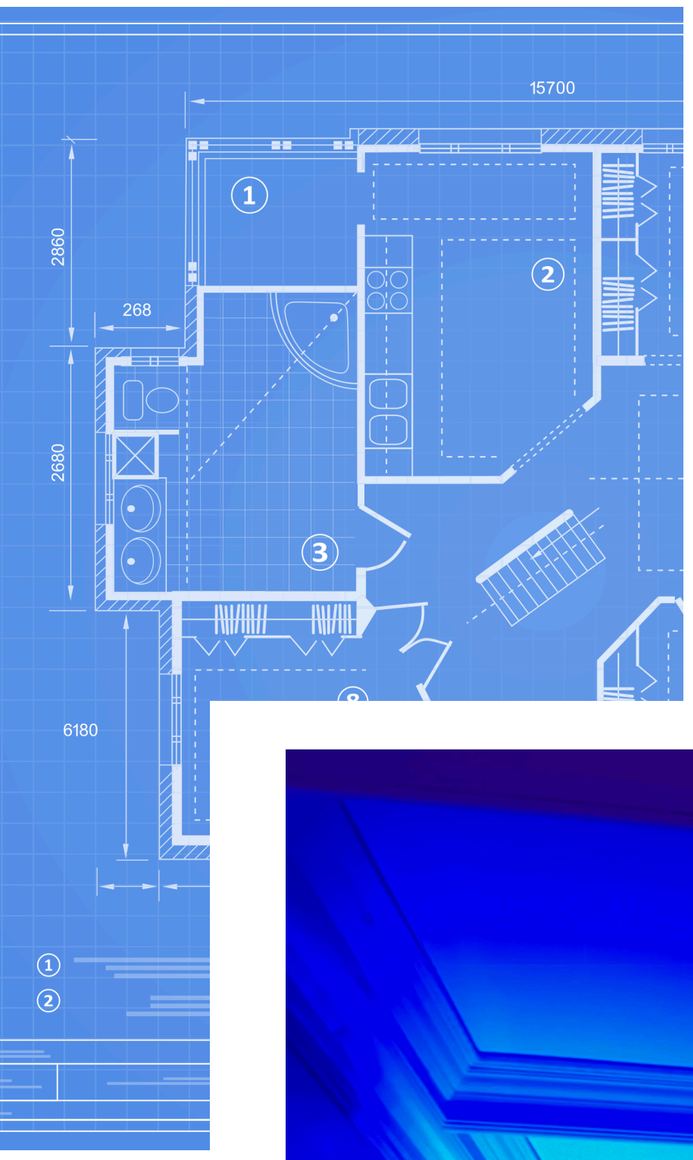


PLACE + SPACE



EAST MICHIGAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COUNCIL

X

Climate Advocacy Lab | 2025



4605 Cass Ave
Detroit MI 48201
emeac.org

social ecology project | 2026

PLACE + SPACE

a mini manual examining the contours of place-based environmental justice organizing in peri-urban settings

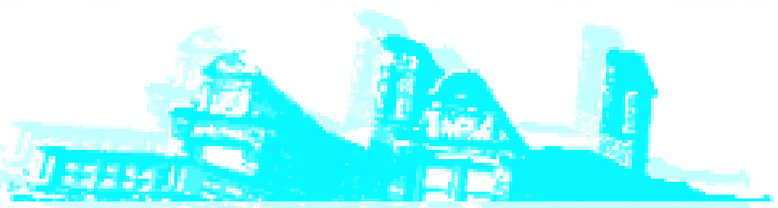
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designed and edited by
paul jackson & nicole crawford

special thanks to
CLIMATE ADVOCACY LAB

AN EXAMINING OF PLACE BASED ORGANIZING IN ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE JUSTICE ORGANIZING

the history of Environmental Action Councils in Michigan began a long legacy of place-based environmental activism.



EAST WEST NORTH MID MICHIGAN all have environmental action councils; some efforts remained regional or hyper-local, issue-based and without a dedicated place.

as stewards of a big building, with shared use in a rapidly gentrified neighborhood, EMEAC examines organizing efforts that actively take on the project of place-making in environmental justice work. we are looking at the way place-making shapes organizing across the broad spectrum of work that can be understood as environmental justice work.



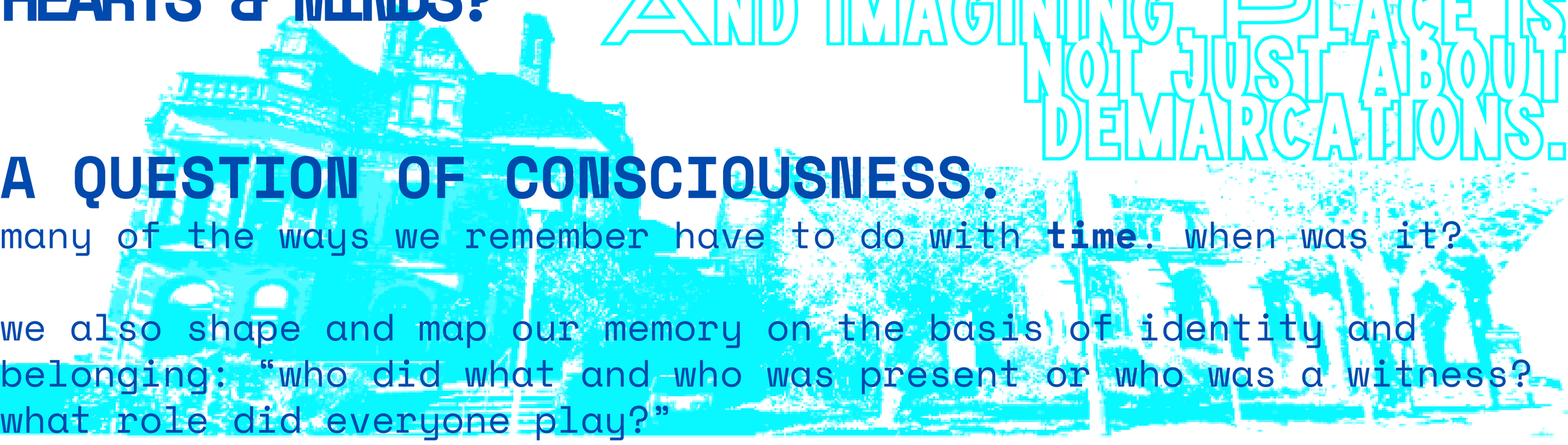
WHY PLACE?

