energy options ordered by the City Council, or provide a credible reason for the gas plant. We have since worked on alternative energy options by supporting a local policy for community solar projects, coordinating the **Climate Action Equity Project**, and advocating for a renewable portfolio standard. We encouraged citizens to join with us in calling on the City Council to **hold Entergy accountable and build an energy system that works for everyone.**



## Journey to Justice Tour

DSCEJ helped to organize a "**Journey to Justice: Real EJ Conversations on Your Corner**" with **EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan** which took place in November, 2021. The week-long trip through Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas spotlighted longstanding environmental justice concerns in historically marginalized communities, and Mr. Regan heard firsthand from residents dealing with the severe impacts of pollution in these areas. He joined roundtable discussions to listen to residents, advocates, and stakeholders, tour neighborhoods severely affected by pollution, and met with environmental justice activists and community leaders to discuss solutions to these deep-rooted problems, the need for more progress, and the commitment to action by the EPA and the Biden-Harris Administration.



EPA Administrator Michael Regan and Dr. Beverly Wright listen to a community member's impact story during the Journey to Justice Tour.

**Since this visit, the EPA has started issuing enforcement actions addressing air pollution, unsafe drinking water and additional EJ issues impacting Gulf Coast communities as well as the nation.**



## New Orleans City Council Ethics Ban

DSCEJ is committed to working as a change agent within our New Orleans communities. In March of 2022, the City Council committee that oversees the regulation of Entergy, AT&T, and Cox Communications voted unanimously to approve a new ethics law to ban campaign contributions from these and other companies regulated or contracted by the City Council. More than 50 New Orleans residents gave comments in support of the ethics ban. The measure passed at the April City Council meeting.

“The Council committee’s vote is an important step forward for equity and justice in New Orleans. We don’t want energy costs, drainage projects, and what we do in this climate crisis to have the undue influence of money from companies regulated or contracted by the City Council.”

- Dr. Beverly Wright.

## New Orleans City Council Prohibits Future Carbon Capture and Storage Projects

The New Orleans City Council unanimously passed Resolution NO. R-22-219 prohibiting the underground storage of carbon dioxide and facilities for this purpose.

The DSCEJ strongly encouraged local and federal leaders to consider the potential consequences of CCS on Black communities around the Gulf Coast who have dealt with the consequences of the oil and gas industry’s careless pollution for decades.



**“I am proud of New Orleans for being a trailblazer in policies that protect local communities from CCS technologies,” said Dr. Beverly Wright, DSCEJ Founding & Executive Director**

## Pathway to Community Recovery from the Oil and Gas Industry Project

*Funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies*

The Center has a long history of valuable research that led to producing the first maps showing the correlation between toxic pollution and race in the Mississippi River Chemical Corridor. Conducting community mapping using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is a standard feature of the technical assistance we offer to communities. The purpose of this project is to improve conditions in EJ communities where the oil and gas industry has caused unhealthy air, unsafe waterways, coastal land loss, and climate-induced disasters. The project’s goal is to organize and support communities in their advocacy against the expansion of 200+ gas plants in Louisiana, Texas and the Ohio River Valley. **Pollution maps that look back at 30 years or more of pollution in Cancer Alley** are currently in development. The following mapping activities have been completed under this grant:

**Corridor based and individual parish pollution maps** were produced and included the revision of the pollution maps from corridor based to individual parishes-based maps. These **Toxic Release Inventory (TRI)** maps resulted in two overlay maps for each parish on poverty and minority distributions at the track level. The parishes include **Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Jefferson, Orleans, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, West Baton Rouge, and Calcasieu**. TRI data covered 2016 through 2021, the last year that data is available. (see **Figure 1**) The **Green House Gases (GHG)** 2016 - 21 emission maps revised for 10 parishes with an overlay of minority and poverty data. (see **Figure 2**)

**Samples of pollution maps developed in 1994** were made available to for inclusion in the final report under preparation. **Mapping of all petrochemical facilities under construction or already permitted** were developed and will be released in April 2023. These maps depict the demographic (poverty and minority) distribution within a 2-mile radius of each site, analyzing each site relative to the ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index and Environmental Justice Index, and CEQ’s Climate and Economic Justice Index (CEIJST).

