

WE CAN'T BREATHE:

POLICING, POLLUTION, PUBLIC VIOLENCE, AND PANDEMIC

NCEJN's 22nd ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUMMIT

October 2020





**NORTH CAROLINA
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
NETWORK PRESENTS:**

WE CAN'T BREATHE:

POLICING, POLLUTION, PUBLIC
VIOLENCE, AND PANDEMIC

22ND ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUMMIT

OCTOBER, 2020

REMOTE ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA & BEYOND

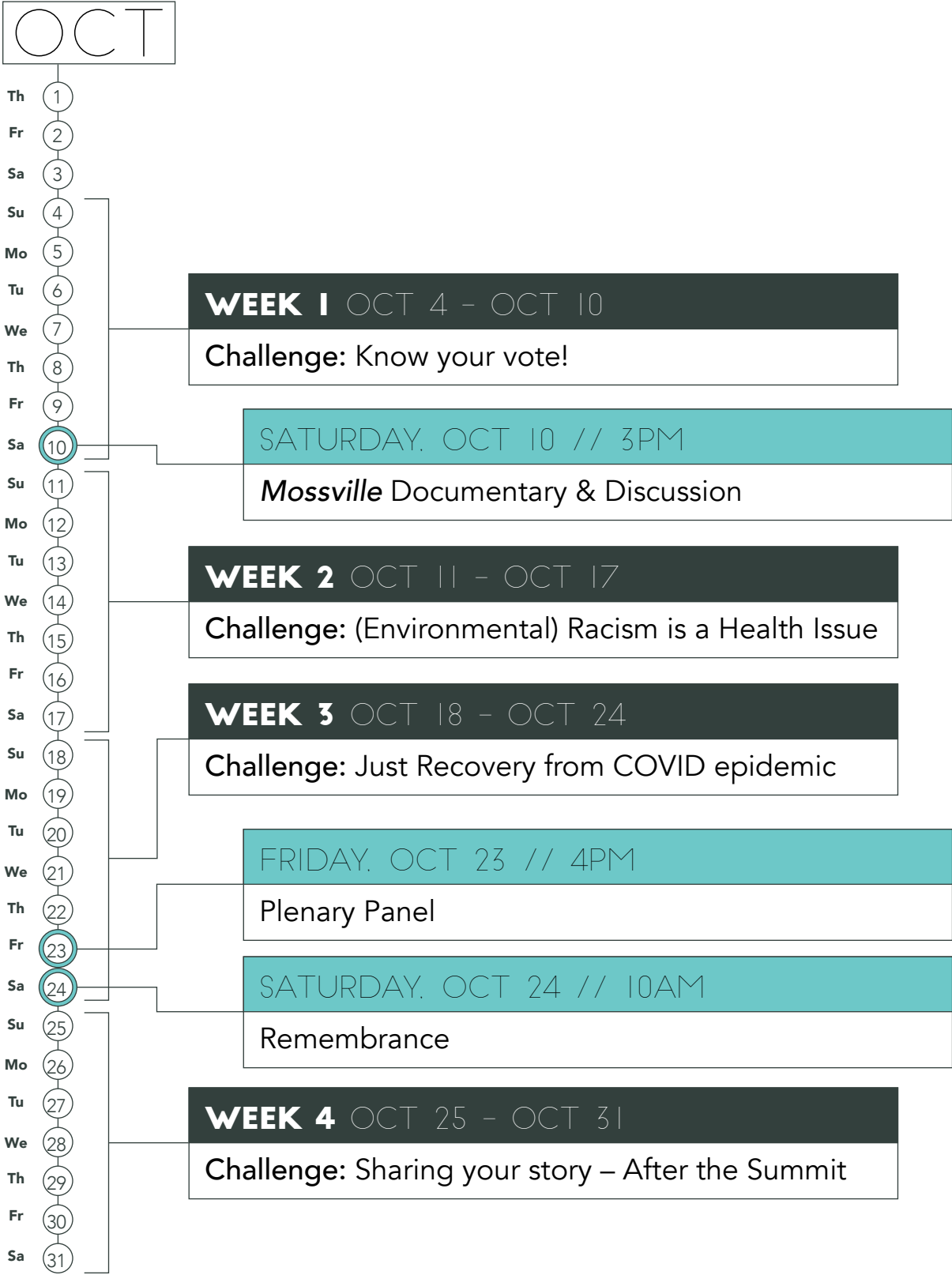
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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



A SMALL NEEDFUL FACT

Ross Gay

Is that Eric Garner worked
for some time for the Parks and Rec.
Horticultural Department, which means,
perhaps, that with his very large hands,
perhaps, in all likelihood,
he put gently into the earth
some plants which, most likely,
some of them, in all likelihood,
continue to grow, continue
to do what such plants do, like house
and feed small and necessary creatures,
like being pleasant to touch and smell,
like converting sunlight
into food, like making it easier
for us to breathe.

Photo by Wally Gobetz, Staten Island, NY

INTRODUCTION

The geographer and abolitionist Ruth Wilson Gilmore asks, “what is it that makes people’s lives vulnerable?” The question propels us to draw connections between seemingly disparate forces, and in drawing those connections we see the complexities in which those forces are truly interrelated.

This year has made those forces starkly evident. It began with a global pandemic that has rapidly and fundamentally transformed our world; in which the health and economic impacts have been felt most severely by Black, Indigenous, and low-income communities of color, according to the existing fault lines of structural oppression. Decades of environmental racism targeting the same communities has contaminated the air and led to disproportionately high rates of asthma and other respiratory

conditions, exacerbating the impacts of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) on this population. Jobs now deemed by our elected officials as “essential” to the functioning of society are largely filled by workers from these same communities, putting their families and themselves at much greater risk of exposure, while continuing the ongoing economic exploitation of these workers. Meanwhile, many jobs largely lack the provision of any adequate protective measures. Institutional racism and highly burdensome costs within the healthcare industry has left far too many underserved by inadequate medical care to treat the virus, not to mention other health conditions that persist alongside the pandemic. And each year, the crisis of climate change grows more severe, as the same communities disproportionately experience the brunt of relentless storms and other extreme weather events. These circumstances are not accidental, but the intentional outcome of decades of austerity and government facilitating the prioritization of profits for the few over the lives and health of the many, particularly those of Black people.

Under these conditions, we continue to witness – and for some, experience – another threat to life and wellbeing by the racist state at the hands of violent police. And while calling for peaceful protests in response to police killings and violent abuse, the same rotten politicians are continuing their crusade of voter disenfranchisement by closing

polling locations and obstructing people’s ability to safely vote during the pandemic, among other strategic maneuvers that perpetuate white supremacy and systemic racism within the United States.

We also learn from Dr. Gilmore that *where life is precious*, life is precious. How do we build systems and structures that reverse premature death, and instead enrich, nourish, and cherish life? How do we cultivate communities where life is precious? A new swell of uprising and rebellion against racist state violence and white supremacist vigilantism has grown across the country and world, in which new ruptures of the oppressive systems can be broken open for transformative change towards the just and beautiful world we are fighting for. In this time we will gather together as the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network community to learn, connect, and engage towards environmental justice in North Carolina and beyond! And as Dr. Gilmore says, to do this we must change one thing: **everything**. To this we dedicate our Summit.

NORTH CAROLINA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE NETWORK

MISSION STATEMENT

The North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN) is a coalition of community organizations and their supporters who work with low income communities and people of color to promote health and environmental equity, clean industry, safe work places, and fair access to all human and natural resources. We seek to accomplish these goals through organizing, advocacy, research, and education based on principles of economic and political equity.

NCEJN VALUES

Grassroots Education and Organizing

The goal of which is consciousness raising, building critical thinking skills, and developing tools for action.

Grassroots-Driven Solutions

Involvement of people affected by the problem.

People Power

NCEJN works to awaken a community's own power.

Justice

Justice means individuals and groups receive equitable treatment ensuring that no one benefits to the detriment of others and that there is fair and equitable access to resources.