many of the things that inspire and inform our organizing are ideological or have something to do with our points of identity,

and the reality is that everything we experience is located, as we are located, geographically and physically. more than this, everything that happens around us also locates itself among us, through our memories and the shape of our awareness of the world.

WHAT PLACE DOES A THING TAKE IN OUR HEARTS & MINDS?

PLACE IS ALSO ABOUT MEANING, TRUTH, POWER AND IMAGINING. PLACE IS NOT JUST ABOUT DEMARCATIONS.



A QUESTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

many of the ways we remember have to do with **time**. when was it?

we also shape and map our memory on the basis of identity and belonging: “who did what and who was present or who was a witness? what role did everyone play?”

we also map our awareness on to the sense of how things feel, whether they help us to feel good or whether they hurt us and cause us to suffer or feel bad.

too often, we frame our conversations, our work, our gathering around geography and location, but we do not place enough emphasis on the ways that location and **place** also participate in the shaping of our consciousness in the actual experiences of things that happen.

when there is an environmental harm and when we respond, the geography may be limited to the facts and less about the experience of the actual events, how far away someone could smell, how close people were to danger, how the events displace individuals and most importantly how the event and the effects shape how communities think and feel about themselves . Likewise, our organizingand our power building become dislocated within established geographies.

WHY PLACE?

place shapes how we tell the story of
how we came to be where we are
physically, politically, economically,
environmentally.



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
NORTH CAROLINA
DETROIT
INDUSTRY
RUST BELT
NEW JERSEY
CLEVELAND
GREAT LAKES

Where we choose to and where we can do our w and where e
can build up our selves and our community mak s a great
difference in how our work is done.

If we had to do our work in basements, in hiding, or in
constant flux, this impacts how our work then lives and how
our work then in te impacts the world.

So, we are talking about place-based organizing in the context
of political and economic fugutivity.

We are talking about the need to know place beyond
geographical fact and to see it as a **site of contestation**.

AND WHAT ABOUT SPACE?

where place has to do with the location of our work, our being, our experiences, our consciousness, and the things that are mapped in and on to us as “reality”, space signals and calls on the ability or inability of such phenomena to expand, to move, to connect positions, to link sites and placements and to develop an awareness of distance and proximity, of closeness and of difference. Place and space express a relationship between where our work emerges, how it emerges, how it can be found, where it is returned to or stored, and how much of the work is to be found, stored, emerged, expressed, developed, and across which confines, and against which tensions and constrictions and into what otherness and ainto elsewhere.

when we define “here” and “this” about our work, beyond our city or our neighborhood, or beyond the relative centrality of our geography, we are carving out an expression of being together and being in one moment of awareness and recognition which places us in a unity and a commonality that occupies a space within our consciousness and establishes a collective consciousness which is itself defined by an sharing of an awareness of something which has happened or has been done in which we were all in some way present or activated.



NOT THE PHYSICAL SITE

how can we talk about place-based organizing and talk about the use of space and not specifically focus on the physical building or the garden or the plot of land?

Why do we insist on talking about more than just a site?

A site does not always hold a critical place or space in the awareness of our work.

Some sites do, because some sites are more to their people than the structure itself, or because the structure comes to mean much more to the people than the physical elements.

We will discuss stewardship, ownership, place-making, use, activation and other ways in which places and spaces become meaningful to the heart of the work that we do as environmental justice and social justice advocates. and we will make it clear that these elements bring a locationality into our understanding of our work and our selves as workers in a way that adds deep meaning to the space and place where we work and then in turn adds a deeper meaning to our work itself because our work therefore makes such place/space and such work possible for others. It is expansive of its own quality and richness.



CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Maybe
Yes
No
Depends

10 Questions

- should we take on a building or continue renting a space?
- will owning borrowing or managing help our place/space?
- organizing, g?



we answer these key questions
from our own lived experience.

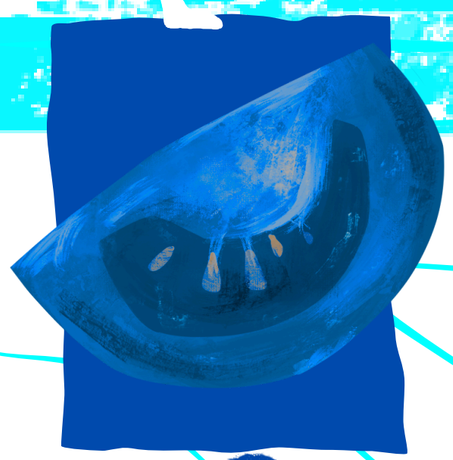
EAST MICHIGAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COUNCIL

East Michigan Environmental Action Council (EMEAC) is a non-profit, public interest group which was founded in 1970. EMEAC's mission "is to protect and restore land, air, water and diversity of life through informed personal and public action. Key to our work is our intention to create a community space that affirms the humanity and dignity of everyone.