Figure 1

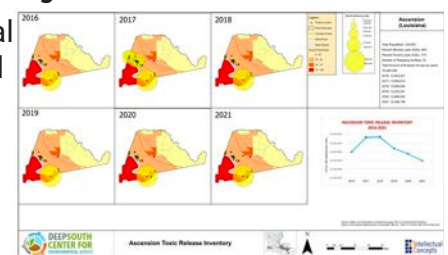
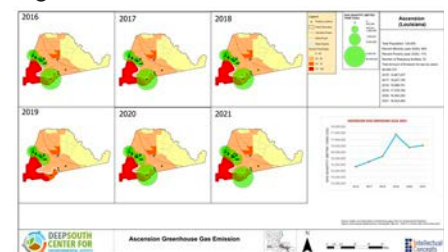


Figure 2



# The EJ Data Hub Project

*Funded by The Windward Fund through its Environmental Justice Data Fund project*

The EJ Data Hub (EJDH) will be an online portal that will merge two distinct, rich databases: (1) “Pharos,” an existing chemical hazards data source owned and managed by the Healthy Building Network (HBN), providing toxicity information on chemicals and building materials; and (2) ChemFORWARD (affiliated with HBN) providing safer alternatives to hazardous chemicals. These have traditionally been used by researchers, but have tremendous potential to add value to the work of EJ communities.

Though publicly available, the process for accessing the data is not community friendly, and can be difficult for a lay-person to interpret.

Through this project, we will create a custom API that elegantly merges these two data sources into an interactive and user-friendly portal. EJ communities and leaders will be able to easily run queries and conduct research that is relevant to their communities’ needs.

Since being funded in 2021, the Center has made significant progress toward creating the mobile application and is implementing a phased approach to developing the EJDH through technical partner Intellectual Concepts, LLC led by Dr. Femi Adesanya.

## Phase 1 Completed: Concepts Development

Following a system engineering process and conducting user interviews with current DSCEJ CBOs, user needs were collected from various stakeholders. Over four months, a series of stakeholder interviews were conducted and a Needs Assessment Report has been finalized. User needs were reviewed, analyzed and transformed into variable requirements that are used to define the system’s parameters.

In preparation for **Phase 2**, we have developed a business requirement document and conducted a series of interviews and workshops with potential developers. It is anticipated that a developer will be selected by April, 2023 and the Design and Testing phase will begin.

**PHASE 1:** Concept development

**PHASE 2:** Design and Testing

**PHASE 3:** Operate and Evaluate

**PHASE 4:** Operations and Maintenance.



“One of the best tools we have to advocate for policy change is **DATA**.

We will develop the EJDH to help partners effectively show what’s in the air we breathe and the water we drink, while bringing more attention to the impacts of toxic chemicals on our health and quality of life. We thank the Windward Fund for this award so we can continue empower advocates and climate justice leaders with the resources they need to catalyze change in their communities.”

- Dr. Beverly Wright

## Local Highlights

**NavigateNOLA** is the social and emotional wellness arm of the Deep South Center. Navigate NOLA social workers provided direct support and served as change agents themselves, while also providing training and professional development to social workers across the city, creating new cohorts of change agents equipped to shift policy, culture, and practices in their own schools. In 2022, Navigate NOLA partner schools, **KIPP Morial, Kingsley House, and Educare New Orleans**, hosted SEL programming and integrated Navigate NOLA SEL strategies into classroom teacher strategies. **Navigate NOLA implemented SEW-NOLA, our weekly classroom-based intervention, with 195 students across 8 classes. In total, Navigate NOLA provided 165 sessions of social-emotional learning to students.**

**Let Black Girls Be...** Building on its progress, NavigateNOLA launched the “Let Black Girls Be...” campaign along with the **Collaborative for African-American Girls and Women (CCAGW)**.

The social marketing campaign aimed at dismantling racist and sexist attitudes towards black girls that give rise to disparities across the systems with which black girls interface. The campaign featured billboards, located throughout the city of New Orleans, of black and white portraits of black girls, captured by documentary photographer **Nina Robinson**. The community at large was encouraged to participate in the campaign by visiting the campaign website, [www.letblackgirlsbe.com](http://www.letblackgirlsbe.com), to create their own images, celebrating black women and black girls, and posting them to social media. This exciting campaign was well received



## New Orleans, LA: The Climate Action Equity Project

This project is a partnership between the City of New Orleans, the Greater New Orleans Foundation, and DSCEJ, funded by the Greater New Orleans Foundation and Partners for Places – a project of the Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities. The mission is focused on implementing the **Climate Action for a Resilient New Orleans Strategy** with the goal of achieving equitable results in building and rebuilding neighborhoods, communities and businesses in New Orleans through the modernization of our energy use, improvement of transportation choices, reduction of waste, and creation of a culture of awareness and action among its citizens.



