



THE FUTURE IS GREEN

“We of the Got Green Project have taken the responsibility to inform the economically disadvantaged of a need, a need to save and heal our community and our planet. Our goal is to lift the people out of poverty and to guide them to the pathways of opportunity. Once you’ve Got Green, it gets a whole lot greener.”

-Khepra Ptah, Got Green video 2010© now available on YouTube.

The buzz about “Green”

We’ve all heard about a green economy, renewable energy, and sustainable products—especially since President Obama signed the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act in early 2009 pledging \$60 billion towards a cleaner/greener economy, and \$500 million for green job training through the US Department of Labor.

But what are “Green Collar Jobs” and how will workers in low income communities get one?

In general they are jobs that improve the environment while paying a decent wage and leading to a career pathway. A national movement – launched in 2006 by the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights and Green for All in Oakland – is clamoring to demand that the jobs created in this new, Green Economy, pay a living wage and benefits, and are accessible to communities that have been historically locked out.

So what’s Got Green got to do with it?

Got Green is a new group led by young adults and people of color that promotes the movement for Green Collar Jobs as the best way to fight poverty and global warming at the same time. It was founded in 2008 as a project of the White Center Community Development Association. Got Green is Seattle’s home-grown branch of the national movement for equity and opportunity in the new Green Economy.

By Karen Zammit

May 2008

Long-time organizer, Michael Woo, gathers young adults to attend a talk by national community organizer Van Jones who popularized the movement for Green Collar jobs.



July-Aug. 2008

Young folks of color meet to strategize how to build a local movement for “Environment, Equity and Opportunity!” A Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Matching Fund Grant helps them found Got Green.

July 2008

Got Green participates at the King County Council’s Labor Committee to support a Green Jobs Motion sponsored by Council Member, Larry Phillips.



Michael Woo, Got Green Director, is well-known in Seattle for building partnerships and mobilizing communities. He brings a strong belief in giving voice to workers and a history of community organizing that dates back to the early 1970's when he helped racially integrate Seattle's building and construction trades.

Michael has worked to create family wage jobs his whole adult life. But when he organized a group of young adults to go hear Van Jones – founder of both the Ella Baker Center and Green for All - speak at a charity breakfast in May 2008, he heard about opportunities and a twist on the jobs issue that was new even to him.

Michael realized that Green Jobs was an area poised for growth, so he brought together the first group of young people to study the issue in Seattle/King County. "What started as an exploratory research group became an advocacy and organizing group with the goal of ensuring that low-income communities will fully participate in opportunities that the Green Economy creates... I tell our Got Greeners that the only way we're going to fail is if we let ourselves down – and that's not going to happen!"



July 2008

Community Litter Clean-up in SE Seattle neighborhoods, tour Superfund cleanup site on Duwamish River in South Park, visit a metal recycling facility and the Cement Mason apprenticeship program.

Aug 2008

Got Green visits Shoreline Community College's Zero Energy House to learn about solar energy and have hands-on experience in installing solar panels.



Aug 2008

Ellensburg, WA - visit to Puget Sound Energy's Wildhorse Wind Farm to deepen understanding of the emerging technologies of wind and solar power alternatives to hydroelectric, nuclear, and coal.



POLICY VICTORIES: Job Creation for Communities of Color

by Brenda Anibarro

In only its first year, Got Green has emerged as a force to be reckoned with by successfully uniting committed young people to develop the in-demand job skills of the new green economy. Through community mobilization, Got Green has been at the forefront of policy victories that have opened the door to new jobs for low-income communities and communities of color.

What's policy got to do with it?

Building a green jobs movement that is inclusive of the voices of communities of color requires having us at the table when decisions are made about how money and resources are allocated. This means working with policymakers to create legislation channeled toward low-income and communities of color when developing government contracts that commit funds targeting green building, technology and other related projects. The result: good paying, long term, career-track jobs available to our communities.

Got Green joined folks from Puget Sound SAGE, LIUNA and Seattle Vocational Institute's PACT to work with the City of Seattle's Office of Housing. They developed the equitable hiring requirements for HomeWise weatherization contractors which states that contractors now must hire 75% of their new workers from qualified training programs (like LIUNA's) and 50% of ALL workers on HomeWise funded projects must be program grads. Got Green's trained members are included in this group of potential hires.

Got Green has also placed its attention at the state and federal level, leading an advocacy campaign with a number of community partners, to ensure that American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds reach low income and communities of color who are in need of good paying jobs. In May of 2009, Got Green delivered a letter and 700 signed pledge cards to the Office of Community, Trade and Economic Development in Olympia as part of public testimony on the use of the Department of Energy ARRA funds. Pledge cards were translated into Somali, Vietnamese, Cambodian and Spanish allowing community members who do not speak English to get engaged in the public process and have their voice heard by elected officials.

