OUR MOVEMENT
MOMENT
GOT GREEN 2015
We began the year, with the victory of Targeted Local Hire, a four-year campaign for a citywide ordinance to ensure that disadvantaged workers would be able to work locally on city projects. We joined Grassroots Global Justice, a national alliance of grassroots organizations rooted in working-class communities of color – sending us to formative trainings and helping us co-host the Pacific Northwest’s Just Transition Assembly.

We extended our solidarity to key struggles of the last year, from the historic “Shell No” mobilizations to long-haul struggles for farm-worker dignity (Boycott Sakuma) and migrant justice (Not 1 More Deportation). We have also sent our organizers to historic gatherings, such as our Women and Queer People of Color contingent to INCITE’s Color of Violence conference where we learned about building transformative movements.

Throughout this year, we grew as a grassroots force, by deepening the power of working-class communities of color. We build power as means to fight poverty, racial and gender injustice, and global warming at the same time. As we wage grassroots campaigns, we are also building a multi-issue movement for social change. As we take collective action, we are also developing leadership from within our communities – especially women, workers, and young people of color.

The work of Got Green is happening in an historic movement moment. A moment where political and economic institutions ruthlessly treat our communities and the planet as disposable, entities that can just be thrown away. We experience this through an increase in incarceration, unemployment, displacement, and climate change that storms through our neighborhoods and homelands.

As conditions look grim, Got Green is inspired by the collective courage of our communities, namely working-class communities of color, who are reminding us that another world is possible. Everyday people are taking bold action, building powerful organizations, and ultimately shaking the foundation of the nation. Without a doubt, Got Green rose up in this historic moment.

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GREEN PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG WORKERS

The Young Leaders in the Green Movement are in the midst of a grassroots campaign to secure living wage green jobs targeted to young workers of color. In Seattle, the youth unemployment rate is over 13%, and for low-income young people of color, it’s even worse.

According the Green 2.0 Report, a “green ceiling” exists nationally, in regards to the limited opportunities, access, and advancement for young people of color in the environmental sector.

The next generation must have dignified work that will move us toward the planet and communities we need, and not be caught in a vicious cycle of unfair jobs, jail, and unemployment. Having released their new report “Breaking the Green Ceiling, Investing in Young Workers of Color,” hosted press conferences, organized demonstrations at the Youth Jail, and have built a coalition of organizations and community leaders—the Young Leaders’ campaign for Green Pathways out of Poverty is a major step in that direction.

JOHNNY MAO
Young Leaders in the Green Movement

How did you first get involved in Got Green? Young Leader organizers Mano Silva and Mo! Avery when they were organizing for living wage internships. I was drawn by their deep commitment to working for young voices of color and the issues we care about most. I was excited to see that their methods were aimed at addressing the roots of environmental racism within the broader issue of global warming. Got Green’s organizing is highly coordinated to achieve community goals while being practical and responsive to both new and experienced organizers. Their events and meetings are always a great place to learn and organize as a team!

Why is the Green Pathways campaign important to you? The Green Pathways campaign is important to me because it gets young people of color a seat at the table, when there otherwise would not be one. The global environmental movement is a train that will move without young people of color on board, and Got Green is a way to take that train over to reach the destination we actually want for ourselves...The campaign creates opportunities for youth to organize in the here and now to create even more meaningful and transformative opportunities for youth in the immediate future. It cannot be more relevant.

What have the Young Leaders taught you about community organizing? The Young Leaders have taught me that community organizing is not only about tearing something down, but rather building something up. The Young Leaders build not just campaigns, but people, leaders, and teams...In Got Green, the community interests are our interests and when we create community well-being, we create well-being for ourselves as well. We are from diverse backgrounds and Got Green encourages us to foster our skills and act from a place of strength to achieve our goals.
FOOD JUSTICE FOR ALL

Since 2012, the Food Access Team, Got Green’s committee led by working-class mothers of color, were successful in having the City create Fresh Bucks—a program that provides healthy food with a match for EBT users at all farmer’s markets. In Seattle, Fresh Bucks is being used by over 4,000 people, and this program is being replicated in cities across the country. This year, the Mayor of Seattle proposed cutting necessary funds for Fresh Bucks, limiting working people’s access to healthy food and increasing health risks in communities of color.

The Food Access Team brought together farmers, farm worker advocates, low-income workers, farmer’s market managers, and community members to tell the City not to cut this program. The Fresh Bucks Program was a result of grassroots victory in Seattle, and when it is threatened, we will continue to defend it.

