

ORGANIZING FOR THE LONG HAUL

*Eco-Justice Organizing Skills
Training at the Grassroots*

MAYPOP
COLLECTIVE
FOR
CLIMATE AND
ECONOMIC
JUSTICE

PHILADELPHIA
2015-2016

Summary

In 2015-16, the Maypop Collective coordinated an organizing skills training with environmental justice leaders in Philadelphia called *Organizing for the Long Haul*. The project was funded and supported by Rising Tide North America as part of a series of similar trainings across the country. The Philadelphia training brought together eleven leaders from five local environmental justice organizations and campaigns working on diverse issues such as flooding prevention, community-controlled development, landfill remediation, waste incinerator expansion, oil refinery development and pollution, and food justice. It

aimed to strengthen and connect local forces for eco-justice among frontline and people of color-led groups. Participants built new relationships across issue and geography, deepened shared understanding of root causes of ecological crises and eco-justice movement strategies, and trained on key organizing skills: nonviolent direct action campaigning, base-building, and fundraising. The training design included a four-day skills-intensive facilitated by guest trainers followed by four “field days” in subsequent months, where organizations hosted participants to apply skills through direct support in their different contexts.

Purpose of this Report:

DOCUMENT the planning and overall design of the training

SHARE reflections and documents related to the training



Maypop Collective for Climate and Economic Justice

The Maypop Collective for Climate and Economic Justice designed and convened the *Organizing for the Long Haul* training. Maypop is an organizing collective centered in Philadelphia, PA working toward a just transition away from an extractive economy of exploitation and inequality to community centered, clean energy economies that take care of people and ecosystems. We work for social justice solutions to the climate and economic crises, learn about movement building, and live in deep community. Maypop members are Dinah DeWald, Alexa Ross, Zein Nakhoda, Hannah Jones, Sachie Hopkins-Hayakawa, and William Lawrence.

maypopcollective.org
maypopcollective@riseup.net
twitter: @MaypopPhilly
facebook.com/maypopcollective

Rising Tide North America

The training was made possible by financial and coordination support from Rising Tide North America. Rising Tide is an international, all-volunteer, grassroots network of groups and individuals who organize locally, promote community-based solutions to the climate crisis and take direct action to confront the root causes of climate change, which are caused by our economic system. The “natural” disasters caused by climate change amplify injustices inherent in a capitalist, racist, and patriarchal society; we must respond to these disasters in ways that do not continue that oppression. Rising Tide is committed to stopping the extraction of fossil fuels and preventing the construction of new fossil fuel infrastructure. Equally important, we must make a just transition to sustainable livelihoods that foster local autonomy and self-sufficiency.

risingtidenorthamerica.org
Jeff Ordower, jeff@organizemo.org
twitter: @RisingTideNA
facebook.com/risingtidenorthamerica

People

Coordination Team

Alexa Ross, Maypop Collective, Lead Coordinator

Katey Lauer, Advocates for a Safe Water System,
Coordination Support

Jeff Ordower, Rising Tide North America, National
Coordinator

Dinah DeWald, Maypop Collective, Coordinator

Training Team

Zein Nakhoda, Maypop Collective, Lead Trainer

Daniel Hunter, Training for Change, Skill Trainer

Arielle Klagsbrun, ACTION United, Skill Trainer

Jordan Ford, ACTION United, Skill Trainer

Allison Budschalow, Media Mobilizing Project, Skill
Trainer

Participants

Atiba Ellerby, Philly Urban Roots Collective,
SoilGeneration

Marquita Taylor, Philly Urban Roots Collective,
SoilGeneration

Earl Wilson, Eastwick Action Committee,
Eastwick Friends & Neighbors Coalition

Joanne Graham, Eastwick Action Committee,
Eastwick Friends & Neighbors Coalition

Terry Williams, Eastwick Action Committee,
Eastwick Friends & Neighbors Coalition

Kaya Banton, Chester Environmental Justice

Chinara Bilaal, ACTION United

Marcus Clark, ACTION United

Deborah Smith, Philly Thrive

Jo Cordon-Hill, Philly Thrive

Morgan Bartz, Philly Thrive

For more information on planning, implementation, and skill training related to *Organizing for the Long Haul*, contact the Maypop Collective.