Got Green is committed to building a movement that brings our community together to create Green Collar job opportunities for our youth and families as we all work together for a greener world.

Got Green leader Jill Mangaliman helps restore the Cedar River Watershed.



Aug 2008

Met with State Legislator, Sharon Tomiko-Santos, to advocate for needed legislation to bring training and jobs to low-income and communities of color.

Sept 2008

Got Green helps plan the White Center Energy Festival and door knocks 1500 White Center homes to educate on conservation, energy efficiency and Eco-Equity.



Jan-Feb 2009

Weatherization graduates begin a 9-week pilot project for the City of Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment canvassing low-income neighborhoods, installing over 5000 Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs & 400 water-saving showerheads.

In a short period of time, Got Green has built an organizing approach that is culturally relevant to the young people of color and families that have often been excluded from the mainstream environmental movement. They are also cultivating young adult leaders who have quickly become spokespeople on the issues.

Tammy Nguyen is a young mom of two children (Lilly, 8 and Alan, 4) who helps support her three siblings and mother. In her own community of New Holly she is recognized as a leader, volunteering on multiple committees and providing interpretation for her Vietnamese neighbors.

Tammy was introduced to Got Green in the summer of '08 at a Southeast Seattle District Council meeting. "Michael and Khepra caught my attention because their project was about me." Over that summer, Tammy and the Got Green team traveled around the Puget Sound to see how pollution affects our rivers, watch solar panels being installed, and observe a wind farm generating electricity.

In 2010, Tammy is excited to focus on behind-the-scenes work at Got Green to help it grow. "I like giving back to a community that is not represented. I was raised in low-income housing and my community members are often ignored. Got Green was willing to invest in this population: low-income and People of Color." Tammy is committed to raising community awareness of global warming and fighting for training to make Green Collar jobs a true pathway to prosperity for young adults.



By Karen Zammit



Jan-Feb 2009

8 Got Greeners graduate from "Tier 1" Weatherization training. Graduates, under a contract from Seattle City Light, complete weatherization installations at 20 multi-family units in SE Seattle.

March 2009

Got Green members join with Seattle Vocational Institute students, Puget Sound SAGE, and the Laborer's Organizing staff to submit language and support legislation (SB5649) in Olympia to fund residential weatherization in WA State.

April 2009

12 graduates of the second Weatherization training program are congratulated by Congressman, Jay Inslee, who says their work is a model for the nation.



Photo by Inye Wokoma

Got Green is instrumental in creating training programs that have led to tangible, family wage jobs for new workers.

Yirim Seck was an organizer of the annual Black Community Festival at Umoja Peace Center when he connected with a coalition of local groups working to promote Green practices. He was drawn to Got Green: "They wanted to take the idea further; to employ people from the community in Green Jobs. I liked that it's community based, not this big establishment where you have to find your way in." He started attending meetings and joined in Got Green projects.

Yirim went on - along with eight other Got Greeners - to graduate from the first class of trainees in the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA)'s new residential weatherization program at their Kingston, WA location. "In two weeks we trained inside a model home and learned weatherization and retrofits. Once I got certified, Michael Woo made it his personal business to get graduates employed. I am fortunate to be working, doing weatherization and retrofits in King County."

Recently, Yirim performed in Got Green's hip hop video. "We wanted to help others understand, it's bigger than just making your home more efficient,

it's about tracking our global footprint and how much we consume on an individual level. We wanted to get the youth interested and engaged in something productive, to gain a living wage and have fun. We're creating an outlet, a way for people to actually earn a living. I'm very proud of what I do. Not only are we able to support our families and help others save money, but it feels good."

By Karen Zammit

April 2009

Got Green helps Seattle City Light at their South Park Neighborhood Power Project to train residents/volunteers on door-to-door canvassing to provide energy tips and free CFL light bulbs. This leads to installment of showerheads and door weather stripping on 23 homes.

April 2009

Got Green leads organizing campaign to insure that federal American Recovery & Reinvestment Act funds will reach low-income communities of color to create training and jobs. Coalition members include White Center Community Development Association, Puget Sound SAGE, Seattle Vocation Institute's PACT Program, and Green for All (Oakland, CA).

May 2009

700 Pledge Cards translated in Somali, Vietnamese & Spanish are delivered to The Department of Community Trade & Economic Development in Olympia as part of public testimony on the use of federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

GOT GREEN GLOSSARY

What do we mean, when we say...