It is not enough that we put healthy food on the tables, but we must ensure that the food is also picked by healthy workers. Got Green is committed to the relationship with our sister organization, Community to Community Development, to learn from each other and to create a genuine collaboration between rural and urban communities, to fight for a food democracy for Washington State where all food workers and families live healthy and dignified lives. As an urban organization, Got Green has been humbled to listen, learn, and take action alongside our rural friends.

How did you first get involved in Got Green? I got involved through a survey that Got Green was doing in the SE Seattle community. It was a survey that listed four criteria’s on what was important to my family.

How did you grow as an organizer during the Fresh Bucks campaign? The “Fresh Bucks” campaign was constant organizing around elected officials so that the program would not be cut. Working with the community is great but to change and to support the community we had to make sure that elected officials would vote and keep this program. As an organizer it gave me experience to never give up.

Why did you speak in front of the City Council in the Fall of 2015? The Food Access Team was made aware that the funding for this program was being cut and once again we had to go to City Hall and make sure that no money was going to be taken out from the program. I had to remind the city council that this very program came out of the City of Seattle and it was not only good for the community but also good for the farmers as well.

Why do you continue to work with Got Green? Got Green is why I organize and advocate for the low-income and people of color. Founder Michael Woo was and is a great leader who taught me so much about how to care and get involve with the very people who are your neighbors.
BRINGING THE SCIENCE TO THE SIDEWALK

Got Green’s Climate Justice Committee was started this year as a collaboration with Puget Sound Sage, where the committee surveyed 150 people of color from South Seattle on what climate change meant to them. This process expanded our understanding of climate change and lifted up the day-to-day realities of frontline communities. The official report was released in March 2016.

Got Green’s entry into climate justice has been intentionally multifaceted—influencing media and stakeholders to de-silo the climate movement, participating in direct action against the fossil fuel industry, building broad alliances, and growing vibrant leadership on the ground. We have also been instrumental holding various People Movement Assemblies, gatherings guided by practices in the Global South, such as the Summer of Our Power: Just Transition Assembly and the Communities of Color for Climate Justice Summit as a means to address the root causes of systemic injustices our communities face. Through these assemblies, we as a community have grappled with false solutions, from gentrification to carbon markets, and come up with people-led action steps necessary for a transition to just green economy.

Why is climate justice important to you?
A generation ago, my father was forced to leave Ethiopia because of the political instability caused by the famine that killed millions. This famine was the result of desertification caused by climate change and environmental neglect from the Selassie government. For ten years my father traveled as a refugee without a country, the rest of my father’s family suffered the same fate. Now I have aunt, uncles, and a cousin in Germany. Canada, Italy and England. All of them displaced because of the unstable environment. “

What does climate justice mean to you?
When I talk about climate justice I think about the millions of climate refugees who will face the same desperate decision my father was forced to make. I will think about these refugees who were pushed out of their countries who did nothing to deserve this. They are the ones who contributed the least to damages that cause climate change yet they are the ones being impacted worse by climate change. This is an injustice and this is how the struggle for climate justice has become so important to me. “

Why did you represent Got Green at the United Nations Climate Talks in Paris?
I went because I’m not going to let a bunch of old White men decide the future of the planet. They had their chance, the climate talks have been going on since I was two years old, twenty one years later and there have been no agreements except a target of 2 degrees of warming, which is when the Western Empire begins to feel the heat but at that point many Black and Brown countries are already underwater and in drought. Unfortunately, the deals on the table won’t even get us to our target, which is why I’m going to let them know there can be no negotiation or compromise on our future.
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Got Green’s Board of Directors
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Got Green’s Staff
Hodan Hassan – Climate Justice Organizer
Jill Mangaliman – Executive Director
Marion Romero – RVC Fellow
Mo! – Young Leaders in the Green Movement Organizer
Sean O’Neill – Development Director
Tammy Nguyen – Food Access Organizer

Credits
Photography
Ijo Media Arts
Alex Garland (Cover Photo)

Design
Nicole Ramirez
ncrlmrz.com
Got Green organizes for environmental, racial, and economic justice. We are a Southeast Seattle-based grassroots organization led by people of color and low-income people, cultivating multi-generational community leaders to make our voices central to the Green Movement. We work to ensure that the benefits of the green movement and green economy: green jobs, healthy, access to healthy food, energy efficient, and healthy homes, and public transit; reach low-income communities and communities of color.

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