Democratic Participation

Participation by people ensuring that every voice is heard, accountability of leadership to all people, and shared power.

Economic And Political Equity

All people have equitable access to political and economic power, and resources.

THE PROBLEM

All individuals and communities should live in a safe and healthy environment. However, because of their race, ethnicity, and income, many North Carolinians have been subjected to living in unsafe conditions. This is environmental injustice in its truest form!

Environmental injustices exist because many businesses, government agencies, and other organizations in positions of power have discriminatory practices and policies. When discriminatory practices and policies are adopted by these organizations, the discrimination becomes “institutionalized” and therefore harder to identify and thus harder to end.

Lastly, no groups of people, based on race, ethnicity, or income, should experience an unequal share of environmental problems because of actions (or inactions) and policies of private industry or government institutions.

Environmental injustices occur not only in our backyard, but also at the state, national, and international level. An environmental injustice in one community means there is a problem for everyone.

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

Environmental justice means that people of all races, cultures, and incomes should be able to live in a safe and healthy environment.

It also means that everyone should be treated fairly and equally.

WHAT DOES THE NCEJN DO?

The North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN) works to empower communities affected by environmental injustices through organized forums, conferences, and through the support of member advocates.

WHY A SUMMIT?

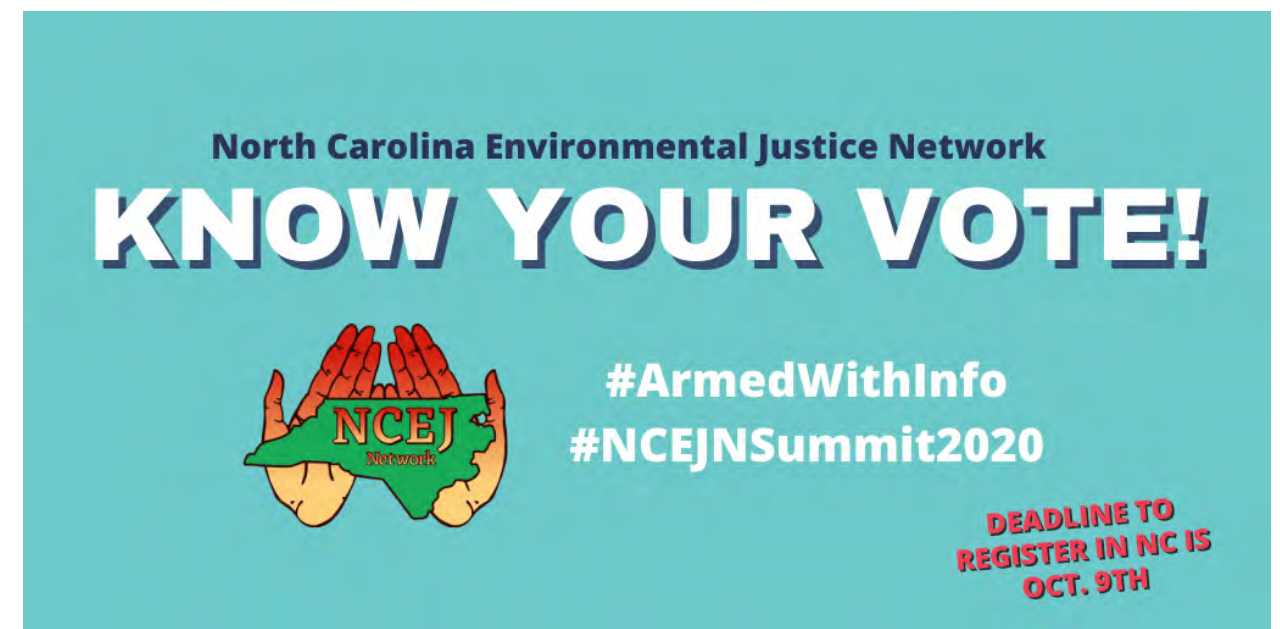
NCEJN's Annual Statewide Community-Based Environmental Justice Summit is a forum to bring people together to help educate and inform them about the history and current state of environmental injustice in North Carolina. The panels and research presentations are designed to help identify specific objectives and ideas for participants to take back to their communities, state, and local government agencies. The goal is to strengthen the resources and plans used by communities and government agencies, which in turn will help protect and improve the quality of life for all North Carolina residents. By working together, we can start building a better tomorrow today.

ACTION CHALLENGE

We are in an unprecedented time. With the arrival of this new virtual era that we have all been thrown into due to COVID -19, NCEJN is rolling with the punches, adapting, and meeting the challenges that face us head on. Unprecedented change like this acts as a moment in which the status quo is interrupted for everyone, and opens a chance for us to further disrupt the oppressive structures that be. To do this, we are asking everyone to participate in a series of actions during October that emphasize the mission of our Network. We will be gathering *via email, social media, on Zoom, and by word of mouth* to continue to practice solidarity and prove that our strength in numbers is not changed by any force! This action challenge will emphasize direct action, mutual aid, awareness and preparedness.

During the month of October, we are asking our members and others to join in and complete weekly challenges, and post their progress on social media, to actively engage collectively towards our shared goals. Our traditions are adaptable. Our actions have power. Our strength never falters!

WEEK I OCT 4 – OCT 10



Action: We challenge you to find out if you are registered to vote, your sample ballot, and polling place here: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/RegLkup/>. Afterward, post on social media that you are armed with info and ready for this general election (Nov. 3, 2020) and tag NCEJN in it!

Format: Website lookup and NCEJN-tagged social media post

Hashtag: #ArmedWithInfo and #NCEJNSummit2020

One of the first steps in making political change is knowing that you have a voice in your local and national elections. We challenge you to find out if you are registered to vote, look up your sample ballot, and find out where you'll be voting in November here: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/RegLkup/>. Afterward, post on social media that you are #ArmedWithInfo and ready for this general election (Nov. 3, 2020). Don't forget to tag [@NCEJN](#) (on Twitter) or [@North Carolina Environmental Justice Network](#) (on Facebook) in it!

Voting Deadlines:

- Deadline to request a ballot by mail: Board of Elections must receive your ballot request by **Tuesday October 27, 2020 at 5pm**.
- Early voting period runs from Thursday October 15, 2020 to Saturday October 31, 2020. If you've voted in North Carolina before, you don't need to show ID to vote.
- First-time voter? If you registered by mail and didn't provide your driver's license number or the last 4 digits of your Social Security number on your registration form, you will need to show ID to vote. Acceptable forms include: a driver's license or state ID; US Passport; employee ID; student ID; military ID; or a copy of a utility bill, bank statement or paycheck. If you are unable to provide ID, you will still be able to vote a provisional ballot. If election officials are able to verify your eligibility to vote, then your vote will be counted.

What to bring when you vote:

- If you've voted in North Carolina before, you don't need to show ID to vote.

- First-time voter? If you registered by mail and didn't provide your driver's license number or the last 4 digits of your Social Security number on your registration form, you will need to show ID to vote.
- Acceptable forms include: a driver's license or state ID; US Passport; employee ID; student ID; military ID; or a copy of a utility bill, bank statement or paycheck.
- If you are unable to provide ID, you will still be able to vote a provisional ballot. If election officials are able to verify your eligibility to vote, then your vote will be counted.

Where to vote:

Look up your polling place here: <https://vt.ncsbe.gov/PPLkup/>

Who's on the ballot?

Visit <https://www.ncvoter.org/2020-voter-guides/> to find out more about each candidate and position.



Background: Racism structures opportunity and access based on how a person looks. Environmental racism in particular is a form of racism that makes Black, Brown, and poor communities more susceptible to environmental harm. It's time North Carolina takes a stand and declares (environmental) racism a public health issue, calling for the allocation of state-wide resources to combating racial inequities for all of its citizens.

Action: Print out or email our template letter with their signatures to the addresses indicated.

Format: Email/letter template

Hashtag: #EndEnvironmentalRacism and #NCEJNSummit2020

detach here

The Honorable Roy Cooper
Governor of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Honorable Roy Cooper,

I write to you today to urge you to declare environmental racism – and racism more broadly – a public health issue in the state of North Carolina.