“350” – Scientists say that when carbon in our atmosphere exceeds 350 parts per million, life on our planet is in danger. In 2010 we are at 390 parts per million...

American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) – President Obama’s economic stimulus package passed by the Congress in February 2009. ARRA includes \$48 billion for job training and education, \$99 billion for transportation and infrastructure, \$20 billion in tax incentives for renewable energy, and more than \$41 billion for energy-related programs.

CFL’s – Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs use up to 80% less energy than traditional bulbs but beware: you must take them to special sites for disposal, don’t throw them in the trash.

Climate Change – A change in climate that is the result of human activity.

Department of Energy – The Federal Department in charge of giving out more than \$5 billion in “Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)” grants to help low-income households save money on their energy bills. Washington State already got \$23 million in WAP dollars and may be eligible to get up to \$30 million more.

Department of Labor – The US Department in charge of giving out \$500 million for green jobs training programs. Got Green will receive some DOL funds for community outreach to connect folks to training.

Direct Install and Canvassing – A conservation and job creation model to install CFL’s and water saving showerheads and faucet aerators in low income homes across Seattle. Working Green, LLC and Got Green trained workers (mostly people of color) to knock on hundreds of doors offering this service.

Eco-Apartheid – Oakland’s Ella Baker Center for Human Rights coined this term to mean “a situation in which white and affluent communities reap the tremendous benefits of clean and green economic development, while communities of color fall further behind.”

The opposite: **Eco-Equity** – is where “poor communities and communities of color (people who were locked out of the old, pollution-based economy) are locked in to the new, clean and green economy.”



June 2009

Got Green organizes action at Seattle City Council to call for quality Green Collar jobs and training.

Oct 2009

Nine Got Green members graduate from LIUNA’s 2-week Weatherization Installer Technician training in Kingston, WA.



Oct 2009

Got Green receives an award from Puget Sound SAGE for their successful work organizing in communities of color for Green Collar jobs.

Green Collar Job – According to Green For All, Got Green’s national partner, it is a “well-paid, career-track job that contributes directly to preserving or enhancing environmental quality.”

Green Economy – From the Ella Baker Center, “A rapidly growing billion-dollar sector that includes renewable energy sources, organic produce and products, green buildings, alternative fuel vehicles, and more.”

LIUNA – Laborers International Union of North America partnered with Got Green to create their 2-week Weatherization Installer Technician Training that awards graduates a certificate and help finding a Green Collar union job.

Van Jones – The community organizer who popularized the movement for Green Collar jobs and eco-equity, author of The Green Collar Economy and former special advisor to President Obama.

Weatherization – Services that will make a home more livable and energy efficient through air sealing and proper ventilation. Weatherization services can range from weather stripping and caulking, to replacing broken windows, to insulating walls, floors and pipes. Retrofits are another way to make homes more energy efficient by upgrading or replacing everything from light bulbs and shower heads to a water heater or furnace.

By Kristyn Joy



Nov 2009

Got Green helps build a coalition which results in City of Seattle’s Office of Housing agreeing to include specific language in weatherization contract language that requires 75% of contractors’ new workers come from approved recruiting sources, including Got Green’s trained members.

Nov 2009

Got Green invited to White House briefing “The Benefits of A Green Economy.”

Dec 2009

Got Green debuts Hip Hop video. Check it out at www.gotgreen.org

Timeline by scott winn

Got Green is a grassroots group organized to ensure that communities of color and low income communities will fully benefit from and participate in the sustainable green economy.

Got Green’s MISSION is to create opportunity pathways to the green economy for people of color and low income people in King County by cultivating leaders of all ages to organize, educate, advocate, build coalitions and create new jobs.

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got green?

Environment, Equity, and Opportunity

A program of the White Center Community Development Association

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Brenda Anibarro works for the Seattle Office for Civil Rights. When not at work she can be found writing her first novel and trying to improve her domino game. She hearts Got Green.

Kristyn Joy is a community organizer at heart who has worked "behind the scenes" for economic and racial justice in Seattle since 1992. She's also a proud mama, sometimes soccer player and organic gardener with a fondness for arugula.

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Scott Winn is a member of the Organizing Collective of the Coalition of Anti-Racist Whites, is an educator, and works for the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative. He loves playing volleyball, struggling through meditation, and working to build a movement to create liberation for us all.

Karen Zammit is an employment consultant by day and community researcher/organizer for social justice by night. She's thrilled to be sending her daughter off to college, so she can focus her efforts on the Green Movement for Local Jobs.