BUILDING A JUST SOCIAL ECOLOGY



MOVEMENT & WELLNESS EMBODIED



ECOLOGY THEORY & PRACTICE



MERRIMENT ARTS & CULTURE



GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING & DIRECT ACTION

ORGANIZING TOOLS

THE COMMONS

EMEAC + Cass Commons is a sanctuary and community base for environmental justice work in the heart of Detroit. African spiritual principles and the grassroots movements of people around the world guide our practices, operations and programs. The purpose of all such programming is to develop Black leadership in particular, to ready our communities, especially our youth, to analyze our lives, material conditions, to think and speak for ourselves and chart our own course toward self-determination.

Our intention is to create a just environment that affirms the humanity and dignity of everyone, as we work to build unity among grassroots justice organizations. We steward, protect and share an historic and essential space, The Commons, for political organizing, art production and other community enterprises. We are evolving a model of social justice movement independence and sustainability.

com·mons
[ˈkɒmənz]

LAND OR RESOURCES BELONGING TO OR AFFECTING THE WHOLE OF A COMMUNITY

COMMONS HISTORY

Originally centered in the suburbs of Detroit, a conscious move was made back to the heart of Detroit, surrounded by the neighborhoods filled with some of the most at-risk frontline communities, facing environmental racism, in need of environmental justice. In 2012, sidled with high maintenance costs and waning attendance, the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Detroit transferred ownership of its campus at Cass and Forest to EMEAC to develop Cass Commons as a home and hub for justice movement work. Over the past decade and half EMEAC has shifted toward centering and prioritizing Black and Indigenous leadership and membership to serve the needs of Southeast Michigan and Detroit's predominant and most deeply impacted communities.

4605 the COMMONS

PROJECTS & EVENTS IN THE COMMONS

- Detroiters Speak
- Annual Malcolm X Day Detroit
- Frontline Detroit Coalition
- Black Legacy Coalition
- Detroit Independent Freedom Schools
- Detroit Movement Center
- Community Yoga Practice
- Detroit Health & Wellness Hub (2026)
- Umoja Day Community Festival
- Jazz at The Commons Concert Series
- Social Ecologies Project Community Advisory Consultation Process













community movement practice

We find it difficult to fight for justice in our environment while our internal environments are deeply misaligned. As Veronza Bowers says in his meditation, finding peace in the chaos

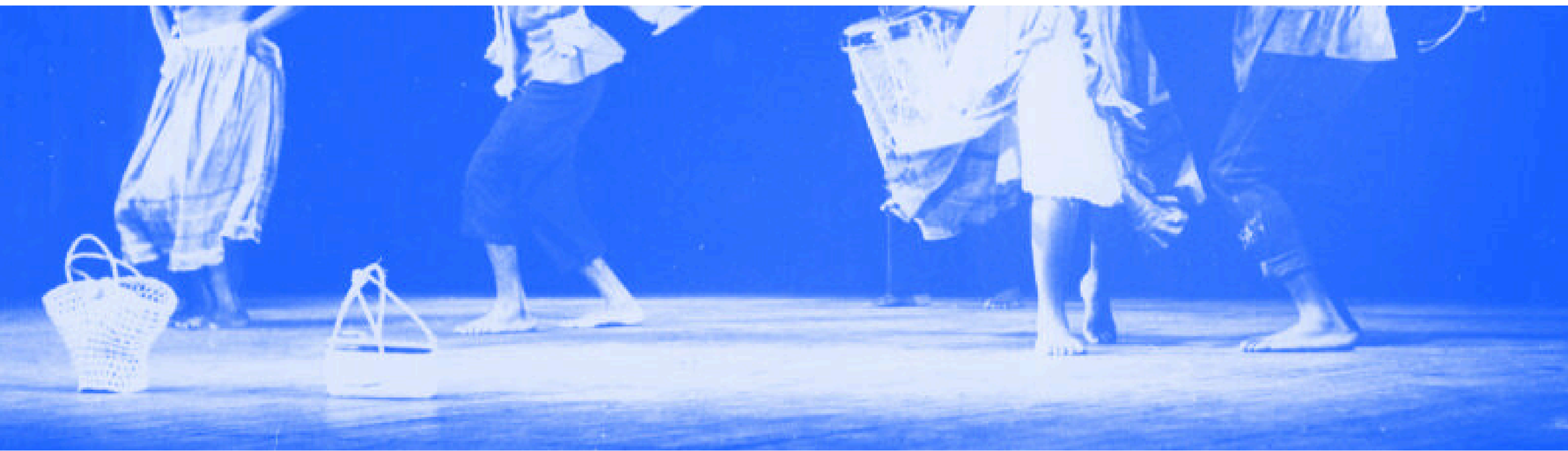
> "how does one maintain [their] sanity living in an insane environment? how does one develop [their] character in a place well-organized to make us into a number? How does one stick to positive morals, and live by lofty principles in a place where such are considered weaknesses?"

Our answer is found in the words of our beloved ancestor June Jordan in her essay, "Where is the Love"

> "I must undertake to love myself and respect myself as though my very life depends upon self-love and self-respect […] I must seek to cleanse myself of the hatred and contempt that surround and permeate my identity […] in this world."