For more: maypopcollective.org/long-haul-slideshow/

Background

In 2014, Rising Tide North America (RTNA) secured funds for capacity building and organizing skills trainings across the United States. An experiment in creating conditions for large scale mobilization, the project aimed to support organizers working at the root causes of the climate crises, including white supremacy, patriarchy, and colonialism.

The Maypop Collective responded to RTNA's call for proposals, and in 2015 was granted \$20,000 for the *Organizing for the Long Haul* training (see our full budget on page 16).

From 2014-2015, RTNA made possible trainings in Minneapolis, St. Louis, and Philadelphia in addition to a national training. For more on these trainings, contact Rising Tide North America.

Organizing for the Long Haul

Organizing for the Long Haul aimed to bolster organizing skills and build relationships across emerging leaders from grassroots environmental justice groups in Philadelphia. The training built on Maypop's commitment to strengthen and unite forces for ecological justice and programs such as our *Young People's Just Transition Project*, a three month political education and organizing apprenticeship program for college-aged students.

Leading up to the training, fossil fuel corporations trumpeted plans to turn Philadelphia into a fossil fuel "energy hub," which would increase oil and gas import, processing, and export. Their visions of a fossil fueled future brought a sense of urgency to the training, and underlined what frontline organizations have known for decades: we must grow our power and effectiveness to win the future we all deserve - one with community-controlled development and green jobs instead of toxic industries and further inequality.

The goals of the training were:

1. **Deepen organizing skills** of active members of organizations in three key areas:
 - *Campaigning for change through nonviolent direct action*
 - *Building a base of engaged leaders and supporters*
 - *Fundraising to raise the resources needed for our movements*
2. **Strengthen relationships** between leaders and organizations in Philly
3. **Engage in political education** around ecological justice, exploring root causes of the intersecting crises we face and the solutions that empower communities.



Anchor Organizations

We prioritized frontline organizations in our training recruitment. For us, that meant groups from directly impacted communities who are the visionary stalwarts of environmental justice in the city. In Philadelphia, this means people of color-led groups, especially Black-led, and working class groups, organizing around diverse issues such as flooding and climate impact, refinery pollution and oil trains, waste incineration, and food justice.

We first approached leaders of organizations to assess how the training could best serve their work. Through these conversations we designated five groups as “anchor organizations” for the training. Anchor organizations committed to help shape the curriculum and to send members to the training. We aimed for anchor organizations to represent different frontline issues and diverse approaches to social change. Maypop held at least some previous relationship with every participating group. They were:

ACTION United

ACTION United is a membership organization of low and moderate income Pennsylvanians working to build power through organizing communities. In conjunction with allied organizations, ACTION United is on the forefront in fighting back against climate change in Philadelphia, especially against oil refinery expansion in South Philly.

actionunited.org/

Chester Environmental Justice

Chester Environmental Justice resists toxic industries in Chester PA, working to prevent expansion of the largest waste incinerators in the country.

Eastwick Action Committee, Eastwick Friends & Neighbors Coalition (EFNC)

EFNC brings together community stakeholders in planning and advocating for an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable future for Eastwick, a neighborhood located in southwest Philadelphia.

eastwickfriends.wordpress.com/

Philadelphia Urban Roots Collective (PURC), SoilGeneration

PURC is a community organization composed of farmer-educators dedicated to creating a stronger network in the food system and culture of Philadelphia. PURC is a part of Soil Generation, a coalition of Philadelphians supporting equity and social justice for community-managed green space, gardens, and farms.

philaurc.org

groundedinphilly.org/

Philly Thrive

Philly Thrive is made up of Philadelphians taking action for clean air, climate justice, and the right to breathe. Their *Right to Breathe Campaign* is a cross-race, cross-class initiative demanding the South Philly oil refinery pay health reparations to impacted residents, cap their pollution, and provide climate jobs as part of a just transition in Philly.

phillythrive.org/

Participants

Participants from anchor organizations were selected through an application process. The application encouraged participants to sharpen their learning goals and prepare for the training (see application questions on page 11).