## US DOE Secretary Jennifer Granholm Travels to Louisiana

In May 2022, DSCEJ along with other leaders of nonprofit organization, met Secretary Jennifer Granholm, US Department of Energy in New Orleans. This was the first time a cabinet official met with community, environmental justice, and energy consumer advocates to talk about energy policy and investment in Louisiana.



During this historic meeting, Sec. Granholm encouraged local leaders to participate in decisions on equitable energy investments, including the \$62 billion in funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law now available for energy projects.



Following this meeting, the **Deep South Center for Environmental Justice and the Alliance for Affordable Energy sent a letter urging Governor Edwards to establish an energy plan** to make Louisiana competitive for the billions of dollars available from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law administered by the Department of Energy,

## Film Fundraiser for Residents of Gordon Plaza, United Houma Nation

On May 18, 2022 DSCEJ partnered with the **PATOIS Film Collective** to host the Southern Premier of **Powerlands**, a new film about Indigenous Rights and Environmental Justice.



The Screening and Benefit took place at the Broad Theater in New Orleans and featured a post-screening discussion with **Shannon Rainey, President of Residents of Gordon Plaza, Donny Verdin, Vice Principle Chief, United Houma Nation, Powerlands Director Ivey Camille Manybeads Tso and Powerlands Cinematographer Melisa Cardona.** The post film

discussion was moderated by Asti Davis, NBEJN Network Manager.

**A total of \$1,209.10 was raised** through this event and was equally shared with the United Houma Nation & the Residents of Gordon Plaza.

Gordon Plaza is a housing development built in the late 1970s on top of the former Agriculture Street Landfill. After residents began to experience clear signs of toxic exposure, they began a long struggle involving public protests, petitioning city mayors and government officials, awareness actions, media outreach, evidence gathering, and a class-action lawsuit against the City of New Orleans. Their righteous fight for a fair and fully-funded relocation continues to this day.

## Regional Highlights

### Detroit, Michigan: Motor City to Solar City

The Green Door Initiative has been a longtime partner, serving as a training site within our ECWT program. A highlight of the Detroit-based program is the expansion of its training to include solar panel installation. In 2022, Green Door Initiative, along with **313 Solar and APEX Direct** partnered to launch a new project focused on revitalizing, rebuilding and restoring Detroit using a block-by-block approach. The Motor City to Solar City project is conducted in phases and serves as a model, providing full and fair access to training, and preparing residents for employment in the “green collar” sector. The overall vision is to increase access to climate-smart jobs for local residents and provide a model for replication.

The pilot project is scheduled to begin in 2023 with the building of a solar energy assembly plant, training workers and installing solar panels on homes to lower energy costs.



### COVID19 Virtual Town Hall Meeting

In February 2021, DSCEJ and partner communities held a virtual discussion about the racially disproportionate impacts of disasters and COVID-19 on Black communities in the Gulf Coast Region. This discussion was hosted by the **Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice and Natural Disaster Subcommittee.**

Keynote speakers included **Katherine Eglund**, Co-Founder of Education, Economics, Environmental, Climate and Health Organization (EEECHO) in Gulfport, MS and **Joe Womack**, Executive Director of Clean, Healthy, Educated, Safe, and Sustainable (C.H.E.S.S.) in Mobile, AL.



## National Highlights

### Dr. Beverly Wright appointed to White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council

In March 2021, President Biden announced members of a new White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council to support his whole-of-government approach to addressing the climate crisis. The WHEJAC was established by President Biden's Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad to fulfill his and Vice President Harris's commitment to confronting long standing environmental injustices and to ensuring that historically marginalized and overburdened communities have greater input on federal policies and decisions.



### Dr. Wright Testifies at Congressional hearing on oil and gas leases and US Climate targets

On January 20, 2022, Dr. Beverly Wright presented testimony at the hearing titled "What More Gulf of Mexico Oil & Gas Leasing Means for Achieving U.S. Climate Targets" at the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources in the US House of Representatives.



