



2021

# ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

GO GREEN INITIATIVE

Environmental justice  
for every child in every school.



# Message From Our Board President



Edwin Piñero

We are pleased to provide the 2021 Annual Report of the Go Green Initiative. As we emerge from the pandemic, we have taken this opportunity to refine our focus and enhance our strategic plan. As has been the case since the first year of the GGI in 2002, we have had significant impact across all of our metrics.

**But we have remained laser-focused on our reason for existence; the most important players going forward in our journey to environmental justice and harmony are those who will be here in the future to make it happen—today’s youth.**

Whatever the issue, be it climate change, water challenges, handling waste materials, or energy security, we must tackle it with a long-range vision, and to do so, we need to include the upcoming generations of leaders. Many of these future stewards live in less-than-ideal conditions and are disproportionately more adversely impacted. Poverty, food deserts, limited opportunities all overwhelm the environmental issues that exist right in those same neighborhoods.

This is not a hopeless situation, and the GGI feels that this provides an opportunity to see the connections between the environment, economy, and our own lives. Addressing these connections, combined with fueling the passion of environmental justice and stewardship, will best prepare future generations to fulfill their role. And that is why the Go Green Initiative exists—to provide a multi-faceted pathway for our youth to become the environmental stewards of the future.





**EDWIN PIÑERO**  
President



**MICAELA OCHOA, ED.**  
Treasurer



**MEG MORRIS**  
Secretary



**JILL BUCK**  
Founder & CEO



**JOHN SCOTT**  
Member



**DEREK VEENHOF**  
Member



**NANCY PAPPAS**  
Member

# Board of Directors

**Our Board of Directors share a vision:** a world where natural resources are equitably available, and all children are healthier as a result of living the principles of the Go Green Initiative.

In 2022, the Go Green Initiative named **Edwin Piñero** the President of the Board and welcomed two new Board members:

- **Derek Veenhof**, Executive Vice President & Chief Commercial Officer of Covanta
- **Nancy Pappas**, Executive Director of Headwaters at the Comal

# COMMITMENT TO EQUITY & JUSTICE

**we prioritize districts most impacted by environmental injustice.**

## WE BELIEVE

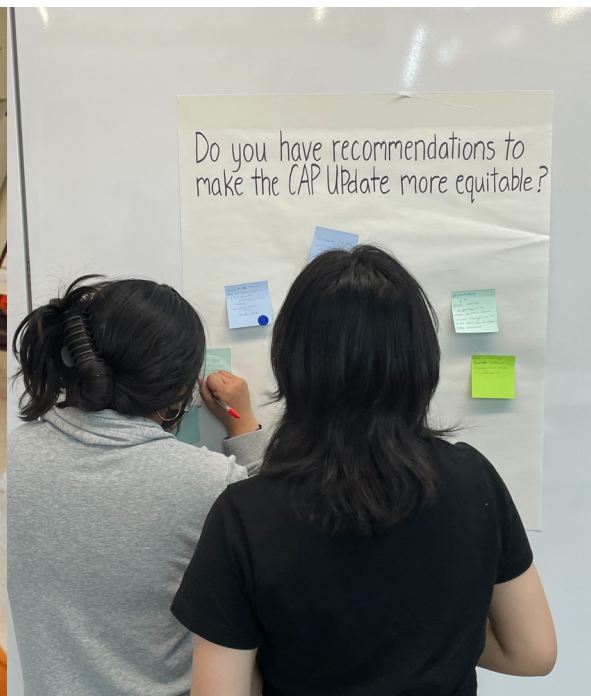
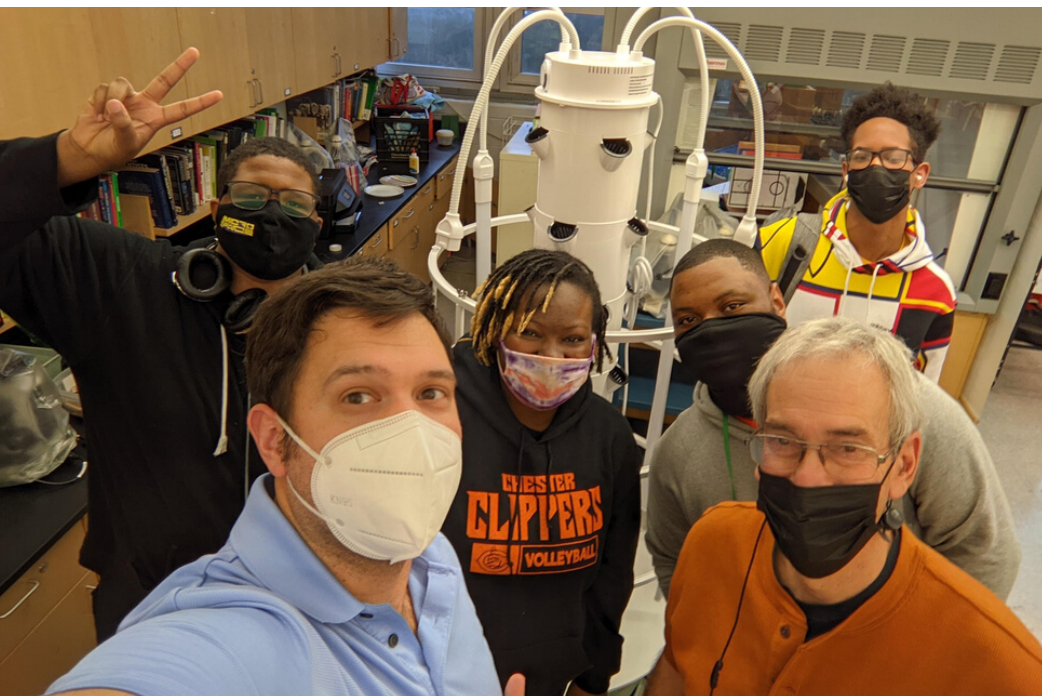
all children must be protected from environmental harm.