Leaders of anchor organizations selectively recruited members to apply. We limited 2-3 training participants from each organization. Once applications were submitted, the Lead Coordinator, Alexa Ross, met with each potential participant for an interview. Interviews set participants up to reflect on their past organizing experiences, further develop learning goals, and consider any challenges that might come up. They were also a chance to communicate logistical details such as expectations for participation and attendance.

Twelve participants were accepted to Organizing for the Haul Long, eleven of which attended the training. Participants ranged in age and organizing background, although most were leaders in their groups with prior experience. Nine participants were African American; two were white. Some were relatively new to Philadelphia, some have lived and worked in the city for many years.

Each participant was paid a \$600 stipend out of the program budget to compensate for time taken off work and for general financial support.

Training Design

The training design emerged through conversation with each anchor organization, consultation with coordinators, and Maypop's knowledge of participating groups. It had two main components: 1) an organizing skills training, and 2) field days.

The organizing skills training occurred over four days from November 13-16. The first day was

devoted to building relationships and political education around eco-justice. Each of the following three days were devoted to a different skill - campaigning, base-building, and fundraising - with a different local trainer facilitating each day. The specific skill areas were determined through our own analysis of the groups and stated needs of anchor organizations.

Field days happened over two follow-up weekends, December 5-6 and January 9-10, and were designed to give participants opportunities to apply skills. For each field day, one anchor organization hosted all other participants as volunteers to practice one of the skills learned in November and add capacity to the host organization. Through these field days, hosts got to step up their leadership and participants got to experience diverse strategies for campaigning, base-building, and fundraising.

Training Team

The training team consisted of four Skill Trainers and one Lead Trainer. Skill Trainers facilitated one day on a specific skill area. The Lead Trainer facilitated the opening day (relationship building and political education) and field days, and was present for all days of skills training as a co-facilitator and to facilitate openings and closings.

This design was based on several factors. Skill Trainers could use their existing curriculum, focusing on skills where they had experience while saving project resources on curriculum design. Since Skills Trainers came from different organizations, participants could experience diverse perspectives on organizing and facilitation. The Lead Trainer, present throughout the training, provided a familiar presence and was able to track the group's dynamics, important for building the "container" of relationship that enables deeper learning.

Preparation

Two training team planning meetings, facilitated by the Lead Coordinator, Alexa Ross, established continuity in the overall design, set up communication between trainers across days, and clarified the role of the Lead Trainer.

At the meetings, trainers met each other and workshopped design drafts, keeping an eye out for redundant activities. A plan was put in place for each trainer to touch base with the Lead Trainer and the Skills Trainer that preceded them in order to adjust for emerging group dynamics.

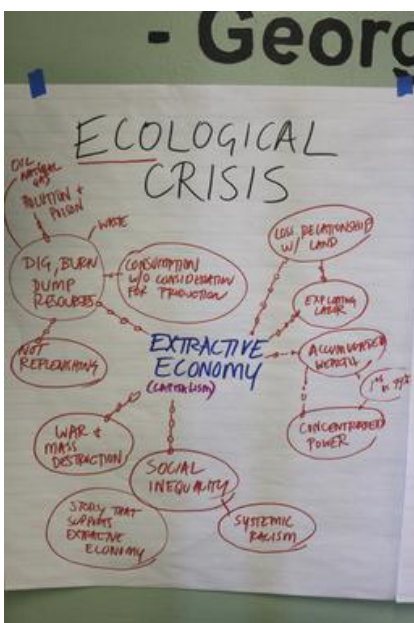
The Lead Coordinator, in addition establishing anchor organizations and interviewing participants, made final decisions on training design, facilitated planning among trainers, and coordinated all logistics, i.e. space rental, food, materials, stipends, etc.

The Lead Coordinator and Lead Trainer consulted with other coordinators especially Coordination Support, Katey Lauer, through regular check-ins and planning meetings. Katey provided logistic support during the four skill training days as well.