Dr. Beverly Wright, executive director of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, spoke powerfully to what communities in the Gulf have been experiencing at the hands of the fossil fuel industry, "I have seen and felt firsthand the effects of climate change, environmental racism, and policies that favor the oil and gas industry over the health and safety of Black children and families." She connected the health impacts from offshore drilling to petrochemical facilities that impact communities along the Gulf Coast.

*CREDIT: NRDC Partner Blog; January 21, 2022 No New Leasing: Hearing on Climate & Offshore Drilling by Valerie Cleland*

### EPA Launches New National Office Dedicated to Advancing Environmental Justice & Civil Rights

On September 21, 2022, Administrator Regan announced the creation of the new office alongside environmental justice and civil rights leaders in Warren County, North Carolina, at the 40th-anniversary commemoration of protests that launched the environmental justice movement.



The new office will oversee the implementation and delivery of a \$3 billion climate and environmental justice block grant program created by the Inflation Reduction Act. The office also will ensure EPA's implementation of other funding programs provided by the Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and regular appropriations meet or exceed the President's Justice40 Initiative.

### Brownfields Conference in Oklahoma City, OK

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and International City/County Management Association (ICMA) hosted the **National Brownfields Training Conference in Oklahoma City, OK**, from August 16 -19. The conference featured 120 panels, roundtables, and topic talks where attendees learned directly from experts in the reuse field and interact with federal, state, and local decision-makers. Plenary speakers include EPA Administrator Michael Regan and Dr. Jonathan Reichental, founder of Human Future. Dr. Beverly Wright delivered a presentation on The Value and Relevance of DSCEJ Training Programs.





## NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

### Justice40: A Time for Righteous Investment

*Funded by the Bezos Earth Fund*

In 2021, President Biden established the Justice40 Initiative - a whole-of-government effort to ensure that Federal agencies work with states and local communities to make good on President Biden's promise to **deliver at least 40 percent of the overall benefits** from Federal investments in climate and clean energy **to disadvantaged communities**.

Because history has shown that too often projects intended to benefit our communities never reach us, DSCEJ, along with our partner the Bullard Center for Environmental and Climate Justice at Texas Southern University, launched a Justice40 Community Engagement Project to build the capacity of communities through education and training to participate in the "just" implementation of Justice40.

The project was designed using the collaborative insight of hard-learned lessons from our decades-long history of research, education and community engagement work. The goal of the project is to document, address and bring change through our struggle for Environmental Justice.

#### April 13, 2022

##### **Justice40 Kickoff Announcement during the Eighth Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference**

Dr. Beverly Wright joined Peggy Shepard of WE ACT for Environmental Justice and Dr. Robert Bullard of the Robert D. Bullard Center for Environmental and Climate Justice to announce plans to support equitable implementation of Justice40 at the state and local level and empower local communities to participate in the policy-making process.



#### August 22 - 23, 2022

##### **FIRST Convening to discuss Justice40 Project in ACTION**

Together with our partner organizations WE ACT for Environmental Justice and The Bullard Center for Environmental Justice at Texas Southern University, **we welcomed over 100 participants from 21 states, throughout the U.S., representing over 30 community-based organizations and supporting organizations**. During the convening, future plans for the just implementation of Justice40 were discussed and potential partner communities were identified.

# Global Highlights

The DSCEJ recognized the importance of making African-American Environmental Justice community voices heard on a world stage. In 2000, the organization began regularly attending the **United Nations Climate Change Conference, Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COP) widely known as COP**. The summits are held annually and bring together 30,000 participants to negotiate policies, take stock of and celebrate commitments, highlight and catalyze action by non-Party actors, expand the network of coalitions and partnerships and inspire others.

Dr. Wright observed over her years of attendance that there were no African American Environmental Justice voices represented with a pavilion in the **Blue Zone**, where world leaders hear input and do the work of making critical climate related decisions.

## COP26: A Pivotal Moment

In 2021, **COP26 was held in Glasgow, Scotland** (October 31 - November 13.) DSCEJ sent a small delegation packed with powerhouse EJ Pioneers in delegates Dr. Beverly Wright, our Founder and Executive Director, Dr. Robert Bullard, Founding Executive Director of the Bullard Center for Environmental Justice at Texas Southern University, Peggy Shepard, Executive Director at WE ACT for Environmental Justice and Donele Wilkins, CEO of the Green Door Initiative. Up and coming environmental justice activist, Payton Wilkins, Program Manager of Environmental Careers and Workforce Development at DSCEJ, and Director of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists' Education Center also joined the delegation. During the convening, Dr. Beverly Wright spoke to the Black News Channel (BNC) about Climate Change Impacts in Cancer Alley. However, the delegation obtained limited passes to enter the Blue Zone.