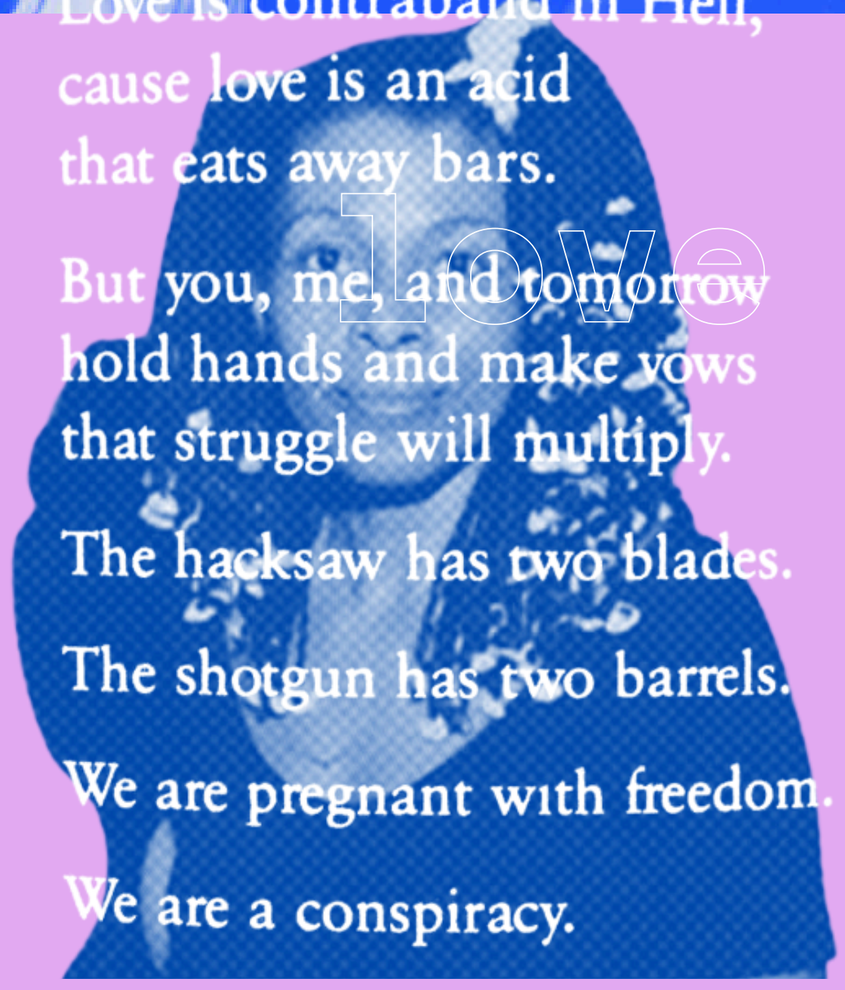
We choose to embody more and more of our vision for the world around us so that the impact of our advocacy will be amplified by the strength of our integrity.

In offering our community movement practice, making healing modalities more accessible to the community, we are offering space for wholeness, for holistic justice movement to emerge.









Assata Shakur

“this is the 21st century and we need to redefine r/evolution. this planet needs a people’s r/evolution. a humanist r/evolution. r/evolution is not about bloodshed or about going to the mountains and fighting. we will fight if we are forced to but the fundamental goal of r/evolution must be peace.

we need a r/evolution of the mind. we need a r/evolution of the heart. we need a r/evolution of the spirit. the power of the people is stronger than any weapon. a people’s r/evolution can’t be stopped. we need to be weapons of mass construction. weapons of mass love. it’s not enough just to change the system. we need to change ourselves. we have got to make this world user friendly. user friendly.

are you ready to sacrifice to end world hunger. to sacrifice to end colonialism. to end neo-colonialism. to end racism. to end sexism.

r/evolution means the end of exploitation. r/evolution means respecting people from other cultures. r/evolution is creative.
r/evolution means treating your mate as a friend and an equal.
r/evolution is sexy.
r/evolution means respecting and learning from your children.
r/evolution is beautiful.
r/evolution means protecting the people. the plants. the animals. the air. the water. r/evolution means saving this planet.

r/evolution is love.”

- Assata Shakur

No One Can Stop The Rain
(A poem by Assata Shakur)

Watch, the grass is growing.
Watch, but don't make it obvious.
Let your eyes roam casually, but watch! In any prison yard, you can see it - growing.

In the cracks, in the crevices, between the steel and the concrete,
out of the dead gray dust,
the bravest blades of grass shoot up,
bold and full of life.
Watch. the grass is growing.
It is growing through the cracks.
The guards say grass is against the Law.
Grass is contraband in prison.
The guards say that the grass is insolent.

It is uppity grass, radical grass, militant grass, terrorist grass, they call it weeds.
Nasty weeds, nigga weeds, dirty, spic, savage indian, wetback, pinko, commie weeds - subversive! And so the guards try to wipe out the grass.
They yank it from its roots. They poison it with drugs. They maul it, They rake it.

Blades of grass have been found hanging in cells,
covered with bruises. "apparent suicides
The guards say that the GRASS IS UNAUTHORIZED DO NOT LET THE GRASS GROW.
You can spy on the grass. You can lock up the grass.
You can mow it down, temporarily.

But you will never keep it from growing.
Watch, the grass is beautiful.
The guards try to mow it down, but it keeps on growing.
The grass grows into a poem.
The grass grows into a song. The grass paints itself across the canvas of life.
And the picture is clear and the lyrics are true, and the haunting voices sing so sweet and strong that the people hear the grass from far away.
And the people start to dance, and the people start to sing, and the song is freedom.

Watch, the grass is growing.



metabolic shift

We need a metabolic shift to fix the metabolic rift.

Whether guiding conservation projects, practicing citizen science in our local parks, or installing solar in a community garden, we use ecology training to build skills and confidence in our community members and partners to be well-equipped and -educated advocates for our ecosystems.

Through our composting trainings for example, we build a practice understanding of the powerful potential in composting to reduce harmful waste accumulation. We don't want or need any expanded landfills. We don't need corporate controlled waste management. We need community-controlled, regenerative bio-waste management.