Eco-Justice Political Education

As Lead Trainer, Zein Nakhoda facilitated political education on eco-justice movement building. It aimed to build shared analysis of ecological crises and organizing responses, rooted in participants' own experience. We adapted the "Just Transition Strategy Framework" developed by Movement Generation and the Our Power Campaign, which outlines elements of the current "extractive economy" and names specific strategies for a just transition toward equitable, regenerative economies. Ecology is defined not as "nature outside," but knowledge of home, including the people, places, living things, cultures that make up where we live. Eco-justice in this sense is the restoration and proper management of home.

In the training, participants named how they're impacted by ecological crisis and harm. Reflecting on that, we generated a concept map of the extractive economy, asking "What defines the economy at the root of these issues?" After generalizing the extractive economy, we moved to



how we respond as a movement. Participants, grouped by anchor organizations, drew visual representations of their visions, answering, "What does our work look like when it's successful?" We reflected on each group's vision, asking, "How did we get there from the extractive economy? What steps had to happen?" to create a list of movement strategies. We finally generalized the strategies into "6 Strategies for Eco-Justice" based on the "Just Transition Strategy Framework."

Participants reported feeling empowered by the activity, made connections across issues while seeing the role of different strategies, and appreciated the invitation into big-picture strategic thinking. A handout was created during the training with participant responses to serve as a snapshot of the group and a take-home political education tool (See the handout on page 14).

Field Days

Field days strengthened participants' capacity to implement campaigning, base-building, and fundraising strategies into their work and deepened relationships across anchor organizations. Host organizations designed and facilitated the majority of each field day, with Lead Trainer and Lead Coordinator as support. Each field day was unique:

December 5 - Eastwick Action Committee hosted the first field day. They created a base-building strategy for their neighborhood to activate more residents, something EAC strongly desired but previously had struggled to do. The group met at the Heinz Wildlife Refuge where EAC explained the strategy and trained other participants in their rap. Participants hit the doors in pairs and small groups in Eastwick, and then reconvened at an EAC member's house to debrief.

December 6 - Philly Thrive hosted the second field day. Philly Thrive had an upcoming direct action planned for their *Right to Breathe Campaign*, so they used the opportunity to prepare and build their

leadership. Participants helped out with an "art build," creating visuals for the action. They also phone-banked Thrive supporters to turn them out to the action. Finally, Thrive had the group do a role-play of the action in order to see how it looked and what changes should be made.

January 9 - Organizing for the Long Haul stretched into 2016 with ACTION United hosting the third field day. They got to try a base-building strategy developed in the November skills training. AU members trained the group to conduct a health impact survey among Southwest Philly residents affected by oil refinery pollution. Residents were asked to place a symbol in their window indicating how they were affected by the refinery, making collective impact visible to the community. The field day was an excellent pilot for a door-knocking project that ACTION United members plan to continue.

January 10 - The fourth field day, and final day of the Long Haul Training, was hosted by Chester Environmental Justice. The day began with a toxic tour of polluting industries in Chester, PA (the first time the Chester EJ participant had led a toxic tour by herself.) Then, the group drove down the road to Chester's wealthy suburban neighbor, Swarthmore. The Chester organizer trained the group in a fundraising pitch and participants went door-to-door fundraising for Chester EJ's work. As a newer group, this was the first time Chester EJ had actively fundraised. It was crucial for the Long Haul Training participants to practice asking for money and, in the process, raising funds for Chester EJ.



Reflections

There's no "one size fits all"

Across training days, we used the metaphor of adding organizing and conceptual tools to a growing toolbox. Different tools are good for different tasks; the "right" tool depends on what you're trying to build. Organizations brought their own context and assumptions to the training. To support participants' learning and skill-building across this diversity, it was helpful not to frame skills and practices as "right way vs. wrong way" but instead to encourage understanding of what certain tools do and how they can be effective.

Training team pros and cons

The experiment of having one Lead Trainer and many Skill Trainers worked fairly well. Even though Skill Trainers focused on a key skill area for their day, each also brought their own frameworks and assumptions about social change. This was great at offering many tools to participants, but meant that the training sacrificed some conceptual consistency between days. Skill Trainers could lean strongly on existing curriculum, but it was difficult to design for and adapt in the moment to emerging groups dynamics, teachable moments, and conflict across days. The training team meetings were crucial in establishing as much continuity as possible through sharing designs and clarifying the role of the Lead Trainer.