**Dr. Wright and her colleagues began to plan a strategy for creating the Climate Justice Pavilion they wanted to premiere at COP27 in Egypt in 2022.**

**MEETING THE METHANE MOMENT WITH EQUITY THROUGH THE U.S. JUSTICE 40 INITIATIVE**

Join White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council members on how the Justice 40 program can reduce methane and provide an example of implementing environmental justice in frontline communities.

Shepard Dr. Beverly Wright Dr. Bob Bullard




### A Conspicuous Absence

Though COP 26 featured a **robust Blue Zone** of companies, governments, and large advocacy organizations that hosted a broad range of programming at their pavilions, **there was no space that centered climate justice**, discussed equity within climate policy, or highlighted the stories and concerns of impacted vulnerable communities.



*That was a startling omission, though not surprising.*



### My Why:

Beverly Wright, Ph.D.  
Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

**“ . . . a conspicuous absence of African American students, Indigenous Peoples and grassroots folks . . . ”**

Slides from the COP27 Funder's briefing held in July, 2022

# GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT

## COP27 - Climate Justice Pavilion: Amplifying our Climate Justice Stories on a World Stage



The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, WE ACT for Environmental Justice and the Bullard Center for Environmental & Climate Justice, along with an international team of collaborators, hosted the **first-ever Climate Justice Pavilion inside the Blue Zone** at COP27, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, November 6-18, 2022.

**The historic Climate Justice Pavilion (CJ Pavilion) amplified the rarely heard voices and perspectives of the most vulnerable communities** for the first time in the global climate summit's 27-year history. The CJ Pavilion was instituted by representatives from the Global South, U.S. EJ movement, and Indigenous peoples within the conference's official "Blue Zone."

Representatives from over **40 Community-Based Organizations, Environmental and Climate Justice experts, HBCU students and faculty** joined our delegation to sit on a world stage to showcase their work in the arena of climate justice.

An estimated 30,000 people worldwide attended COP27. During more than two weeks of presentations and conversations, the **CJ Pavilion elevated the experiences and leadership of more than 100 speakers from Indigenous groups, the Global South, and more.**



(Top) The Climate Justice Pavilion in the final stages of preparation. (Bottom) Former VP Al Gore addresses a standing-room-only crowd.

## The documentary film **Descendant**

was screened during the second week of COP27. Produced by Barack and Michelle Obama's production company *Higher Ground* along with *Participant* and *Night Tide* in association with *Two One Five Entertainment*, the film tells the story of the descendants of the last slave ship known to have reached the United States – the **Clotilda**.

Director Margaret Brown and Executive Producer Ahmir Questlove Thompson utilized the documentary feature format to showcase the long effort to locate and raise the wreck of the Clotilda and how residents of **Africatown** have faced economic and other forms of racism for over a hundred years. Their neighborhood is hemmed in by heavy industry, reducing the value of the land and potentially exposing local people to dangerous chemicals.



**More than 40 panels were hosted** at the CJ Pavilion, on a wide range of topics including **community driven climate solutions, financing for climate resilience innovation, lessons from Indigenous knowledge holders, and climate science accessibility**. Along with the Pavilion's daily program of panels and presentations, visitors from developing country delegations stopped by, as did U.S. delegation participants and observers including **former Vice President Al Gore**, Chairman of The Climate Reality Project, **then-Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi**, and other members of Congress.

Other highlighted guests included **EPA Administrator Michael Regan**, **Council on Environmental Quality Chair Brenda Mallory**, **USAID Administrator Samantha Power** and **Director of the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity at the US Department of Energy Shalanda Baker**.

In addition to our three EJ pioneers, the pavilion would not have been possible without the assistance of our partners:

- **Abigail Dillen**, *Earthjustice* (pictured below)
- **Cathy Eatock**, *Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform*
- **Johanna Chao Kreilick**, *Union of Concerned Scientists* (pictured below)
- **Fred Krupp**, *Environmental Defense Fund*
- **Marina Macal**, *Instituto Clima e Sociedade*
- **Dr. Deb L. Morrison**, *CLEAR Environmental*
- **Mithika Mwenda**, *PACJA, Pan African Climate Justice Alliance*





# We **APPLAUD** our supporters.

The work that we do at the Center is the result of collaborations, partnerships and sustained relationships with funders, communities, academic institutions and local, regional and national agencies and organizations. Without their support in time, talent and treasure, we would not be able to create change in impactful ways within the communities we serve. **We humbly thank all of our donors, sponsors, funders, colleagues, staff, students, experts and industry partners who make our work possible.**

*Pictured above: Representatives from the Environmental Defense Fund at the 8th Annual HBCU Climate Change Conference*



Fuzieh Jallow, Director of Donor Engagement & Events from the Union of Concerned Scientists at our Pavilion Partner display.