Racism structures opportunity and assigns value based on how a person looks. The result is that these conditions unfairly advantage some and disadvantage others in tangible ways and with material consequences. According to The American Public Health Association, “racism hurts the health of our nation by preventing some people the opportunity to attain their highest level of health.” They continued to add that “racism may be intentional or unintentional and operates at various levels in society. It is a driving force of the social determinants of health,” such as housing, education and employment, as well as environmental protections or lack thereof. Racism is also a barrier to health equity according to a new report by the American Public Health Association titled Creating the Healthiest Nation : Health and Housing Equity.

Environmental racism is a particular form of racism that disadvantages Black and Brown communities and makes them more susceptible to environmental harm, including but not limited to: exposure to toxic waste, lack of protection following natural disasters and unsafe work conditions. One county in North Carolina (Mecklenburg) along with its major city (Charlotte) have already declared racism a public health issue. It is time for all of North Carolina to also follow their lead. Declaring (environmental) racism a public health concern is an important first step in the movement to advance equity and justice and must be followed by the appropriate allocation of resources and strategic action.

I look forward to your swift action in declaring environmental racism a public health issue in North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Phone Number _____

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Dr. Mandy K. Cohen
Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
2001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2000

Dear Dr. Mandy K. Cohen,

I write to you today to urge you to declare environmental racism – and racism more broadly – a public health issue in the state of North Carolina.

Racism structures opportunity and assigns value based on how a person looks. The result is that these conditions unfairly advantage some and disadvantage others in tangible ways and with material consequences. According to The American Public Health Association, “racism hurts the health of our nation by preventing some people the opportunity to attain their highest level of health.” They continued to add that “racism may be intentional or unintentional and operates at various levels in society. It is a driving force of the social determinants of health,” such as housing, education and employment, as well as environmental protections or lack thereof. Racism is also a barrier to health equity according to a new report by the American Public Health Association titled Creating the Healthiest Nation : Health and Housing Equity.

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I look forward to your swift action in declaring environmental racism a public health issue in North Carolina.

Sincerely,

detach here

Signature	Date
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Print Name	Phone Number
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detach here

Cornell P. Wright, Executive Director
DHHS Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities
1906 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1906
Courier #56-20-11

Dear Cornell P. Wright,

I write to you today to urge you to declare environmental racism – and racism more broadly – a public health issue in the state of North Carolina.

Racism structures opportunity and assigns value based on how a person looks. The result is that these conditions unfairly advantage some and disadvantage others in tangible ways and with material consequences. According to The American Public Health Association, “racism hurts the health of our nation by preventing some people the opportunity to attain their highest level of health.” They continued to add that “racism may be intentional or unintentional and operates at various levels in society. It is a driving force of the social determinants of health,” such as housing, education and employment, as well as environmental protections or lack thereof. Racism is also a barrier to health equity according to a new report by the American Public Health Association titled Creating the Healthiest Nation : Health and Housing Equity.

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I look forward to your swift action in declaring environmental racism a public health issue in North Carolina.

Sincerely,

detach here

Signature	Date
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Print Name	Phone Number
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detach here

Michael Regan
Secretary of the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality
1601 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1601

Dear Michael Regan,

I write to you today to urge you to declare environmental racism – and racism more broadly – a public health issue in the state of North Carolina.

Racism structures opportunity and assigns value based on how a person looks. The result is that these conditions unfairly advantage some and disadvantage others in tangible ways and with material consequences. According to The American Public Health Association, “racism hurts the health of our nation by preventing some people the opportunity to attain their highest level of health.” They continued to add that “racism may be intentional or unintentional and operates at various levels in society. It is a driving force of the social determinants of health,” such as housing, education and employment, as well as environmental protections or lack thereof. Racism is also a barrier to health equity according to a new report by the American Public Health Association titled Creating the Healthiest Nation : Health and Housing Equity.

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I look forward to your swift action in declaring environmental racism a public health issue in North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Phone Number _____

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Environmental racism in particular is a form of racism that makes Black, Brown, and poor communities more susceptible to environmental harm. It's time North Carolina takes a stand and declares (environmental) racism a public health issue, calling for the allocation of state-wide resources to combating racial inequities for all of its citizens. Sign the included letter template and send to the addresses listed below to declare Environmental Racism a public health issue in NC! Want to email the letter to your government officials instead? Copy and send to the addresses below. Don't forget to address the letter and sign your name.

The Honorable Roy Cooper
Governor of North Carolina
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dr. Mandy K. Cohen
Secretary of the North Carolina
Department of Health and Human
Services
2001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2000
mandy.cohen@dhhs.nc.gov

Cornell P. Wright, Executive Director
DHHS Office of Minority Health and
Health Disparities
1906 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1906
Courier #56-20-11
cornell.wright@dhhs.nc.gov
919-707-5034

Michael Regan
Secretary of the N.C. Department of
Environmental Quality
1601 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1601
919-707-8622
michael.regan@ncdenr.gov

WEEK 3 OCT 18 – OCT 24



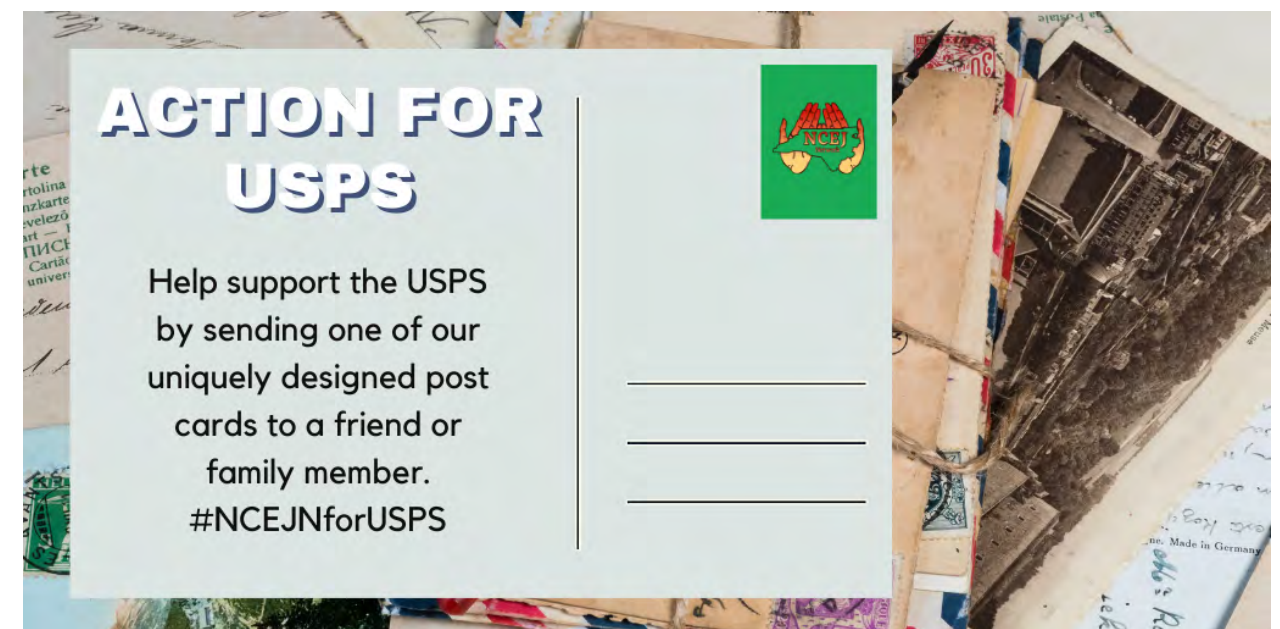
Background: COVID has been ravaging our communities and leaving paths of further differential treatment and recovery in its wake. Sign the petition here: <https://survivalandbeyond.info/>, and be sure to include any information that you reflect on that has to do with your experiences during this syndemic.

Action: Sign online petition and social media post. Tag [@NCEJN](#) (on Twitter) or [@North Carolina Environmental Justice Network](#) (on Facebook)!