Experiential education is powerful

Training methods that drew on experiences in the room and in anchor organizations deepened learning, created stronger relationships among participants, and helped lessons stick. We observed this over the training and heard it from participant feedback. We took time to reflect after activities and field day practices, asking “What happened, what worked?”, stressing the importance of learning over time rather than getting it perfect one time. Next time, we would advocate experiential design more explicitly in the training team.

Craving strategic vision

Participants were activated by the political education on eco-justice strategies and had much wisdom from their experience to enrich our discussion. It highlighted the need for popular tools for big-picture thinking to invite more people to the strategic table.

Field days were a success

The field day model is worth replicating. All participants grew tremendously from the field day experience - both hosts who took a giant step in their leadership by guiding a group of volunteers and participants who got firsthand experience applying newly acquired organizing skills.

Acknowledgements

Much curriculum and facilitation design was adapted from tools and methods developed by Movement Generation Justice & Ecology Project and Training for Change.

Movement Generation Justice & Ecology Project

Movement Generation inspires and engages in transformative action towards the liberation and restoration of land, labor, and culture. We are rooted in vibrant social movements led by low-income communities and communities of color committed to a Just Transition away from profit and pollution and towards healthy, resilient and life-affirming local economies.

movementgeneration.org

info@movementgeneration.org

twitter: @MoveGen

Training for Change

For over 20 years, Training for Change has provided activist training for groups standing up for social, economic, and environmental justice through strategic nonviolence. Using our unique experiential approach, we create learning environments that provide the practical tools and insights that activists can use, as well as opportunities for real growth, transformation, and empowerment.

trainingforchange.org

info@trainingforchange.org

twitter: @Tr4Change

Appendices

Appendix 1. Application

Name
Organization

Home Address
Phone number

Email address

Do you have any allergies, accessibility needs (such as transportation needs, wheelchair access, hard of hearing), or anything else we should know to best support you through the training, should you be accepted?
(Paragraph Text)

In which areas do you have previous organizing experience?

Administration

Media

Running campaigns

Events/Actions

Outreach (door-knocking,
tabling, etc)

Volunteer coordination

Coalition building

Political/popular education

Youth Organizing

Fundraising

Summarize your previous organizing experience.

Details can be described during your interview.

What is the organizing that you think your community needs, and what role do you want to have in doing that work?

Where has there been a point of conflict that you have helped bridge or overcome in the past year?

What do you see your organization doing well? Where could your organization improve its work?

Where do you see yourself and your work in three years?

What would justice look like for your community? For the city of Philadelphia?

Summarize special skills and qualifications you have acquired from employment, previous volunteer work, etc. Details can be described during your interview.

Please list three references. Name, phone, relationship.

Person to notify in case of emergency. Name, address, phone, email.

Agreement and signature (print name and date).

By submitting this application, I affirm that the facts set forth in it are true and complete. I understand that if I am accepted as a trainee, any false statements, omissions, or other misrepresentations made by me in this application may result in my immediate dismissal without pay.

Appendix 2. Participant Program Handout

Organizing for the Long Haul: Philadelphia Training

Fall/Winter 2015 Program

Training Vision

The current extractive economy has thrown communities and our planet into degraded and critical states. Growing social movements for the restoration of land, labor, and culture is imperative. The Long Haul Training will bring together members of grassroots environmental justice organizations in the Philadelphia area in order to build their individual and collective power. Specifically, the three goals for the training are:

1. To deepen the organizing skills of active members of organizations in three key areas:
 - **Fundraising to raise the resources needed for our movements**
 - **Building a base of engaged leaders and supporters**
 - **Campaigning for change**
2. To strengthen relationships between leaders and organizations in the Philly area that can be supportive in practicing newly acquired skills and in winning on environmental justice.
3. To engage in political education around climate justice, exploring root causes of the intersecting crises we face and the solutions that empower and uplift communities.

Participants of the training will be supported by a unique team of local trainers. For the main training block November 13-16, participants will build the foundation for relationship and engage in intensive skills trainings. The two follow-up weekends December 5-6 and January 9-10 are focused on application. The training cohort will participate in "exchanges," volunteering at each other's organizations for the goal of practicing the skills learned in November and observing how various organizations implement fundraising, basebuilding, and campaigning.