To begin to build our confidence as the community that is seeking to be empowered and lead in our own solutions we need to continue to grow our skills and spread education amongst one another.













YIELD: Youth Initiative in Education & Leadership Development

East Michigan Environmental Action Council (EMEAC) works to develop young leaders in our community with a focus on community- and family-inclusive popular education and leadership development. We foster positive, cooperative, and affirmative spaces for our community members to learn, grow, and challenge ourselves and each other.

Currently EMEAC operates school garden programs and supplemental classroom engagements on environmental justice and our afterschool and summer Youth Street Team community outreach and political education program. Our staff are currently working to integrate additional school sites for educators looking for support in starting gardens and sustaining creative, environmental justice curricula and to integrate and expand our two tracks of community outreach and in-school educational experiences. Further, we are working with community based experts in nature-based education, to expand opportunities for our young people, to benefit from outdoor learning in wilderness/conservation spaces.

We broaden awareness in our communities and neighborhoods, in order to usher in a new season of cooperation, a deeper level of community-based power to build a more just and sustainable society.















EMEAC's Place-Based Work in Review

These are all examples of programs and projects that lean directly on the occupation of space and the stability and constancy that provides to members, participants and attendees.

All of these projects and programs can run without having a specific and dedicated site under our management, but it would be much different and likely more challenging.

When we took the Commons on as a project, Cass Corridor was expressing the worst effects of the 2008-2012 Economic Crisis.

The Commons now serves as an archive of a decade of place-based power building against the incinerator, against water shutoffs, against Emergency Management and the capture of our water system. The Commons holds a collective memory of environmental justice organizing which propels us into this new era of heightened contradictions.



4605 the COMMONS

ORGANIZATIONS IN THE COMMONS

The Cass Commons serves as a sanctuary for social justice organizations and an organizing hub for many of our environmental and climate justice initiatives. As a shared meeting site, the Commons facilitates power-building in our community through initiatives like the Detroit Movement Center, a health and wellness initiative, the Youth Initiative in Education and Leadership Development (YIELD) program and other youth camps, and the Social Ecologies Project, a collaborative community advisory process. The Commons serves as home to amazing organizations like the Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice, The Wisdom Institute, the South East Michigan Producers Association, Wayne Curtis Art Studio, the City of Detroit Reparations Task Force, and many more.

COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP SINCE 2012

SUGAR LAW CENTER FOR ECONOMIC & SOCIAL JUSTICE

wisdom Institute
Lessons in life, Learning and Spirit.™

Bellissima Sanctuary

SEMPA

East Michigan Environmental Action Council
emeac.org | @frontlinedetroit

wanyakazi

Semester in DETROIT
SINCE 2009
semesterindetroit.com

QIFLOW massage & BODYWORK

MALCOLM X DAY DETROIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Commons Use & Impact Survey

Prompt Language: "Please fill out this brief form to give us a documented understanding of how the Commons and your use of the space impacts your work. The purpose of this survey and following conversations is to present our broader community and movement with the study of an example of a community controlled center for organizing and power-building. Typically when renting or co-hosting, we ask our organizational partner and community members to fill out a similar questionnaire, as a rough aggregate of the derived data helps us to continue to fund the space and represent the various and inspiring uses of the building by our community. The responses here will be used, with your consent in follow-up, in our mini-manual on contemporary urban EJ organizing focused on place-based organizing and community-centres as well as youth and intergenerational work."

"place-based organizing is very important to our work. Having a physical location like the Commons creates a consistent and accessible anchor for our community. A central space builds trust. People know where to find us, how to gather, and that they will be welcomed. It also allows us to weave together organizing, training, and healing in one place, which deepens engagement and strengthens long-term base-building. Without a reliable space, much of our outreach would feel fragmented. With it, we are able to create continuity, build stronger relationships, and nurture the kind of community power that sustains advocacy and healing justice work."

CICELY ALLEN, WISDOM INSTITUTE



PARTNER ORGS WE TALKED TO

The General Baker Institute
UMOJA Village
THe Neighborhood Association
Sugar Law Center
Bryce Detroit
Wayne Curtis Studio
Black Oaks Center

"Confronting gentrification creates the imperative: We need to secure as much as possible. The more we secure the less space is vulnerable. If one's vision is scalable then at a certain point we must scale"

Bryce Detroit, Community Based Developer EMEAC Member

"The whole community and the whole environment here is productive. The whole commons fits. The Commons plays a very important part in my life. It's a spiritual contribution that I *get from* this place, The Commons. Being here helps me and keeps me going."