Format: Online

Hashtag: #AJustCOVIDrecovery and #NCEJNSummit2020

WEEK 4 OCT 25 – OCT 31



Background: This action aims to combat the federal atrocities against the USPS by showing the people's support for this long-standing institution that benefits all kinds of marginalized communities (incarcerated folks, poor people etc.)

Action: Partnering with People for USPS, we ask you to send postcards that you received (or create your own! Go to: tinyurl.com/People4USPSPostcardHow-To for more information) and then either snap a pic with them before sending or just post that they sent it to a friend/family member with the accompanying hashtags. You can also reflect on the summit in this post. Tag NCEJN!

Format: Mail-in Postcards and social media post

Hashtag: #NCEJNforUSPS and #NCEJNSummit2020



DOCUMENTARY & DISCUSSION

Saturday, October 10 | 3pm Film | 4:20pm Discussion

Mossville, Louisiana: A once-thriving community founded by formerly enslaved and free people of color, and an economically flourishing safe haven for generations of African American families. Today it's a breeding ground for petrochemical plants and their toxic black clouds. Many residents are forced from their homes, and those that stay suffer from prolonged exposure to contamination and pollution. Amid this chaos and injustice stands one man who refuses to abandon his family's land - and his community.

Discussion questions:

- 1) Environmental documentaries often talk about the environmental impacts of industry, but there's less about human impacts and the effect on communities as a whole. What was lost in Mossville?
- 2) Let's talk about the power dynamics of people from outside telling communities' stories. In previous screenings of the film, the documentary creators talked about challenges they faced as a team of both impacted community members and outsiders. How have you experienced that dynamic?
- 3) Cedric Robinson coined the term racial capitalism to describe the importance of race in structuring social and labor hierarchies in capitalist economies. The film tells the story of how racial capitalism is a threat to Black lives locally and globally. How is racial capitalism operating in your community and around the world?
- 4) Danielle Purifoy writes about hope in her review of the film: "watching the film again in the last two weeks, as Black people across the globe chant 'We Can't Breathe,' I found another kind of hope in seeing the hopelessness of racism and capitalism. Mossville inspires a cry for abolition of these interlocking systems, which are deeply linked to the toxicity of policing and incarceration. Abolition is the hope." Did anything from this film or discussion inspire hope for you?

For more information:

- Visit the film's [website: www.mossvilleproject.com](http://www.mossvilleproject.com)
- Read a film [review](#) and [panel discussion](#) from Scalawag Magazine
- Learn more about [Mossville Environmental Action Now](#)

PANEL DISCUSSION

WE CAN'T BREATHE:
POLICING, POLLUTION,
PUBLIC VIOLENCE, AND
PANDEMIC

Friday, October 23 from 4-5:30 PM ET

Moderated by Danielle Purifoy, NCEJN and UNC-CH

- **Policing »» New models of public safety:** Kyla Hartsfield, Coordinator for Durham Beyond Policing
- **Pollution »» Clean and safe environments:** Sacoby Wilson, University of Maryland
- **Public Violence »» Community solidarity:** Naeema Muhammad, Co-director for NCEJN
- **Pandemic »» Worker protections:** Ajamu Dillahunt, Southern Workers' Assembly (Safe Jobs Save Lives)

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

AJAMU DILLAHUNT

Southern Workers Assembly Coordinating Committee



A native of New York City, Ajamu has lived in N.C. since 1978. He is a retired postal worker who served as President of the Raleigh Area Local of the American Postal Workers Union, Research and Education Director of the North Carolina Council of the APWU and Southern Regional FMLA Trainer. He has participated on the boards of many labor and social justice

organizations including Labor Notes, the Institute for Southern Studies, and United for a Fair Economy. He has worked for the N.C. Justice Center as Outreach Coordinator for the Budget and Tax Center and the Workers Rights Project. He continues to do popular education training for the APWU as well as local and regional grassroots groups. He is a member and leader of the Black Workers for Justice and a member of the North Carolina Climate Jobs Roundtable, and affiliate of the Labor Network for Sustainability. He has done solidarity work in Latin American, the Caribbean, and Africa. He is currently a member of the Southern Workers Assembly Coordinating Committee.

KYLA HARTSFIELD

Durham Beyond Policing



Kyla Hartsfield is from Raleigh, NC but has made a home out of Durham, NC. She is currently the Campaign Coordinator for Durham Beyond Policing and has been organizing around policing and decarceration over the last three years. She’s a Southern, Black, Queer, Organizer who believes in storytelling, the moon, abolition, love and Black People. She obtained a B.A. in English from

the illustrious North Carolina Central University. Her life has been on an upward spiral fighting for the liberation of all and is extremely thankful for everyone who has taken her under their wing. In her spare time, she enjoys trying new foods, getting tattoos, and dreaming of a world without cages.

NAEEMA MUHAMMAD

NCEJN Organizing Co-Director



Naeema Muhmmad has been the director for the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN) since 2013. She is married to Saladin Muhammad and together they have 3 children, 10 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren. They have been married 54 years and reside in Rocky Mount, NC.

Naeema has worked on two NIEHS funded grants. The first was Community Health and environmental Reawakening (CHER) in which she served as a community organizer working with communities dealing with waste from industrial hog operations. In this position she worked with Dr. Steve Wing, Associate Professor at UNC-Chapel Hill School of Public Health and was supervised by Gary R. Grant, Executive Director of the Concerned Citizens of Tillery. She has co-authored publications with Dr. Wing regarding community based participatory research (most recently in the new Solutions Health Journal). She kindly serves on the NC Department of Environmental Quality Secretary’s EJ and Equity Advisory Board.

DANIELLE PURIFOY

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill NCEJN, Board Chair



Danielle Purifoy is writer, lawyer, and Assistant Professor of Geography at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her work focuses on roots of contemporary environmental inequity in the U.S. South, particularly in the development of Black towns and settlements. Danielle also serves as Board Chair of the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network and as the Race

and Place editor for Scalawag, a media organization devoted to Southern politics and culture.

SACOBY WILSON

University of Maryland-College Park



Dr. Sacoby Wilson is an Associate Professor with the Maryland Institute for Applied Environmental Health and Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Public Health, University of Maryland-College Park. Dr. Wilson has 15 years of experience as an environmental health scientist in the areas of exposure science, environmental justice, environmental health

disparities, community-engaged research including crowd science and community-based participatory research (CBPR), water quality analysis, air pollution studies, built environment, industrial animal production, climate change, community resiliency, and sustainability. He works primarily in partnership with community-based organizations to study and address environmental justice and health issues and translate research to action.

Dr. Wilson is Director of the Community Engagement, Environmental Justice and Health (CEEJH) laboratory. CEEJH is focused on providing technical assistance and research support to communities fighting against environmental injustice and environmental health disparities in the DMV region and across the nation. Through CEEJH, Dr. Wilson is engaging communities in the Washington, DC region and beyond on environmental health issues including exposure and health risks for individuals who fish and recreate on the Anacostia River; use of best management practices to reduce stormwater inputs in the Chesapeake Bay; air pollution and health impacts due to industrial and commuter traffic in Bladensburg, MD; built environment, environmental

injustice, and vectors in West Baltimore; cumulative impacts of environmental hazards on air quality in Brandywine, MD; goods movement, industrial pollution, and environmental injustice in South Baltimore, MD; environmental justice and health issues in Buzzard Point area of Washington, DC; industrial chicken farming on Maryland's Eastern Shore; health impact of assessment in the Sheriff Road community; and other topics. In addition, he is working with schools in the region on pipeline development efforts in the STEM+H disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Health).

He has worked on environmental justice issues including environmental racism with community-based organizations through community-university environmental health and justice partnerships in South Carolina and North Carolina including the Low-Country Alliance for Model Communities (LAMC), in North Charleston, South Carolina; the West End Revitalization Association (WERA) in Mebane, NC; and the Graniteville Community Coalition (GCC) in Graniteville, SC. He has provided technical assistance to REACH in Duplin County, NC; RENA in Orange County, NC; and the NC Environmental Justice Network. He also has worked on environmental justice and air pollution issues with community-based groups in Houston, Texas, Savannah, GA, Uniontown, AL, and Wilmington, DE.