Participating Organizations

Leaders participating in the training represent the following organizations:

- Action United
- Eastwick Action Committee, Eastwick Friends & Neighbors Coalition
- SoilGeneration, Philly Urban Roots Collective
- Philly Thrive
- Chester Environmental Justice

Training Team

Allison Budschalow, Fundraising. *Philly-based fundraiser, Media Mobilizing Project.*

Daniel Hunter, Campaign Skills. *Training for Change.*

Arielle Klagsbrun, Basebuilding. *Action United, Rising Tide North America.*

Jordan Ford, Basebuilding. *Action United.*

Zein Nakhoda, Lead Trainer. *Maypop Collective for Climate and Economic Justice.*

Coordinating Team

Alexa Ross, Coordinator. *Maypop Collective for Climate and Economic Justice.*

Katey Lauer, Coordination Support. *Advocates for a Safe Water System.*

Dinah DeWald, Logistics Support. *Maypop Collective for Climate and Economic Justice.*

November 13-16 Schedule

Friday November 13, Relationship-building and Political Education

Trainer: Zein Nakhoda

10am	Welcome
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm	Relationship-building & Political Education
6:00pm	Closing & Dinner
7:00pm	Goodnight!

Saturday November 14, Campaign Skills

Trainer: Daniel Hunter

10am	Opening: Campaign Skills
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm	Campaign Skills
6:00pm	Closing & Dinner
7:00pm	Goodnight!

Sunday November 15, Basebuilding

Trainers: Arielle Klagsbrun & Jordan Ford

10am	Opening: Basebuilding
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm	Basebuilding
6:00pm	Closing & Dinner
7:00pm	Goodnight!

Monday November 16, Fundraising

Trainer: Allison Budschalow

10am	Opening: Fundraising
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm	Fundraising
4:30pm	Wrapping up & Graduation
6:00pm	Closing & Dinner
7:00pm	Goodnight!

Logistics

Lunch and dinner will be provided each day, with the option for a pack-out dinner for those who need to get home.

The training will be held at Dixon House at 1920 S 20th St. If you cannot find the location or if you have any questions or concerns call Alexa at 402-310-2508. Reimbursement for transportation is available.

You will be paid half of the \$600 stipend on Nov. 16 and the other half on Jan. 10, the last day of official training.

Expectations

Full participation is expected of participants at each day of the training. Participants will be responsible for making all necessary arrangements to be able to attend each day of the training, Nov. 13-16 and follow-up weekends Dec. 5-6 and Jan. 9-10.

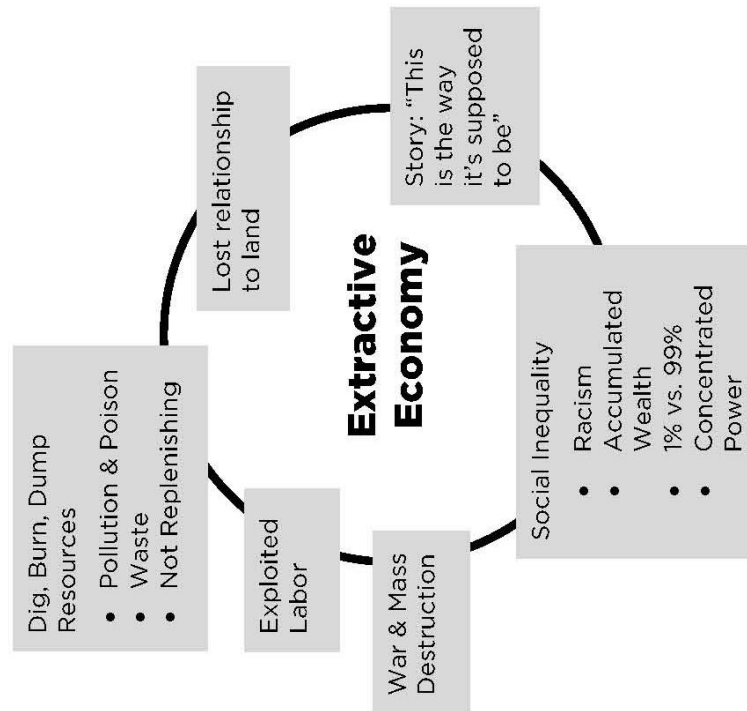
Once the training begins, trainees who don't participate to their fullest ability or are unable to maintain regular attendance may be asked to leave the program without pay.