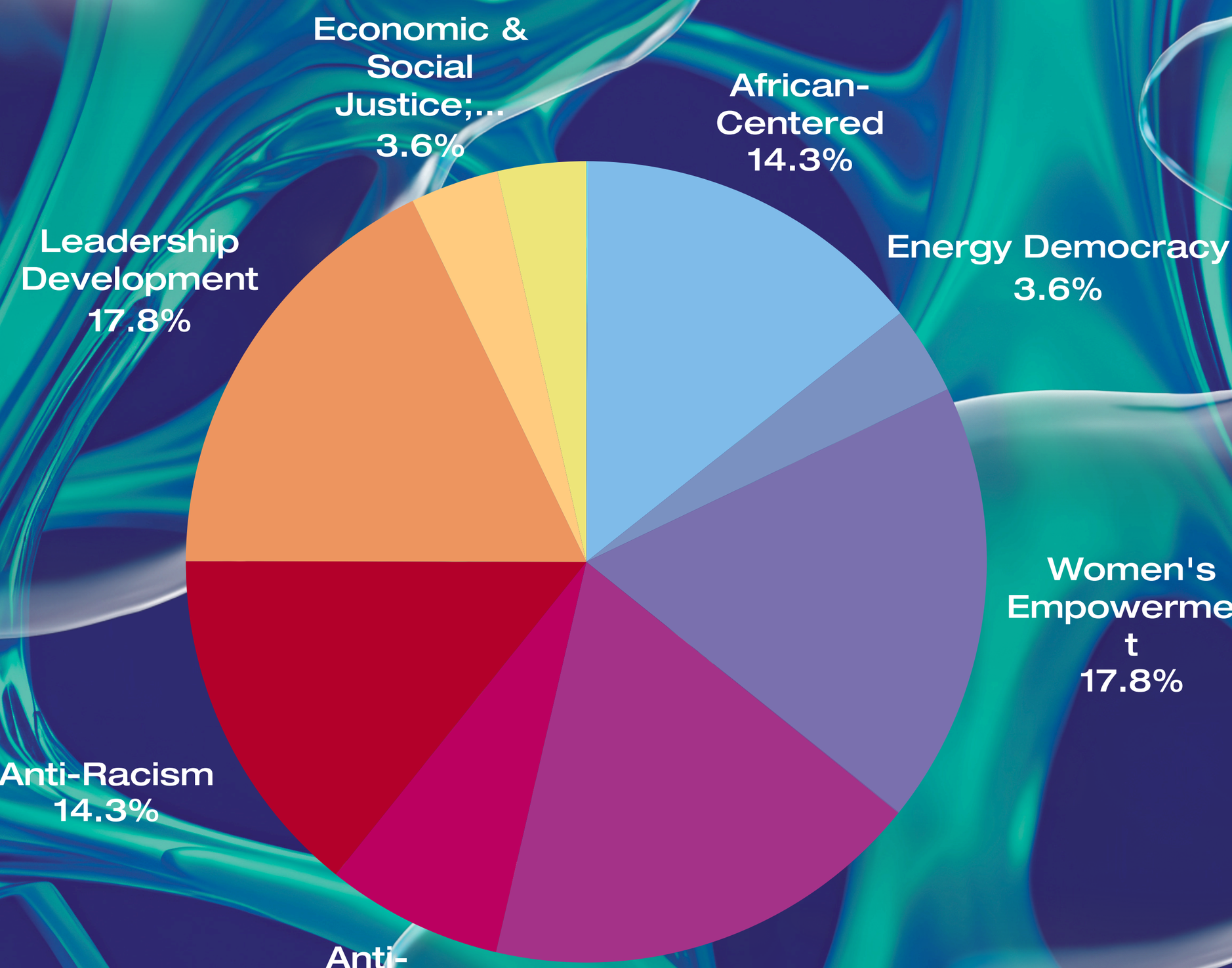
Wayne Curtis, EMEAC Member

MODELS WE STUDY

Canadian Indigenous friendship centres
New Afrikan Independence movements
Schools for the Chiapas (Mexico)
MST Brazil Landless Workers Movement
Economic Freedom Fighters (South Africa)
Comite Dialogo Ambiental (Puerto Rico)
Picaris Pueblo (New Mexico)
Rebuild Foundation (Chicago)
Breathing Room (Chicago)
Black Oaks Center (Pembroke, IL)
Ojibwe Nature Center (Windsor, ON)
Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership (Kalamazoo)

