



Environmental Justice Working Group

psc-cuny.org/environmental-justice-committee



Welcome PSC members!

We invite you to join our newly reorganized Environmental Justice Working Group (EJWG), and participate in making the world more just, equitable, and safe for all, by activating your participation through our union. We meet on zoom monthly and work in smaller “Interest Groups” to keep us all posted and participate in the work of the broader climate movement.

The work of the EJWG is sufficiently broad to allow you to focus on one or all of the issues you wish you had enough time to make a difference in, efficiently and effectively. Our membership is actively pursuing the full range of environmental and equity issues that are so important to the continued well-being of PSC members, our families, and the society in which we live.

This monthly newsletter will keep us all abreast on our areas of work and help you to engage as much as your time and interest allows. Please feel free to use the contact info in any of the posts below to find out how you can participate on any level you wish.

Beyond Plastics Campaign

This [NY State-focused campaign](#) has already succeeded in ridding NY of single-use plastic bags but we have a ways to go to dramatically reduce harmful plastics from the waste stream. We are focusing on removing plastics from the CUNY waste stream by pushing for no plastic bottles in food services or vending machines and installing filtered water fountains in all CUNY buildings. We are working closely with NYPIRG and University Student Senate on this campaign. We encourage all members to sign up at beyondplastics.org to learn more. Our 10.19 meeting will focus on this campaign. Contact Marcia Newfield, revolu@earthlink.net

PSC-USS-NYPIRG (CUNY Climate Coalition)

These three groups are working together to get CUNY trustees to divest CUNY funds from fossil fuels (please see group [letter here](#)), and move CUNY forward on sustainability in the food services (composting and no plastics), accessible filtered water fountains, solar panels, and more). We meet on zoom every other Thursday at 4:30pm to strategize. Contact: RonSpalter01@gmail.com for more info.

Peoples Climate Movement-NY March for Racial and Climate Justice: Sept 20

PCM-NY and 50+ other NYC-based organizations are working on a march starting from Columbus Circle (in-person and on zoom) advancing the centrality of racial justice and climate movement to each other on Sept. 20. A webinar on racial and climate justice is being prepared

for Sept. 23. One demand is investment in Black and Brown communities—CUNY is one of the most productive investments for POC communities so bring your signs about CUNY and/or other more specifically climate and racial justice related issues. For more info click [here](#) and sign up to join in the work [here](#). Contact nancyromer@gmail.com for more info and to let us know you are going to the march. We are forming a PSC contingent with signs.

City-Wide Green Recovery Platform –Climate Works for All

Support the [Climate Works for All Platform](#) that would create 100,000 good green jobs in NYC as a central part of the economic, health and racial justice recovery. There will be a press conference launch of that platform on Sept. 24. Contact nancyromer@gmail.com for more info.

Publicly Owned Renewable Energy in NYC and NYS

We are working with the Public Advocate, Trade Unions for Energy Democracy and the New York Public Power Coalition to create a publicly owned energy grid generating clean electricity. Contact RossKSPinkerton@gmail.com for more info. Our next meeting on 9.21 will focus on this campaign.

Divest NY State Public Pension Funds from Fossil Fuels

We work with [DivestNY](#) to get the state to divest its over \$20B holdings in fossil fuels. There was a press conference on Sept 10, unveiling the “Academics Letter”, signed by over 1100 academics demanding divestment. Please sign our statewide petition [here](#). This coalition already won NYC Divestment; the State is next! Contact nancyromer@gmail.com for more info.

Require TIAA to cease investing in Grabbed Agricultural Land

TIAA, the retirement system of most PSCers, is the world’s largest holder of “agricultural land” investments--over 2 million acres worth \$10 Billion (out of the \$340 B they manage). Neutral sounding “agricultural land” is often “grabbed land” that has questionable legal status, destabilizes peasant and agricultural communities around the world and sets the stage for industrial agriculture and deforestation. Right now we are trying to figure out the exact situation, particularly with AFT's prior meeting with TIAA about this. For more information see [ActionAid](#), an [Atlantic article](#), and [TIAA's response](#). Contact Adam.Koranyi@lehman.cuny.edu for further info.

Bring back an improved, robust, NYC Composting program

PSCers work with the [#SaveOurCompost](#) coalition to bring back composting, expand its accessibility to all communities, and make it mandatory. Budget cuts eliminated curbside pick-up and greatly reduced drop-off sites, leaving most New Yorkers with no way to recycle organic waste. If uncomposted, food waste, which constitutes 1/3rd of the city's waste stream, enters landfill, where it emits methane, a dangerous GHG many times more potent than CO2. Contact Jane Selden: janselo2000@yahoo.com.

NY Renews—Statewide Climate Coalition

[NYRENEWS](#) is a statewide coalition of labor and environmental groups that lobbied to pass the historic, though imperfect, Climate and Community Leadership Protection Act. It is presently working on pressing the state to appropriately fund the goals of the legislation, no doubt a

heavy lift, as the Governor resists taxing the rich, even when the state's revenue have been seriously eroded by covid19. Contact Eileen Moran, EileenMoran7@gmail.com for more info.

Save the Kingsborough Farm

For the last several years, [Kingsborough Community College has had a large farm](#) used to grow food for the campus food service, culinary program, community food banks and experiential learning curriculum. It's being threatened with demolition. Contact Uda Bradford for more info: munroebradford@gmail.com.

Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (TUED)

[TUED](#) is an international coalition of unions working for a just transition off fossil fuels. TUED's research papers are available on their website and indicate that private interests are unlikely to meet essential target dates for transitioning to renewable energy and strongly advocates for public power and insure the energy industry is democratically controlled and operated in the interests of energy consumers. TUED is holding a series of meetings in August and Sept addressing the impact and challenges of Covid19 on workers, organized labor and the transitioning from fossil fuels. Contact EileenMoran7@gmail.com for more info.

We have several Interest Groups in formation. Let us know if you are interested in any of them:

Elect a climate solutions focused government

Outreach on Climate to Retirees

Stop All Fossil Fuel Infrastructure

Divesting TIAA and TRS holdings from Fossil Fuels (sign petitions [here](#))

Come Join Us!!!

Ron Spalter, Editor