## WE PARTNER

with district leadership to address their schools' most urgent needs.

## OUR SERVICES

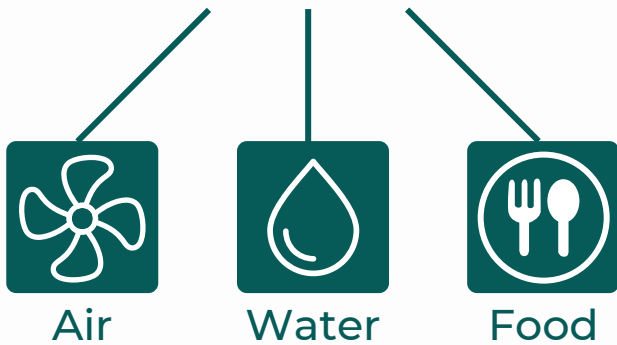
are free and accessible to any school district, anywhere.



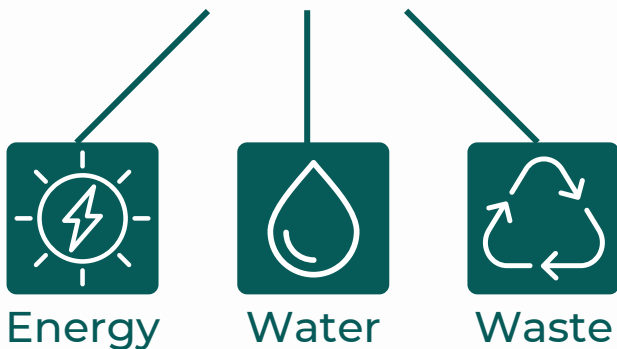
# ACTION AREAS

Our programs protect what children need today and tomorrow.

## Protecting Children's Health From Environmental Toxins



## Conserving Natural Resources & Mitigating Climate Change



# OUR STUDENT INITIATIVES

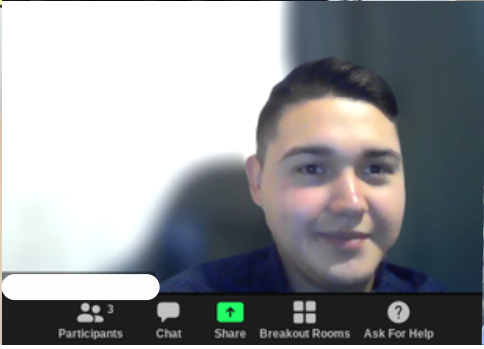
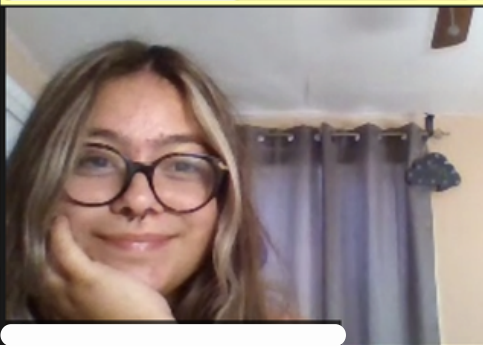
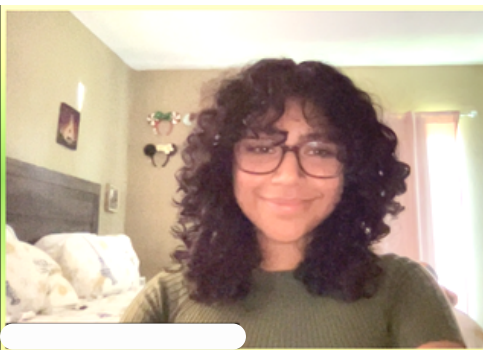
Our student programs build the next generation of environmental leaders.