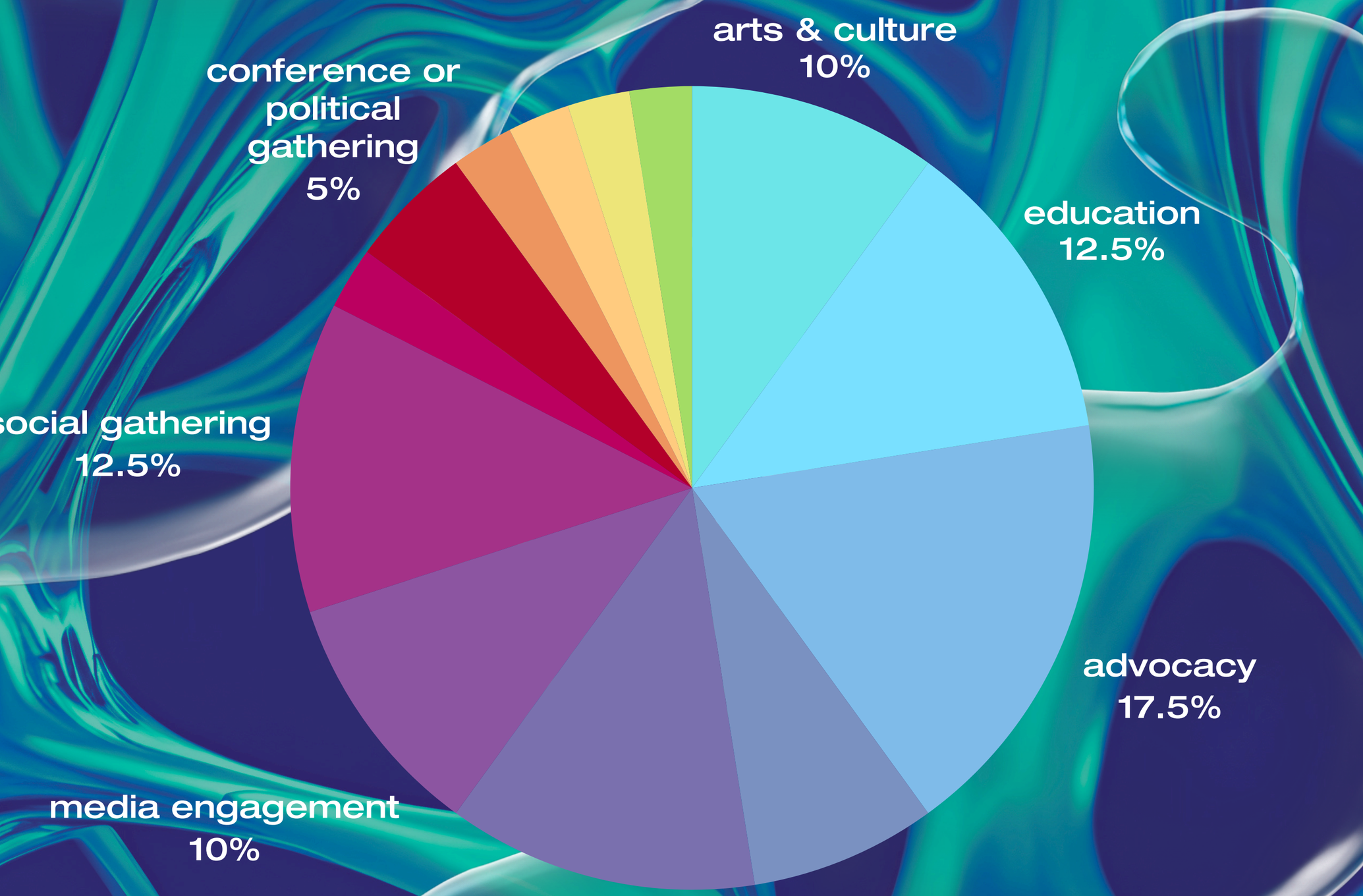
our core themes

- indigenous sovereignty
- Anti-War/Anti-Militarism
- African-Centered
- Energy Democracy
- Women's Empowerment
- Food Sovereignty
- Community Development
- Anti-capitalism/Socialism/Re...
- Anti-Racism
- Leadership Development
- Economic & Social Justice;...
- Domestic and Sexual Violen...



our areas of work

- arts & culture
- education
- advocacy
- community organizing meeting
- sacred ritual
- media engagement
- social gathering
- culinary experience
- conference or political gathering
- sentuality, healing, health and wellbeing, retreats and training
- know your rights trainings; legal advocacy
- community resource (clothing closet)
- retreats, healing experiences



Is yours a base-building organization?

yes

no

Is your organizations leadership and staff gender-inclusive?

yes

working on it

Do you or your staff need or require accessibility accommodations?

yes

no

maybe

Is 50% or more of your leadership/staff BIPOC?

yes

working on it

PLACE BASED ORGANISING

Reasons for holding varieties of physical space in environmental justice organizing:

PLACELESSNESS AND HOMELESSNESS

our community has been subjected to the violence of displacement and being uprooted, when our organizations are also subject to instability and placelessness, this can make it difficult for our members to engage in a high-trust way

BEING ROOTED IN AN ECOSYSTEM

we aim to develop relationships and engagements with community that provide for the needs of our people and being able to locate and identify with a space of abundance and belonging serves to communicate and facilitate that commitment to our people without having to even always speak the words; it's a way of showing up already

MODELING THE POLITICS WE ADVOCATE

electrification and solar energy are pertinent examples for how building can serve as sites of creativity and experimentation of our prefigurative governance and putting our political into practice

- *Place* as a generative belonging, adds to the dignity and safety of our community and of our collective work in a fraught political climate

SITE-BASED VS PLACE-BASED

Distinctions and Clarifications

A **site is a technical utility** having to do with having physical space to exercise particular functions like storage, gathering, office space. **Place, in the sense of organizing, has to do with the meaning that a space gives to a collective work or sensibility**, this can be identity, belonging, duty, collaboration, co-ownership, etc. A commons is a particular way that a site can go from being a mix-used profit seeking real estate venture, for example, to a collectively managed space that brings organizations into community.

PLACE-BASED ORGANIZING MAY NOT NECESSARILY BE RELATED TO A SITE.

When a group of migrants or refugees form an organization which connects them on the basis of their place of origin and advocates for justice specific to the political climate in their place of origin (e.g. Palestine or Sudan or Phillipines), this is a form of place-based organizing.

Organizers can meet in the homes of members, in a community centre, in a borrowed or shared office space and that site may add very little meaning or identity to their project. They may represent a sense of placelessness that is definitive to their organizing narrative and their power-building claims and may feel no distance between organizers in a city 100 miles away in another home or office who organize under the same banner. Our Cuba solidarity organizing is place-based, but it represents an other-place-base, identity coming from an other place.

Site-based organizing, like organizing against the construction of a condominium or a concrete or asphalt plance in a neighborhood which is not economically enfranchised in the political and economic decision-making, can have everything to do with a specific location and the people may not be organizing around a sense of place or belonging there. They may make place elsewhere up the block. Site based organizing and place-based organizing are distinct and related.

WITH THE SPACE, WE CAN DO WHAT WE WANT TO DO HERE. TEACHING WHAT WE WANT TO TEACH. WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IF WHAT YOU'RE TEACHING IS GOING TO GO AGAINST SOMEONE ELSE'S PHILOSOPHY AND HOW ARE THEY GOING TO REACT TO IT AND KICK YOU OUT. AND THEN WE GET TO CONTROL WHAT HAPPENS WITHIN THIS SPACE HERE. IF SOMEBODY WANTS TO USE THE SPACE AND WE DON'T THINK THAT IT'S APPROPRIATE FOR US, WE DON'T HAVE TO LET THEM DO IT.