Sharon Beard, director of the NIEHS Worker Training Program has been a long-time supporter of DSCEJ.

## WHY WE SUPPORTED THE COP27 CLIMATE JUSTICE PAVILION



“For too long the discourse on climate, particularly at the highest echelons of power, has

been faceless, focused on policy without centering people, much less justice. We can see where that approach has gotten us.

**We are, thankfully, at a time where climate justice is constantly invoked as a reason to take climate action. But the folks who are at the very front lines of climate injustice and the leaders who are thinking through what the solutions have to be are too often on the sidelines.**

In my experience, work, decisions and policies are shaped by who you know, what voices are in the room, who’s at the table, who you

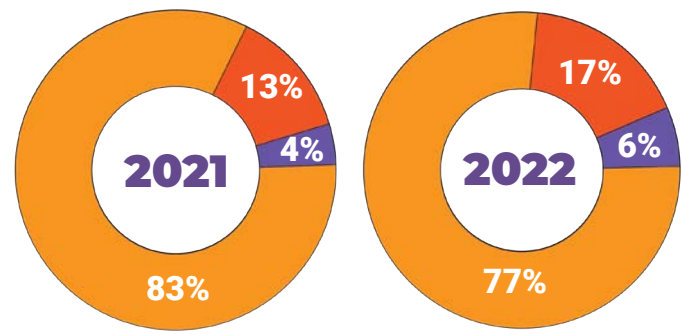
feel accountable to. Our own US delegation at the COP needs to be accountable to environmental justice leaders in the United States and around the world.

**The global conversation has to have climate justice at the center.** This is not just one event, but it is building infrastructure, the tissue of relationships that we will need to make the changes that are required over the next six years and beyond. **I will say that there was not one person on our team that had a one second hesitation about making a significant investment in this project. We see it as mission critical, and I cannot overstate my gratitude to the leadership of Dr. Wright, Peggy and Dr. Bullard.”**

*Abigail Dillen,  
President of EarthJustice*

## Funding Report

Major funding for the programs, projects and initiatives of the Center is received through federal grants, foundation grants and private donations.



Foundation Grants Federal Grants Private Donations

## Funding Relationships Sustained over the years...

As we move forward with our mission, we take this opportunity to express our thanks for the relationships we have built over the years with our funding partners who continued that support throughout 2021 and 2022. These sustained partnerships, for which we are ever grateful, have empowered us to empower communities impacted by climate change and whose people are feeling the daily effects of environmental injustices and racism.

- EarthJustice
- Energy Foundation
- Environmental Defense Fund
- Environmental Justice Leadership Platform
- JPB Foundation
- Kresge Foundation
- League of Conservation Voters
- Mosaic
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- National Resources Defense Council, Inc.
- National Science Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Sierra Club
- Tides Foundation
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

## Recent Funding Relationships

We also offer our gratitude to those funding partners and donors who have begun providing their support to our work over the calendar years 2021 and 2022. We look forward to cultivating continued and lasting relationships with these agencies, companies, foundations, organizations and institutions of higher learning. Your generosity has assisted us in providing quality programming and initiatives in service of our many constituents.

- American Efficient
- American Family Insurance Institute for Corporate and Social Impact
- Apple, Inc.
- Argonne National Laboratory
- Benevity
- Bezos Earth Fund
- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- CARE
- Center for American Progress
- Ceres
- Clara Lionel Foundation
- Clean Air Taskforce
- Climate Equity Collaborative/National Wildlife Federation
- Cloud Mountain Foundation
- Columbia Climate School
- Crown Family Philanthropies
- David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Deloitte
- Dream.org/Green for All
- Environmental Justice Leadership Forum
- Equitable and Just Climate Platform
- EvHybridNoire
- Fox Family Fund
- Greater New Orleans Foundation
- Green Leadership Trust
- Healthy Building Network
- Healthy Gulf
- IBM
- Inroads
- Levi Strauss Foundation
- Mount Holyoke College
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine. (NASEM)
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Audubon Society
- National Center for Atmospheric Research, Computational & Information Systems Laboratory
- Ocean Conservancy
- Open Road Alliance
- Pisces Foundation
- Resource Legacy Fund
- Restore the Mississippi River Delta
- Roth's
- RSF Social Finance
- Seven Star Academy, Inc.
- Schmidt Family Foundation

- Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs
- Southern Environmental Law Center
- Stanford Earth - Stanford University School of Earth, Energy & Environmental Sciences
- University of Oklahoma College of Atmospheric and Geographic Science
- USAID
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Verra
- Water Foundation
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
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- Gerrish H. Milliken
- Kate Moore
- Amy Morgan-Rogers
- Nancy Moses
- Lily Nemirovsky
- Ben Noack
- Roberta O'Connor
- Allison Osborne
- Christine Papas
- Stacey Parrish
- Patagonia.com
- Nicholas Pevzner
- Amber Phelps
- Andrea Polito
- Jennifer Roche
- Suzanne Roosen
- Naamah Rose
- Emma Roth
- Elizabeth Rowan
- Ellen Rozek
- Sari Horstein Family Trust Charitable Fund
- Josh Schill
- Sarah Schneewind
- Finn Schubert
- Haley Schwalm
- Christina Sharkey
- Rubina Singh
- Z E Smith
- Kelcee Smith
- Taylor Spicer
- Grant Sunderland
- Zain Tewalthomas
- Kathryn Thompson
- Josh Trichon
- James Trimarco
- Jay Vashisht
- Adoette Vaughan
- Ziyue Wang
- Todd Weiser
- Daniel Whittle
- Sarah Wilce
- Beverly Wright
- Max Yancy
- Laura Yonamine
- Georgia Young
- Edward Zukoski

## DSCEJ Governing Board

- **Glenn Johnson**, PhD, Texas Southern University, President
- **Myra Lewis**, PhD, Retired DSCEJ Assistant Director, Vice President
- **Gabrielle Dirden**, Deputy Director, US Programs CARE, Secretary
- **Keena Dixon**, U.S. Treasury Agent, Treasurer
- **Johnette Jackson**, Concerned Citizens for Melia, New Orleans, Board Member
- **Dorothy McWilliams**, Concerned Citizens for Melia, Board Member



Ms. Dorothy McWilliams (left) and Ms. Johnette Jackson (right) have been board members since our early years. Their wisdom, and knowledge of their community has given us great insight as we work toward a brighter future for all communities we serve. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your never-ending support. We love you.



# Meet Our Staff



**Beverly L. Wright, PhD**  
Founder and Executive Director



**Amanda Bonam, BA**  
Network Coordinator,  
NBEJN



**Kim Boyd, BS**  
Executive Assistant



**Celeste Cooper, BA**  
Assistant Grants Manager



**Asti Davis, JD**  
Network Manager, NBEJN



**Kim Dunn, MSPH**  
Technical Training Director



**Simone English**  
Pre-Doctoral Fellow



**Monique Harden, Esq.**  
Director of Law and  
Public Policy



**Ginger LeBlanc, BA**  
Director of  
Communications.



**Bruce McClue III, BS**  
Technical Training Manager



**Brigitte Sabbs, BA**  
Chief of Staff & Head of  
Strategic Planning



**Barbara Shelby, MA**  
Wrap Around Services  
Facilitator



**Jerica Wallace, MA**  
Operations Manager



**John Warford, PhD**  
Assistant Director of Operations  
and Training



**Mary I. Williams, MEd**  
Director of Community and  
Student Engagement



**Danielle Wright, DSW,  
MPH, LCSW, NavigateNOLA**  
Division Director



**Della Wright, MPH,**  
Evaluator & NavigateNOLA  
Associate Director

# Our Team is AMAZING!

MISSION-MINDED. COMMUNITY-CENTERED.



*This Impact Report is a testament to how the Deep South Center for  
Environmental Justice is STILL GROWING STRONG year by year!  
To all of our supporters, we most humbly THANK YOU.*

STILL  
*Growing*  
**STRONG**



9801 Lake Forest Blvd.  
New Orleans, LA 70126  
Phone: 504.272.0956  
Website: [www.DSCEJ.org](http://www.DSCEJ.org)