

Press Release: CalEPA funds local, grassroots efforts to fight pollution from the ground up

Description

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CalEPA funds local, grassroots efforts to fight pollution from the ground up

Small grants will have huge impact in state's most polluted communities

For Immediate Release:

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Media Contact:

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SACRAMENTO • Turning Bay Area youth into climate change evangelists. Training refugees and immigrants working at nail salons how to reduce their exposure to toxic chemicals. Helping Black expectant mothers and their health workers in Fresno understand how reducing air pollution can improve prenatal care.

These are just three of 28 projects the California Environmental Protection Agency is supporting this year through its 2020 Environmental Justice Small Grants program. Today, the agency announced the recipients of over \$1M in grants to non-profit organizations and federally recognized tribal governments for environmental justice projects across the State.

The grants support creative solutions to local environmental justice challenges in California's diverse and often disproportionately burdened and vulnerable communities. This year, as the impacts of COVID-19 have also disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous and other communities of color, the grants are more critical than ever.

• These grants may be small in size, but they have huge impacts in the community. The community-led projects they fund address real problems our vulnerable communities are facing today in terms of both equity and economic recovery,• said Jared Blumenfeld, California Secretary for Environmental Protection.

Projects funded through the grants address a variety of issues, including improving climate resiliency, ensuring safe and affordable drinking water, and building community capacity to participate in planning and land-use decision-making, among others. Many projects focus on providing information to residents of disproportionately burdened communities and enabling more robust and meaningful participation in environmental decision-making at local, state and federal levels.

Since the grant program's inception, CalEPA has awarded over \$5.4 million to nearly 200 projects focused on environmental justice issues statewide. This year's grant recipients are located throughout the state, including northern, southern and central California, as well as inland and coastal communities.

Projects funded include:

- \$50,000 to California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative to train at least 2,500 nail salon workers and owners in San Francisco, Alameda and Los Angeles counties, many of them Vietnamese refugees and immigrants, how to reduce their exposure to toxic chemicals and COVID-19.
- \$49,242 to Earth Team in Contra Costa and Alameda counties to develop climate hazards action plans at four Title 1 high schools. The project will train 56 high school students to become informed leaders of influence to spur action to reduce climate change.
- \$49,985 to the Conservation Corps of Long Beach to train Long Beach youth how to provide low-income households along the I-710 corridor with new, drought-tolerant garden landscapes and teach both youth and residents about environmental restoration, the importance of climate resilience and green job opportunities.
- \$48,000 to the Fresno Metro Black Chamber Foundation to address birth outcome disparities in African American Fresno County communities through creation of training curriculum and a toolkit that highlights the importance of prenatal health, air quality, and the impact of climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases in the environment on prenatal care.

A complete list of recipients is on CalEPA's [2020 Environmental Justice Small Grant Project Summaries](#) webpage.

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California Air Resources Board â?¢ Department of Pesticide Regulation â?¢ Department of Resources
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