Dr. Wilson has been very active professionally to advance environmental justice science. He is a member of the USEPA's National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC), member of the National Academy of Science's Board on Environmental Studies and Toxicology (BEST), board member of the Citizen Science Association, Editor in Chief of Environmental Justice, a past Chair of the APHA Environment Section, former Board member of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, a former member of Board of Scientific Counselors for the CDC NCEH/ATSDR, and former Chair of the Alpha Goes Green Initiative, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

He is also a senior fellow in the Environmental Leadership Program.

Dr. Wilson has done a lot of work to build environmental justice organizations and coalitions. He is Co-Founder of the DMV Environmental Justice Coalition and Founder of 17 for Peace and Justice, an environmental justice advocacy organization. He currently is faculty advisor for a student chapter of 17 for Peace and Justice on the campus of the University of Maryland-College Park. He is on the steering committee for the recently relaunched National Black Environmental Justice Network (NBEJN). Additionally, he hosts an annual environmental justice symposium that brings together community members, advocates, policymakers, researchers, students, and practitioners to discuss ways to address environmental justice issues in the DMV region and around the country.

Dr. Wilson has received many awards for his contributions and achievements as an environmental justice researcher and advocate. He won the 2018 Taking Nature Black Environmental Champion Award. He also received the APHA Environment Section Damu Smith Environmental Justice Award in 2015. From the University of Maryland School of Public Health, he received the George F. Kramer Practitioner of the Year Award (2014-2015) and the Muriel R. Sloan Communitarian Award (2019-2020, 2012-2013). He also received the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Social Justice Award from the University of South Carolina in 2011. He received a US EPA Environmental Justice Achievement Award given to Low Country Alliance for Model Communities, North Charleston, SC and Mitigation Agreement Committee. Additionally, Dr. Wilson received the Steve Wing International Environmental Justice Award in 2008.

Dr. Wilson, a two-time EPA STAR fellow, EPA MAI fellow, Udall Scholar, NASA Space Scholar, and Thurgood Marshall Scholar, received his BS degree in Biology/ Ecotoxicology with a minor in Environmental Science from Alabama Agricultural and

Mechanical University in 1998. He received training in environmental health in the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Wilson received his MS degree in 2000 from UNC-Chapel Hill and his PhD from UNC-Chapel Hill in 2005.

WHEN GREAT TREES FALL

Maya Angelou

When great trees fall,
rocks on distant hills shudder,
lions hunker down
in tall grasses,
and even elephants
lumber after safety.

When great trees fall
in forests,
small things recoil into silence,
their senses
eroded beyond fear.

When great souls die,
the air around us becomes
light, rare, sterile.
We breathe, briefly.
Our eyes, briefly,
see with
a hurtful clarity.
Our memory, suddenly sharpened,
examines,
gnaws on kind words
unsaid,
promised walks
never taken.

Great souls die and
our reality, bound to
them, takes leave of us.
Our souls,
dependent upon their
nurture,
now shrink, wizened.
Our minds, formed
and informed by their
radiance,
fall away.
We are not so much maddened
as reduced to the unutterable ignorance
of dark, cold
caves.

And when great souls die,
after a period peace blooms,
slowly and always
irregularly. Spaces fill
with a kind of
soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
to be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
better. For they existed.

Dedicated to our own Great Trees who've fallen, the EJ Warriors we've lost.

REMEMBRANCE

Saturday, October 24 at 10 AM ET

Just because we are going virtual for this year's Summit does not mean we cannot connect in meaningful ways! Nothing will beat our usual in-person organizing and strategizing, but through our Remembrance event on Zoom, we will try to come close. This year we will take time to celebrate the rich history of the Summit as well as some of the folks that have committed their lives to social and environmental justice. We will also take time to recognize people in the EJN who have passed on and those who have lost their lives because of various environmental injustices. A huge component of the Summit is its ability to bring the community together and curate very intimate moments. This Remembrance session will help us channel those connections and intimacies.

During the Remembrance event, we will journey back through the years and revisit memories from past summits. We will also hear from community members about what the NCEJ Network means to them. Even during this unprecedented time, we will find ways to join together and carry our mission forward.

Agenda*

- I. Welcome and Introduction
- II. Icebreaker
- III. History of the EJ Summit
- IV. 2020 Summit Recap: We Can't Breathe: Policing, Pollution, Public Violence, and Pandemic
- V. Community Reflections
 - A. What does the summit or NCEJ

- Network mean to you? To your community?
- B. What are your favorite Summit memories or memories with the network?
- VI. Remembering EJ Warriors
- VII. Link in the Chain
- VIII. Closing remarks

**Subject to change*

NOTES FROM THE FRONTLINES

Throughout the month of the Summit (October), NCEJN will engage with affiliated community groups across the state, as well as other aligned organizations, asking them to develop a 1-page update that the Network will compile and finalize for sharing after the Summit. This “updates booklet” can have 1) notes from the frontlines, including updates and reflections, and 2) resources relevant to members of the Network. It will be distributed after the Summit as another way to engage our members.

If you are interested in submitting a note, please reach out to us:
ncejsummit@gmail.com

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

We welcome new member groups Anderson Community Environmental Justice and House of TimbuKtu. Thanks for joining NCEJN!

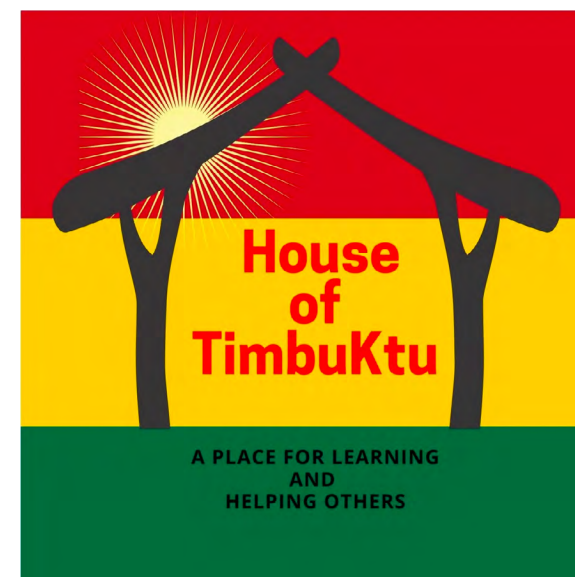
Anderson Community Environmental Justice

Our mission is to obtain and secure environmental justice for the members of the Anderson Community Group. The Anderson Community Group was founded in 2020 after the community found out, by word of mouth, about a proposed environmental injustice with a proposed asphalt and cement plant.

acejustice.org



House of TimbuKtu




We are a multicultural center honoring our ancestors by preserving the past and servicing our communities. We preserve our past through education, an antique gift shop and by displaying historical artifacts in our mini-museum. Our community preservation includes outreach services and community donation drives.

houseoftimbuktu.org


ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

COVID-19 SAFETY


If you leave home, know your 3 Ws!



WEAR
a cloth mask over
your nose and mouth.



WAIT
6 feet apart. Avoid
close contact.