"Being in Local Leaders has taught me so much more than I have ever known about rising environmental issues including waste contamination and water pollution, but **I have also gained lifelong leadership skills. I learned how to speak with city officials and people of authority, engage students, and make actionable change,** all while constantly improving my environmental education."

- Hira, Foothill High School Local Leader





# MULTI-CITY INTERNSHIPS

The Go Green Initiative runs two collaborative summer internship programs, with its flagship program in GGI incubator district Pleasanton, California and the second available to students across the country. In this year's program, interns worked to reduce short-lived climate pollutants by promoting community compliance with waste reduction and diversion laws.

Sixty-six students participated, representing six cities: **Compton, Hayward, Madera, Oakland, and Pleasanton, California, as well as Mendota, Illinois.** Each contributed to five outcomes for their respective communities:

- City-wide outreach campaigns
- 50+ community education presentations
- 5-week social media toolkit
- Residential & business infographics
- Presentations to community leadership

<b>66</b>	STUDENTS IN 6 CITIES
<b>4280</b>	HOURS WORKED
<b>\$55K</b>	IN INTERN SALARIES & SCHOLARSHIPS



"My confidence in the field of environmentalism is definitely stronger. I now have a greater understanding in a wide variety of fields including marketing, public relations and policy, and environmental sciences."

- Giovanni, Multi-City Intern

# Local Leaders of the 21st Century

Our network of student organizations train the next generation of environmental leadership.

## NUTRITION ON THE MENU IN NEWARK

Our Local Leaders at West Side High and Central High in Newark, New Jersey are on a mission for nutrition!

They formed the **Nutrition Advisory Council**: a joint effort between students and district administrators to improve nutrition and cultural inclusion in school meals. Collaborating with their district's Executive Director of Food Services, they've proud of the changes they've seen to the menu.

“

**“I believe anyone who wants to see change in issues affecting their community should join Local Leaders.** They will be able to talk to people with the same interests as them and see things change for the better.

**Local Leaders has enabled us to see proper change in our school meals.** It has helped us speak to high end officials in charge of food in our city and see progression in our school meals.”

– Ashley, West Side High Local Leader





## CHESTER'S TECHIE FRESH FOOD SOLUTION

STEM Academy Local Leaders in Chester, Pennsylvania are serving up fresh food to their community! With expert input from the Green Bronx Machine, they built **indoor aeroponic tower gardens** and wrote a proposal to secure heating for their **outdoor greenhouse garden**. The fruits of their labor are donated to an afterschool culinary program.

"**Local Leaders has been a great chance for the students to be empowered to make a difference in Chester.** They have been tasked with making real decisions that affect the outcome of the projects we are working on. The opportunity to think, plan, and act has been well supported by the GGI." – Andrew Piasecki, Local Leaders Faculty Advisor

## HAYWARD STUDENTS LEAD DISTRICT CHANGE

Students at Tennyson High School in Hayward, California are serious about their **campus' climate impact**. They formed a Green Team this year and have conducted a bin-ventory and waste audit to assess next steps for compliance with SB-1383, state law that requires schools to recycle and compost, as well as recover edible food. They're bringing their concerns to the **District Green Team and School Board** to secure the equipment and support they need to make it happen.

The team is preparing a campus-wide campaign to teach their community how to prevent waste contamination and **minimize greenhouse gas emissions**. They're also the first young people to meet with the **City of Hayward** to provide feedback on the city's Climate Action Plan and are working to secure more student input for the city's plan.



