

# YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVOCATES ACADEMY

FALL 2023 / SPRING 2024

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The Global ARC  
Global Action Research Center

## Background & Purpose

The non-profit Global Action Research Center (Global ARC) holds *a vision of healthy, resilient communities where people learn and work together and life flourishes in just and equitable environments*. It works toward this vision by assisting communities in bringing their voice into the public dialogue by connecting the grassroots to policy makers and researchers.

It does this by:

- Building Civic Engagement
- Helping Communities to Use Science and Technology to Address their Concerns
- Assisting Communities and Universities to Learn from Each Other



## CHALLENGE

*“Air pollution and extreme heat are killing inner-city residents at a higher rate than almost all other causes, and as average temperatures continue to rise - contributing to what scientists call the ‘urban heat island effect’ - death and illness from the effects of climate change are expected to rise further.”*

**-Scientific American Magazine**

**ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM** is a leading cause of death in communities of color. Therefore, it is vitally important that the Environmental Justice Movement in San Diego is fully inclusive with a membership that accurately represents the ethnic / cultural / linguistic and other demographics of the community. The residents must develop an on-going relationship with relevant decision makers at the City and County level to ensure the community’s voice is included in policy decisions impacting the quality of life in the targeted communities.



## Approach

The **Young Environmental Justice Advocates Academy** (YEJAA) reflects the Global ARC’s commitment to supporting Youth of Color in developing and bringing their voice and the voice of their community into the public dialogue on addressing climate change.

1.) Taking participants through a series of workshops that teach them about Climate Science, Environmental Justice, and Nature-Based Climate Solutions, with a focus on how these issues affect the local community and results in them identifying a specific area of concern to address.

2.) Training the youth on how to communicate what they learned about the benefits of applying Nature-Based Climate Solutions (e.g., green infrastructure, planting trees, community gardens, water harvesting, composting systems, bioswales, etc.) to their respective neighborhoods using creative arts as well as how to advocate for policies focused on addressing the issues raised in their training.

3.) Supporting youth as they utilize what they learned in the training portion to both educate their community and advocate for environmental justice by meeting with policy makers at the city and county levels.

The youth utilize creative arts as the platform for delivering the campaign's key messages to their community. They also have the opportunity to present their issues to elected officials and other decision makers. These skills prepare them to become leaders/activists in San Diego's climate justice movement and throughout the program the youth are introduced to and encouraged to join existing Environmental Justice organizations.



## Curriculum

YEJAA students will learn about Climate Change, local Environmental Justice issues, Nature-Based Climate Solutions and how local decisions impacting their environment are made. They will then develop a message that informs their peers, parents, community residents, and policymakers about these solutions using skills built through the training and experience. Throughout the Academy, youth will have several opportunities to meet and work with other organizations and youth in the

Environmental Justice Movement as well as elected officials and other decision makers, providing graduates with several pathways for continued engagement in the movement post-Academy.

Content	Duration
<b><u>Climate Science</u>: What is happening to our planet? How is it affecting our local community?</b>	Nine (9) Hours
<b><u>Nature-Based Solutions</u>: What can we do to save our communities?</b>	Nine (9) Hours
<b><u>Understanding Power</u>: Who has the authority to address our concerns?</b>	Three (3) Hours
<b><u>Community Education</u>: Bringing the Community's Voice into the Public Dialogue</b>	Nine (9) Hours
<b><u>Hands-On, Real-Time Experience: Raising up the Community's Voice on Environmental Justice</u></b> – Based on the Nature-Based solutions to Climate Change the group has developed, participants will organize a community LISTENING SESSION where they will present their project and engage their community in dialogue on Environmental Justice. They will also document the community's perspective and produce a report to be presented to policy makers at the city, county, and state levels.	

## Commitment

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Participants in the Academy are expected to contribute four (4) hours per week. Those hours will be spent in training workshops, project development, outreach, event planning, and developing an advocacy report.

## Compensation

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Participants in the Academy will receive a stipend of \$15 per hour (up to \$900 for the full program). Participants will be paid through four (4) disbursements throughout the program.

## Enrollment Process

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To be a part of the Academy, interested students must be High School aged, complete an application and submit it by the deadlines listed below. All youth under the age of 18 will need to provide parental/guardian permission to participate.

### 1. Attend an Info Session

Registration links are attached to flyers and other outreach material, or otherwise send an email to Program Manager Catherine Parker (CParker@TheGlobalARC.org)

## 2. Submit Required Paperwork

- Contract
- Parental/Guardian Permission (if under 18 years old)
- Liability Forms

## 3. Commit

- To attending all sessions
- To participating in all activities

## 4. Participate

- Be active in your learning
- Reach out and educate your community

## 5. Graduate

- Upon completion of the Academy, graduates receive a Certificate of Achievement from The Global Action Research Center and University of California's Bioregional Center for Sustainability Science, Planning and Design
- Stay engaged – Keep up with alumni opportunities and find support in transitioning to partner organizations.
- **Change the world**



## Important Dates

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Info-Sessions	Week of August 28th	Week of February 20th
Session Begins	Week of September 9th	Week of February 26th
Session Ends	Week of December 16th	Week of June 18th

Contact Information

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