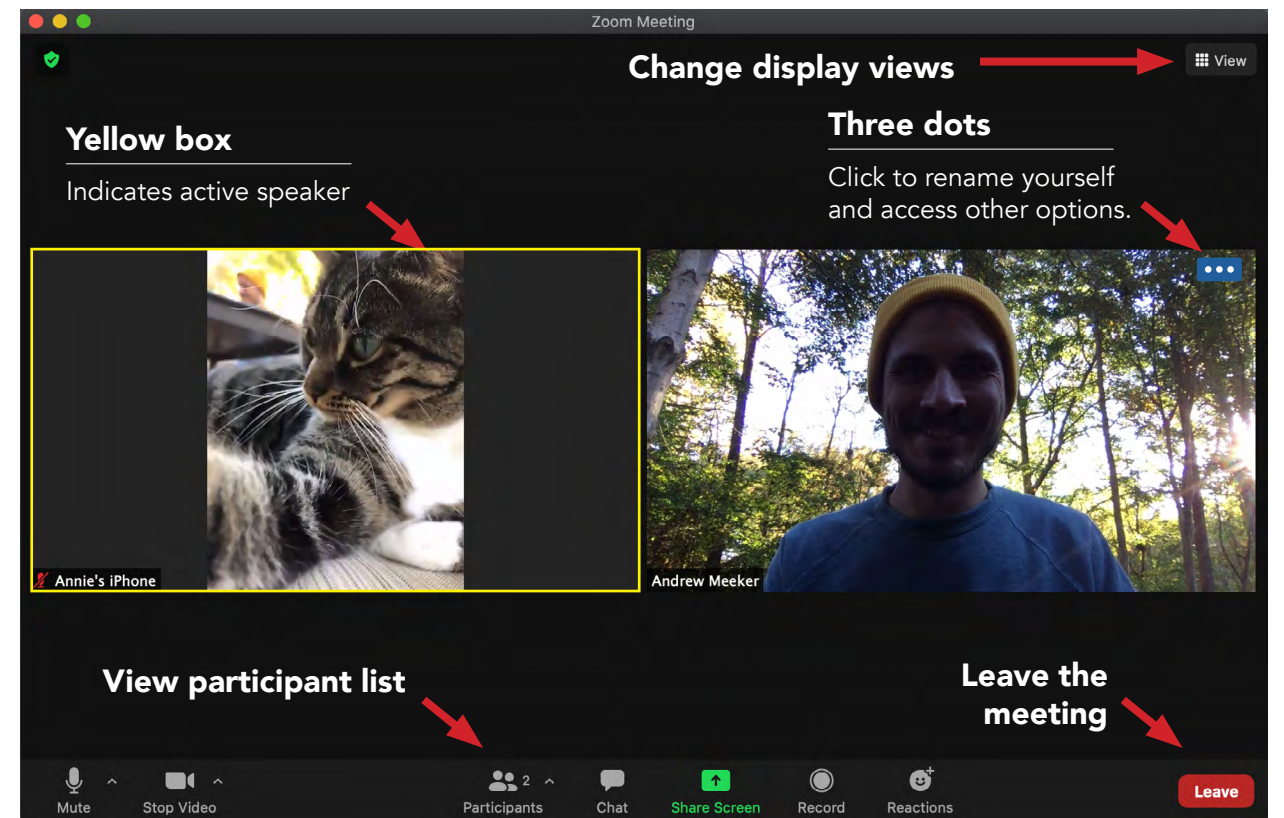


WASH
your hands or
use hand sanitizer.

@NCDHHS
#StayStrongNC

For more information, go to: covid19.ncdhhs.gov

ZOOM 101



Toggle Video

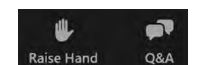
We love to see your smiling faces! And you can turn off your camera if you do not want to be seen by the full group. **Note:** If your internet quality is low, turning off your video will help.

Open chat box

If you'd like to share questions/thoughts to the group, click the chat button and type your comments in the chat box on the right.

React!

Show your support by displaying a reaction!



Toggle Microphone

Please mute yourself when you are not speaking. **Note:** If you are not muted, everyone on the call will be able to hear you speak.

For more information, go to: support.zoom.us

Also! In webinar format

"Raise your hand" and ask questions of panelists during a presentation.

If you are having technical difficulties with using Zoom, feel free to contact coordinators Sarah Rhodes (561-251-7849) or Andrew Meeker (919-679-2327) for assistance, or email ncejsummit@gmail.com.

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

MAKE A PLAN

BUILD A KIT

BE INFORMED

Make a Plan:

- Prepare your home.
- If you or anyone in your household is an individual with a disability identify if you may need additional help during an emergency.
- You may have to evacuate quickly due to a hurricane so make sure to know your local evacuation zone.
- Review your insurance policies and make sure personal documents (like ID) are up to date.

Build a Kit:

Have enough supplies for everyone in your household. Include items like:

- At least 3 day supply of water and food
- Medication
- First Aid Kit
- Battery or Solar-powered phone charger
- Spare batteries
- Disinfectant supplies
- Cloth face coverings
- Pet supplies in your go bag or car trunk.

Be Informed:

- Download the FEMA app and receive real-time alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide.
- If you cannot evacuate, remember that floodwater may contain sewage, trash, harmful toxins, or dangerous animals. Avoid wading through floodwaters.

For more information, go to:

[Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)

Prepare Your Home

Always run generators outdoors to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

Fill up your car's gas tank, park in a garage if possible.

Cover windows with hurricane shutters or plywood.

Secure outdoor objects or bring them inside.

Keep all trees and shrubs well-trimmed.

Build A Kit

Have enough food, water and other supplies to support your needs for several days.

Download the FEMA App to get alerts and warnings.

#HurricanePrep

Ready

AWARDS

Due to the circumstances surrounding the coronavirus, we did not hold awards this year. However, please consider nominating someone for next year!

NCEJN Community Resilience Award

The Community Resilience Award is designed to give the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN) the opportunity to spotlight community groups and individuals who have made a difference in environmental struggles.

Past Recipients

David Caldwell, 2014	Ellis Tatum, 2017
Belinda Joyner, 2015	Bobby Jones, 2018
Macy Hinson, 2016	Stokes County NAACP, Appalachian Voices,
Devon Hall & REACH, 2016	and the Lilies Project, 2019

Steve Wing International Environmental Justice Award

In 2007 Gary R. Grant proposed the SWIEJ Award to annually recognize an academic who has made notable contributions to achieving Environmental Justice, especially through activism. While scholarship is not unimportant for a nomination, the clear emphasis is on a person’s advocacy work that reflects the goals of the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN). The award is named after the late Dr. Steve Wing, a founding board member of NCEJN, as well as a long time scholar and activist in the Environmental Justice arena in North Carolina. The person receiving this honor reflects through their work *Steve’s commitment to community, justice and equality, while taking a stand in academia.*

Past Recipients

Dr. Sacoby Wilson, 2008	Dr. Sarah Hatcher, 2015
Dr. Christopher Heaney, 2009	Professor Elizabeth Haddix, J.D., 2016
Dr. Mansoureh Tajik, 2010	Dr. Courtney Woods, 2017
Dr. Valerie Johnson, 2012	Dr. Sarah Rhodes, 2018
Esq. Savi Horne, J.D., 2013	Dr. Ryan Emmanuel, 2019
Professor Irving L. Joyner, J.D., 2014	

EJ Youth Vanguard Award

We believe in our young people and their desire to make our communities cleaner, safer, and productive. Environmental justice (EJ) means that people of all races, cultures, and incomes should be able to live in a safe and healthy environment. It also means that everyone should be treated fairly and equally. The EJ Youth Vanguard Awards are designed to give the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN) the opportunity to recognize young people from our communities who already are environmental champions and who show great promise as future leaders in the EJ movement.

Past Recipients

Jamesha Cannon-Phillips, RENA, 2017	Aissa Dearing, 2019
Dakota Moore, REACH, 2018	

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE DEFINITIONS

Environmental Justice – The right to a safe, healthy, productive, and sustainable environment for all, where “environment” is considered in its totality to include the ecological (biological), physical (natural and built), social, political, aesthetic, and economic environments. Environmental justice refers to the conditions in which such a right can be freely exercised, whereby individual and group identities, needs, and dignities are preserved, fulfilled, and respected in a way that provides for self-actualization and personal and community empowerment. This term acknowledges environmental “injustice” as the past and present state of affairs and expresses the socio-political objectives needed to address them.

Environmental Racism – Communities of color in the United States are more likely to be exposed to hazardous and unsafe environments, whether these take the form of landfills, polluting industries, or greater vulnerability to climate change. This term acknowledges the political reality that environmental injustices present today are the result of historical process that privilege whites and continue to promote racial inequality culturally, institutionally, legally and ideologically.

PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The following Principles were adopted on October 27, 1991, at the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, held in Washington, D.C. Over 650 leaders attended this four-day summit to strategize and build a movement that addressed how environmental issues were connected to racial, economic, and social justice. These principles continue to guide us in our actions to achieve environmental justice.

PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF COLOR, gathered together at this multinational People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, to begin to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities, do hereby re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles in healing ourselves; to insure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and, to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our peoples, do affirm and adopt these Principles of Environmental Justice:

1. Environmental justice affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.

2. Environmental justice demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination of bias.
3. Environmental justice mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.
4. Environmental justice calls for universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land water, and food.
5. Environmental justice affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples.
6. Environmental justice demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers are held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.
7. Environmental justice demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.
8. Environmental justice affirms the right of all workers to a safe and healthy work environment, without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment. It also affirms the right of those who are at home to be free from environmental hazards.
9. Environmental justice protects the right of victims of environmental injustice to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.
10. Environmental justice considers governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.

11. Environmental justice must recognize a special legal and natural relationship of Native Peoples to the U.S. government through treaties, agreements, compacts, and covenants which impose upon the U.S. government a paramount obligation and responsibility to affirm the sovereignty and self-determination of the indigenous peoples whose lands it occupies and holds in trust.
12. Environmental justice affirms the need for and urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and providing fair access for all the full range of resources.
13. Environmental justice calls for the strict enforcement of principles of informed consent, and a halt to the testing of experimental reproductive and medical procedures and vaccinations on people of color.
14. Environmental justice opposes the destructive operation of multi-national corporations.
15. Environmental justice opposes military occupation, repression and exploitation of lands, peoples and cultures, and other life forms.
16. Environmental justice calls for the education of present and future generations, which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.

Environmental justice requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to insure the health of the natural world for present and future generations.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT, NORTH CAROLINA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE NETWORK, AND THE ROLE OF STUDENTS

*By: Saladin Muhammad, Black Workers for Justice
November 16, 2014*

The role of students in the EJ movement

Student research, while important, can and should not be the basis for determining the focus areas of the struggles and social movements of the oppressed and exploited.

Our movements are not laboratories for students. Students should be allies using their access to resources and research to help develop strategies and tactics that help to expose, isolate and weaken defenses used by the corporate and state forces to justify their actions and policies in defense of greed and profits over human needs and rights.

The North Carolina Environmental Justice Network (NCEJN) and 2014 EJ Summit

What I felt and believe I saw at this year's EJ Summit was a reflection of multifaceted EJ forces and young base communities coming together to constitute a more united social movement to exercise mass-based people's power.

I thought the panel on Moral Monday and Ruben Solis's presentation during lunch helped to create a climate of discussion that stressed the need to identify, organize and

mobilize power that strengthens the basis for exercising the transformative power of impacted communities.

Building a coordinating committee whose majority are representatives of organizations from impacted communities and workers should be a main goal of NCEJN. This will move the EJ Summit to the level of an EJ movement venue and not mainly an NCEJN event. This is not meant to suggest that the EJ Summits and the work of NCEJN have not been very important. It is to point out that we should recognize the need to focus on new contradictions of the U.S. and global capitalist crises where strategies and tactics cannot be originated from what foundations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are willing to fund. NGOs must function to strengthen the leadership, confidence and power at the base of the impacted communities, and not mainly on NGOs and service organizations composed of professionals who do not belong to impacted communities.

The Role of NCEJN in the Global EJ Movement

I am hoping that the commitment to leadership of impacted communities in the EJ movement is embraced by the NCEJN and that its work will be informed and guided by this principle, which needs further development in concrete ways. An EJ school for people impacted by environmental injustice, outside the walls of academia, would be important in helping to further develop this principle by contributing to the strength of diverse forces representing a majority from base communities.

The NCEJN must see its role as helping to develop an EJ leadership from impacted communities that is grounded in struggles against environmental racism, bringing to it resources and connections that strengthen this working-class Black and people of color leadership and infrastructure to give leadership to the wider EJ movement. This will place climate justice within the context of EJ, and it will anchor the leadership in the most impacted and oppressed communities.

Discussions about raising funds, which are greatly needed, must not distract from the transformative mission to build power. Approaching major banks that finance polluting corporations for funding does not strengthen and can weaken efforts to build base community consciousness about the relationship of forces in the struggle. These forces will bring pressures on the NGO, service and base organizations to comply with corporate and state laws and policies in the actions of the EJ movement.

These issues must be discussed by participants and allies in the EJ movement. Ways need to be identified that prevent and reduce compromises in key areas and core questions of EJ movement program and strategy.

While being clear that the NCEJN is not itself a revolutionary organization, it should be viewed as a part of a battlefield in the struggle for human rights that is connected to a broad, international movement towards a transitional civil society. The base communities must become exposed to participants in this movement so that their learning scope is not limited to their immediate experiences and the priorities of NGO and service organizations whose politics and priorities are too often shaped by foundation funding.

How NCEJN defines the base communities of the EJ movement infrastructure is very important. As EJ experts based on their life experiences, as people who have no choice about living with contamination (unlike outside professionals) the base community members need to lead and give permission to the outsiders, and especially privileged professionals, who come into their communities. This goal is undermined if communities are turned into research laboratories that bring funding to researchers and NGOs. This kind of exploitation encourages base community members to see themselves as victims and dependent souls with no power to wage a struggle against the forces and systems of oppression and injustice.

DEFINING THE ROLE AND PRINCIPLES OF LAWYERS AND ACADEMICIANS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

*A provisional document prepared by the
African American Environmental Justice Action Movement
October, 1997*

As the environmental justice (EJ) movement continues to grow and develop, various new and creative tactics and strategies are being employed within communities in our struggle for clean land, air, water and healthy human beings. The tried and true strategies and tactics of grassroots, community based organizing and militant direction action which has characterized our movement for the past twenty years continues to be successful by empowering our people to master their own fates and destinies. However, as the EJ movement has become larger, more successful, and increasingly more sophisticated, it has attracted the attention of various organizations and institutions beyond our grassroots communities. Discussion of environmental justice is no longer limited to community and neighborhood dialogue and meetings. The struggle against poisoning of the places in which we work, live and play is now a subject of particular concern within the legal and scientific communities and within the halls of academia as well. This document represents the provisional policy perspective of the organizations of the African American Environmental Justice Action Network (AAEJAN) on this important issue.

Lawyers

The use of lawsuits, legal injunctions and other litigation tactics has grown exponentially in the last several years in southern communities across the United States. Some communities have found the legal strategy helpful in achieving limited

gains in the process of community organizing. Legal strategies have been used to inspire community residents by demonstrating the level of seriousness the toxic poisoning of our communities has become. The legal strategy has also had some success in forcing the hand of the industrial opposition to react to a community initiative during a stalemate. However, hundreds of lawsuits and injunctions have been filed in both state and federal courts leading many with the EJ movement and without to conclude that this is the “magic solution” in our struggle against the environmental destruction of our communities! We must be very clear --- the law is not the only answer to environmental problems. The law must be viewed as a tool that can be applied as a part of a broader strategy to prevent environmental harms and to advance the struggle for environmental justice.

Lawyers, empowered by the perception of their legal expertise, are frequently playing influential roles in and over environmental justice community organizations. Law schools are rapidly developing environmental law clinics and symposia throughout the country. Environmental justice litigation has become a cottage industry of sorts for some lawyers as the very American tactic of “take ‘em to court” gains increasing acceptance within the EJ movement in our quest for compensation/reparations for the damage done to our communities. We must be aware of both the benefits and limitations of a “courtroom” environmental justice strategy.

Academics

The seduction of so-called “good science” offered by academicians, technical assistants, etc. oftentimes places “environmental professionals” in positions of serious influence over the decision-making process of new and even veteran grassroots EJ community organizations. Academicians working with these communities frequently have little to no background in community organizing struggles, yet, often posture as resource people in organizing strategy discussions. The academicians are frequently accountable to the University administration rather than to the community and have a history of being subject to corporate influence and being guided by project funding over community needs. Frequently, universities received environmental justice funding for work in a community with which university officials have had very little or no real advance consultation.