"Growing plants that are fresh and giving them to students who needed them was really rewarding."

- DeSean, STEM Academy Local Leader



# Engaged Citizens

## Public Policy Partnerships



**In the GGI's home district, Local Leaders at Amador Valley and Foothill High Schools continue to lead the way in their schools and community.**

Expanding on work by our interns, these Local Leaders **partnered with City Councilmembers and City Staff** to conduct city-wide outreach on waste reduction and diversion compliance and host a screening of **GGI intern-produced water conservation documentary** "Hometown Water: the Lifeline of Pleasanton". Their event was well-attended by city management, public policymakers, and the community.

They also joined forces with their senior district administrators to optimize recycling and organics programs on campus, re-launch food share and waste tracking programs, and evaluate district-wide compliance with SB 1383.

"One of the most valuable things I learned in Local Leaders is how to work with and lead a team and how even as a high school student, I could influence public policy.

**My participation in Local Leaders has inspired me to pursue a B.S. in Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning at UC Davis this Fall. I hope to continue environmental advocacy and action for years to come."**

-Julianne, Amador Valley High School Local Leader





The most important players going forward in our journey to environmental justice and harmony are **those who will be here in the future to make it happen—today's youth.**

-Edwin Piñero, GGI Board President



# OUR DISTRICT SERVICES

- Sustainability Planning
- Utility Analysis & Reduction



We support districts to ensure healthy learning environments and mitigate climate impacts.

**100K**

students served in our 2021 Tier I districts

**2.5M**

students represented in GGI registered schools

That's why we're working with districts from the East Coast to West on the most pressing environmental safety and sustainability priorities in their schools. We partner with district leadership to set custom and comprehensive sustainability plans, analyze and reduce utilities, and eliminate environmental toxins from the campus.

# Utility Analysis & Sustainability Planning

We're working with districts across the country to conserve natural resources and school budgets.

## NEWARK AIMS FOR SILVER CERTIFICATION NEWARK, NJ

In 2021, Newark Board of Education set its sights for Sustainable Jersey for Schools Silver Certification for all its campuses and the GGI is helping them make the grade.

Supporting the district and school to implement and evaluate their qualifying programs, the GGI created customized training for schools and worked with senior NBOE administrators across departments to document sustainability action and analyze two years of utility data for 68 school sites.

The GGI has supported the district in each component of their sustainability plan, including:

- Energy tracking & management
- Energy efficiency
- District sustainability policy
- Green purchasing policies
- Safe routes to school
- Professional development
- Green enhancements for district strategic plans
- Student participation in the arts
- Healthy food beyond the cafeteria
- Promoting locally grown food
- Breakfast after the bell
- Green cleaning
- Digital teaching & learning





83

schools applying for certification by Sustainable Jersey for Schools

## CAMDEN SCHOOLS SEEK BRONZE CERTIFICATION

### CAMDEN, NJ

This year, the GGI has supported Camden City School District with applications for all of its 17 schools to go for Bronze Certification by Sustainable Jersey for Schools. These applications are the culmination of long-standing efforts by the District, in partnerships with the GGI, to achieve environmental health and sustainability, including efforts to:

- track and conserve energy use
- locally source fruits and vegetables
- install edible gardens
- facilitate access to healthy food options outside of the cafeteria
- achieve green cleaning
- and improve indoor air quality

Their applications document five schools that have reduced their energy usage by 10% since 2018 and numerous other achievements across departments and facilities. .



## COMPTON LAUNCHES DISTRICT GREEN TEAM

### COMPTON, CA

The GGI's partnership with Compton Unified School District began in 2020 with the participation of CUSD students in our **internship program**. In 2021, the Go Green Initiative launched District Services within the CUSD, supporting senior administrators and the School Board to prepare for compliance with SB 1383 across campuses and facilities.



In progress toward that goal, CUSD has formed a **District Green Team**, chaired by the head of the Business Services department, and maintaining commitment from senior facilities staff, parent liaisons, school administrators, and students, including GGI internship program participants. The GGI has provided training on SB 1383 and specific tactics to bring all school sites into compliance. We look forward to seeing CUSD through to meeting its goals to institute **recycling and composting** programs across the District, and to **recover edible food** in accordance with the law.