Appendix 3. Strategies for Eco-Justice Handout

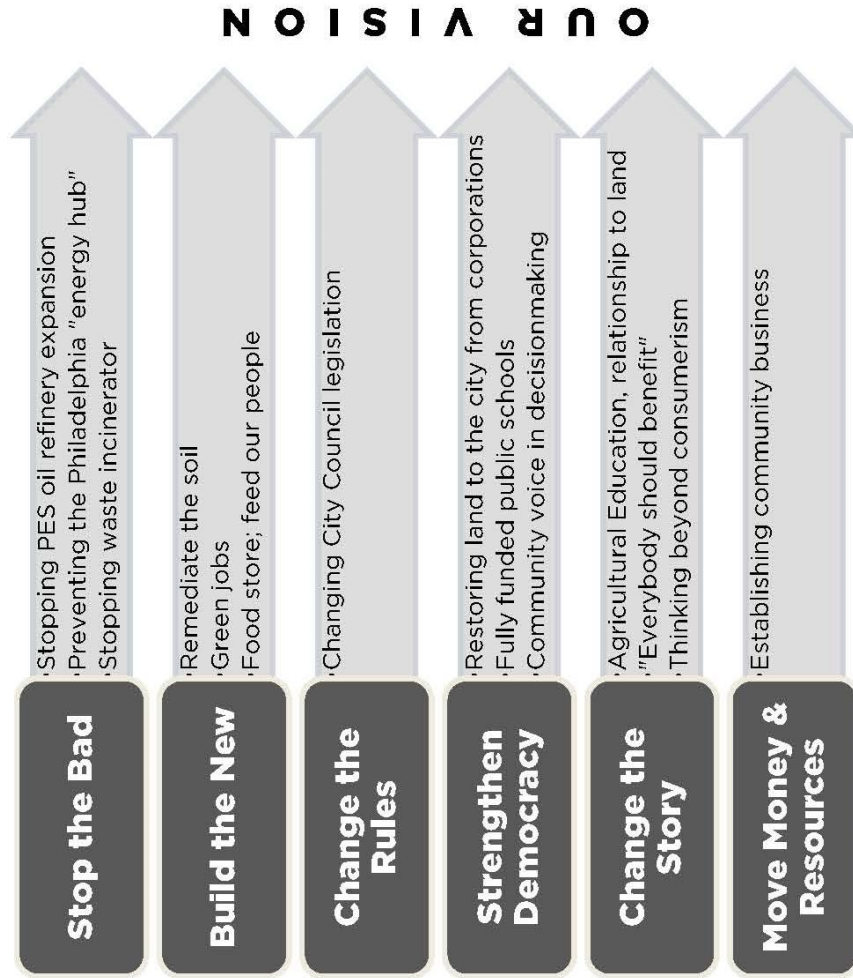
Workshop Notes from “Organizing for the Long Haul: Philadelphia” | November 13, 2015

Content represents the analyses and strategies of training participants from Action United, Eastwick Action Committee, Philly Urban Roots Collective, Philly Thrive, and Chester Environmental Justice. Notes from the training are presented here unedited.

Ecological Crisis



Strategies for Eco-Justice



This tool was adapted from the “Just Transition Strategy Framework” developed by Movement Generation and the Our Power Campaign
movementgeneration.org | ourpowercampaign.org