The fact that universities are often accountable to institutions outside of the impacted community frequently leads academicians to exhibit an extreme reluctance in

endorsing direct action and civil disobedience. The fact that historically both the litigation tactic and scientific assessment strategy have been extremely limited in their ratios of success and reliability seems to be of little or no consequence to the elites which promote them within our movement. If academicians truly understand and embrace the complete spirit and track record of our movement they must not continue to challenge the very foundations of our struggle --- direct action!

Many communities begin to feel as if they are strategically "pigeon-holed" into limited options which must be approved by academic/scientific (or legal) advisors and experts. Aggressive direct action strategies and tactics are regularly discouraged and then abandoned by activists after being advised by the "experts" that such activity might "hurt the lawsuit" or that a community concern is "inconsistent with academic/scientific data." It is not uncommon for communities to be enticed by the elites to remain silent in hope that a rare financial settlement is waiting in the wings. To add insult to injury, too many are being convinced that blind faith in the promises of the complexities of environmental science and academic theory is more practical than community common sense! These are fallacies which must be understood and challenged by grassroots activists as well as lawyers and academicians with a genuine commitment to advancing the fundamental assumptions of the EJ movement. The AAEJAN definitively affirms, "We speak for ourselves! We organize ourselves! We lead ourselves!"

Conclusions

The growing prominence of formally trained environmental professionals in our movement has far too often shifted direct and ultimate responsibility for the success of the EJ struggle out of the hands of the community collective and into the mouths of lawyers and/or minds of scientists. As a result, many seem to have forgotten the credos

of empowered communities that assert, "Law is found in the courtroom. Justice is found in the streets!" and, that "The spirit and genius of the people is greater than the man's technology!" We offer this listing of Principles for Lawyers and Academicians for members of our communities struggling for self determination and community control as well as for the "experts" of the legal and scientific community who principally seek to assist us in our struggle for environmental justice:

* Community residents and activists are the "experts" on grassroots community organizing decisions, strategies and tactics and must be respected as such. Lawyers,

academicians, technical assistants and other environmental professionals serve as resource people and advisors for specific and limited components of a community-based and controlled organizing strategy.

Lawyers and academicians must provide services which are beneficial and accountable to the communities being served and the goals of the movement as a whole. Lawyers, academicians and others who are also community activists are not more important or potentially valuable than any other member of that community. We recognize that all people (lawyers and academicians included) are members of the communities which may be affected by the pains of environmental oppression. Yet, we identify lawyers and academicians as a part of the grassroots movement of affected communities only if they are accountable to that community rather than external organizations and institutions.

* The limitations of the utility of legal strategy and litigation tactics must be understood by all involved in and with our movement. Litigation is not a substitute for effective community organization nor is a lawsuit representative of a "winning long-term strategy." Lawyers must be honest --- Claim no easy victories! Tell no lies! Lawsuits are always merely a tactical move and great efforts must always be made to educate our communities of this reality. The lawsuit tactic must always be counter-balanced by community oriented tactics which leave the primary responsibility for the success of the campaign in the hands of the people.

* Lawyers and community activists must be mindful of the fact that using the law tactically and philosophically creates certain contradictions within our movement. First, using the law takes the struggle out of the realm which is community controlled and places it within an institution (the legal system) which has historically perpetuated environmental injustice in particular and community disempowerment of oppressed people in general. We must caution against the appearance of legitimizing this system to ourselves and to others as we struggle for redress within a fundamentally illegitimate system. Second, the use of the law encapsulates and limits the extent and depth of our movements' political expression to the scope and breadth of the parameters of existing statutory law. The "law of the land" is institutionally racist and classist and upholds tragically insufficient protections of the health of our communities. This fact is a major reason why we must struggle for environmental justice in our communities in the first place.

* Efforts at mounting a massive legal strategy and/or seeking to integrate the community agenda with a predefined and funded program of the academy can lead to serious draining and misdirection of already scarce community resources. Efforts at legal redress normally require huge amounts of seed money up front tapping the budgets of grassroots organizations and cultivating an automatic cycle of dependency of the community on the success of the lawsuit. We must struggle against this and work to create relationships that do not require large sums of seed money up front. We must also clearly understand the limitations of natural science in explaining the reality in our community. Science is but only tool in the building of a strong movement.

Lawyers and academicians are an important asset to our human rights movement. We need more conscious lawyers and academicians who are committed to the principles of our movement. All participants in the movement must serve the interests of our communities as they are defined by our communities.

The motivation for the development of these principles is berthed from our commitment to self determination. Self determination is a fundamental human right to which we are entitled by virtue of the fact that we live and breathe as members of the family of humanity. Our people's right to self determination which can be related to the struggle for environmental justice is legally defined in international legal documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Social, Cultural and Economic Rights and in the United Nations Convention on Genocide. The struggle for environmental justice is a struggle for human rights. We must seek to make full use of all of our talents and human resources, legal and academic, grassroots and activist, as we move forward to the future. Free the land!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS AND DONORS



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you to Saif Wideman for illustrating the 2020 EJ Summit design on the cover of the program.

Thank you to Michelle Lanier, Catherine Rierson, Alexander Glustrom, Lyntoria Newton and the rest of the folks at Fire River Films for sharing with us their beautiful film *Mossville*.

Thank you to our student volunteers for documenting and providing logistical support during the EJ Summit.

Thank you to our panelists, facilitators, and moderators for providing invaluable content throughout the Summit.

Thank you to the planning committee members and coordinators for all of their great idea generation and organizing.

Thank you to all attending community members, organizations, academics, government officials, and all others who attended for participating in the 2020 NCEJ Summit.

We deeply appreciate and are grateful for all of our sponsors and supporters!

NCEJN STAFF, BOARD AND EJ SUMMIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Staff

Organizing Director: Naeema Muhammad

Communications Manager: Acacia Cadogan

Organizing Project Manager: Dedan Waciuri

Board

Danielle Purifoy, Chair	Elsie Herring
Don Cavellini	Peter Gilbert

EJ Summit Planning Committee

Coordinators

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Kamaria Kaalund	Naeema Muhammad
Nikhil Kothegal	Sarah Rhodes
Cherrel Manley	Adrien Wilkie
Libby McClure	

Committee

Don Cavellini	Omega Wilson	Nikhil Kothegal
Jamie Cole	Rosa Saavedra	Cherrel Manley
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Jim Grant	Ellis Tatum	Andrew Meeker
Tatiana Height	Marilynn Marsh-Robinson	Naeema Muhammad
Elsie Herring	Danielle Purifoy	Sarah Rhodes
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Brenda Wilson	Kamaria Kaalund	

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

*Interested in engaging with NCEJN throughout the year?
Here's how:*

Become a NCEJN member

Please fill out our NCEJN membership form and pay the annual due (\$25 for individuals and \$100+ for organizations).

Become a planning committee member (priority to residents from impacted communities)

If you would like to help organize the EJ Summit or Youth EJ Summit in future years, please contact NCEJN.

Become a board member (priority to residents from impacted communities)

If you would like to be more involved with NCEJN beyond the annual EJ Summit, please contact NCEJN.

Attend our quarterly "strengthening the movement" meetings

Please provide NCEJN with your email address so we can send you meeting announcements and reminders.

Become a monthly sustainer via monthly PayPal or Autodraft

Donations

Your donations matter! You may give a donation payment by going to our website (www.ncejn.org). On the home page on the right side, click on the "Donate" button.

Follow us on social!

 [@NCEJN](https://twitter.com/NCEJN)

 [@NCEJNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/NCEJNetwork)

Posting on social media? Use the hashtag #NCEJSummit!

Questions, comments, concerns?

Contact Information

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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING
NCEJN'S 22ND ANNUAL
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUMMIT!



I AM A LINK IN THE
CHAIN. AND THE LINK
IN THE CHAIN WILL NOT
BREAK HERE!