# Chester Builds Social Infrastructure for Success

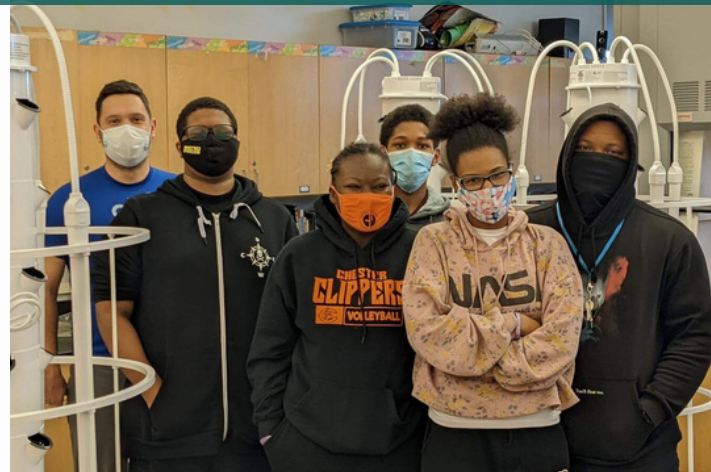


The GGI has been working with Chester Upland School District **since 2015**, achieving success in student services at STEM Academy and in community-based programs to **promote nutrition and healthy lifestyles**. This school year, the GGI met with Superintendent Dr. Parkinson and senior staff to lay the groundwork to establish a **District Green Team** and district-wide sustainability plan.

Despite a tumultuous school year that required numerous pivots between in-person and at-home instruction, the District's **commitment to creating a healthy, sustainable learning environment** is stalwart. We look forward to continuing to expand the GGI's District Services in Chester Upland in the 2022-23 school year.



**CHESTER,  
PENNSYLVANIA**



# OUR INCUBATOR DISTRICT PILOTS REPLICABLE SUCCESS

Pleasanton USD is tackling short-lived climate pollutants with replicable waste tracking success.

## PLEASANTON, CA

Returning to the classroom from remote learning, the GGI supported PUSD to swiftly re-launch their on-campus integrated waste management programs. The district team assessed needs for bins and equipment and re-established **Green Teams** at all school sites, each trained by the GGI to achieve school-wide compliance with SB-1383 and **keep short-lived climate pollutants out of the landfill**. Administrators, teachers, custodians, and students at each site collaborated to educate their campus community, ensure successful recycling and organics programs, relaunch food share, and measure their success.

Their work to track waste allows the district to measure environmental impacts, quantify diversion success, save money on waste hauling, and optimize the program on each campus.

The district has continued to utilize the **Energy Star Portfolio Manager** to analyze utilities and achieve savings. Their case study is helping us build a toolkit to replicate their success across the country.

**\$7.8K** FUNDING DIRECT TO SCHOOL GREEN TEAMS





# 2021 FINANCIALS



- Program Services - 89%
- Management & General Support Services - 11%

**89%**  
of total expenses directly funded our program services in schools and districts across the country.



- Corporate donors - 54.6%
- Government - 35.8%
- Foundations - 5.2%
- Individual donors - 2.8%
- Other - 1.6%



These figures represent audited financials for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2021.

The Go Green Initiative is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The GGI is proud of its Gold level designation from GuideStar® and its 100% confidence rating by Charity Navigator.



# Statement of Activities

For the years ended December 31

	2021	2020	YOY CHANGE
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>	<b>\$695,307</b>	<b>\$544,241</b>	<b>+27.8%</b>
Grants & contributions	\$437,012	\$216,555	
Contributions (donor-restricted)	\$47,200	\$279,313	
Gifts in-kind	-	\$14,249	
Interest income	\$41	\$1,655	
Net assets released from restrictions	\$211,054	\$32,469	
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$379,706</b>	<b>\$239,114</b>	<b>+58.8%</b>
Program services	\$337,914	\$203,278	
Management & general support services	\$41,731	\$35,836	
Fundraising support services	\$61	-	
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			<b>+22.7%</b>
Net assets, beginning of year	\$461,007	\$188,349	
Net assets, end of year	\$565,554	\$461,007	

# Thank You

DONORS MAKE OUR MISSION POSSIBLE.



The Go Green Initiative thanks our 2021 donors for their investment in environmental justice for every child in every school.



"It is not enough to  
prepare our children  
for the future.  
We must prepare  
the future for our  
children."

- Jill Buck, Founder & CEO

THANK YOU FOR  
SUPPORTING OUR MISSION.



[gogreeninitiative.org/donate](https://gogreeninitiative.org/donate)