Appendix 4. Elements of a “Rap” Handout

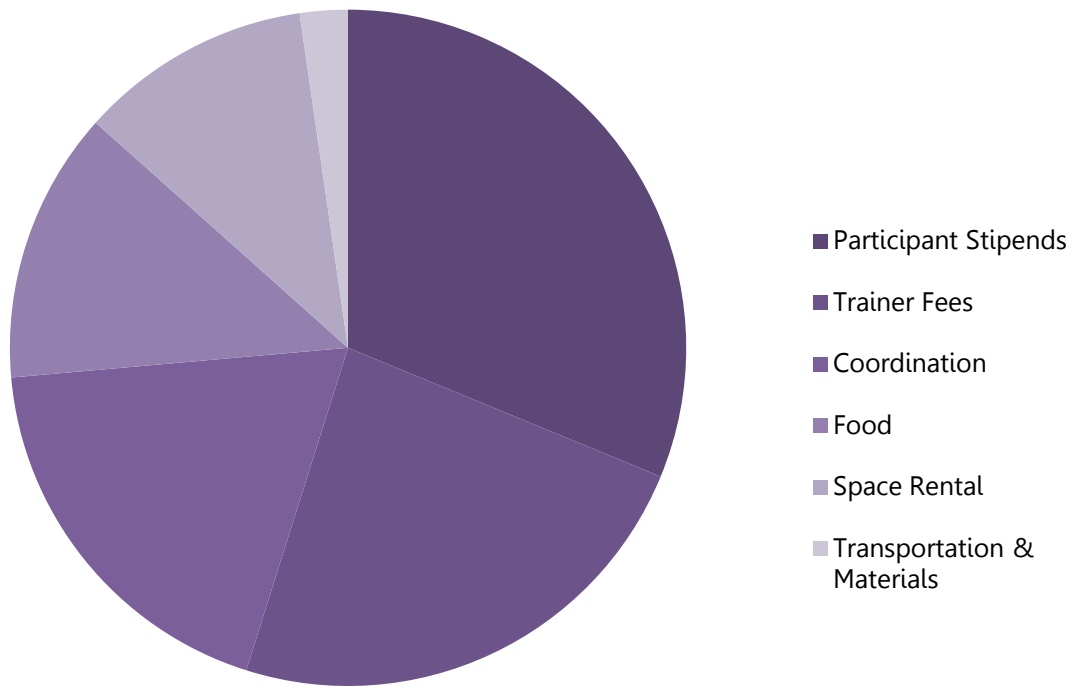
Elements of a “Rap”

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
INTRODUCTION	Individual and organizational	“Hi, my name is ____ and I’m here with ____.”
ISSUES	Why you’re talking with them and <u>why you need them.</u>	“We need numbers”, “We need you’re support to win ____.”
NAME YOUR OWN STAKE	Sharing how the issue affects you retains passion, connects to their stake.	“I’m not a member of Action United, but I breathe the same air as its members.”
QUESTIONS, SMALL TALK	Find out their stake, where they stand on issue. Small talk opens up conversation	“Are you familiar with the PES refinery?”; “Crazy weather this season, huh?”
POLARIZATION	Draw a clear line between us and them.	“The refinery doesn’t want us to know the health effects, but we believe we have a right to know. What do you think?”
ASK	Clear, concrete asks. Connect the ask to their stake and information you learned about them	“Can you hand this letter in your window to indicate you’re affected by asthma?”
CLOSING, FOLLOW UP	Give informational handouts, get their contact information, let them know what kind of follow up to expect.	
FRIENDLY PRESENTATION		Smile, wave, make eye contact, have a confident approach
“CATCH THEIR BEAT”	Notice if someone is in a hurry or looks like they have time and adjust your rap.	Sometimes people have time for the full rap, other times, they only have time for main points

Workshop Notes from “Organizing for the Long Haul: Philadelphia” | January 9, 2016

Training participants from Action United, Eastwick Action Committee, Philly Urban Roots Collective, Philly Thrive, and Chester Environmental Justice generated this list from a door-knocking reflection. The list is presented here unedited.

Appendix 5. Budget



Funding	
Grant, Rising Tide North America	\$20,000.00
Additional Funding, Maypop Collective	\$1,141.80
Total Budget	\$21,141.80

Project Expenses	
Participant Stipends	\$6,600.00
Trainer Fees	\$5,000.00
Coordination	\$3,960.00
Food	\$2,748.14
Space Rental	\$2,350.00
Transportation	\$146.72
Materials	\$336.94
Total Project Expenses	\$21,141.80