– VAL BAKER, GBI

WHY SHOULD WE AS A CLIMATE JUSTICE ORGANIZIATION NOT TAKE ON A SITE?

- A site and the associated costs and responsibilities can eat your programming and organizing budget
- A site needs constant maintenance and upkeep which will constantly disrupt your work flow
- The space will likely not be frequently and consistently used for office and administrative functions at a capacity that justifies cost

WHY SHOULD WE TAKE ON A SITE?

- increased freedom and flexibility in programming, sovereignty & independence
- Stability, an ability to secure processes from flux and displacement
- The ability to project a presence in the community
- The ability to rent out the space for mixed use to generate revenue

"I CAN GO TELL THEM ALL DAY AND THEY CAN'T ENVISION IT. BUT WHEN THEY WALK IN HERE, THEY'RE LIKE, "WHAT THE HELL IS THIS PLACE?" AND IT CHANGES THEIR PERSPECTIVE. THEY CAN ACTUALLY ENVISION SOMETHING DIFFERENT THAT THEY COULDN'T BEFORE BY YOU JUST TALKING TO THEM. IT MAKES IT DIFFERENT: THE FACT THAT YOU CAN TOUCH IT–PHYSICALLY TOUCH IT, YOU DON'T HAVE TO SWIPE–IT AIN'T SOMETHING YOU'RE SWIPING ON THE PHONE, IT'S A PLACE YOU CAN COME SIT DOWN AND YOU CAN SMELL IT AND YOU CAN TOUCH IT. IT INCLUDES ALL YOUR SENSES."

– CAROLYN BAKER (GBI)

THE CONTRADICTION

WHEN WE CEDE SPACE TO THE CAPITALIST STATE & CORPORATE FORCES, WE CONCEDE THE POWER OF PLACES.

WHEN WE HOLD PLACES, WE MAY SACRIFICE OUR ABILITY TO HOLD SPACE POLITICALLY. THIS IS A CONTRADICTION.

Our buildings can be critical assets for our organizing and our programs for the stated reasons, but the rising cost of building maintenance and upkeep, the high costs of utilities, and the high cost of modernization means that often time our organizing and advocacy work is eaten by the budgets of our building and stewardship projects.

We need to rely on dual development and shared stewardship. Create an organizational container specific to the building where the task of those workers is the maintenance and funding of the building.

DO NOT HOLD SPACE ALONE!

WE MADE SURE WE INCLUDED THEM [...] BEFORE WE BUILT ANYTHING, LIKE, HEY, WHAT DO Y'ALL WANT TO SEE HERE? WE'RE THINKING ABOUT DOING THE GARDEN HERE. IF WE WERE TO DO THAT, WHAT VEGETABLES DO Y'ALL WANT? DO Y'ALL WANT A GARDEN? DO Y'ALL WANT FLOWERS OVER HERE? WHAT DO Y'ALL THINK WOULD MAKE THE MOST SENSE? SO WE INCLUDED THEM IN THE DECISION MAKING.

— JERJUAN HOWARD, UMOJA VILLAGE

HOW SHOULD WE TAKE ON A SITE?

1. Sites should be separately managed; create an entity which is operationally separate which has its own staff, even one or two trusted people who manage the site, who fundraise for and finance the site, who can hire cleaners and maintenance
2. Sites should be developed by larger trusted organizations in community who have a longer history and recognizability with community organizing
3. Sites both their occupancy/use and stewardship MUST be shared by several organizations that share the same basic values and overall vision for environmental and climate justice
4. Sites should be used to model just transition and the technologies and politics that we are advocating for broader society, especially for the community or in high visibility areas

"YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HAVE TO GO HAND IN HAND. YOU CAN'T DEVELOP THE KIDS WITHOUT DEVELOPING WHERE THEY LAY THEIR HEAD. IT DOESN'T WORK LIKE THAT. YOU CAN'T DO IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND EITHER: YOU CAN'T DEVELOP A NEIGHBORHOOD AND LEAVE OUT THE KIDS. IT JUST DOESN'T WORK. AND SO WITH THAT, UMOJA VILLAGE AND UMOJA DEBATE LEAGUE TOGETHER, IS KIND OF LIKE THAT PERFECT HARMONY. WE'RE GONNA TEACH ALL THIS STUFF, BUT NOW HERE'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE. SO IT AFFECTS THE WORK BY BEING A REAL LIFE EXAMPLE"

JERJUAN HOWARD, UMOJA VILLAGE



"SO MANY OTHER PEOPLE JUST DON'T HAVE THE OWNERSHIP OF THE THINGS THAT THEY'VE INTERACTED WITH THEIR WHOLE ENTIRE LIVES. YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING? AND NOT OWNERSHIP IN, LIKE, SOME WEIRD CAPITALIST TYPE WAY, BUT JUST, YOU KNOW, SOME SENSE OF CONTROL OF, LIKE, HOW THIS SPACE IS OPERATED. SOME SAY—SO, SOME BELONGING. SO I HOPE THAT WHEN WE SHUT DOWN THE COLDER MONTHS, I HOPE THAT STILL IS AN OVERARCHING IDEA THAT'S BEING SPREAD EVERYWHERE. "THIS IS THIS IS OURS." IT'S OURS TOGETHER AND WE SHOULD BE HAVING SOME SENSE OF BELONGING AND BUILDING OUT WHAT WE WANT IT TO LOOK LIKE AND BENEFITS WE RECEIVE FROM IT"

"WE GOTTA, YOU KNOW, PLANT OUR FEET INTO THIS GROUND AND BUILD. YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING, PERIOD. BUILD AND BUILD FOR US. AND I THINK IF WE DON'T DO THAT, THERE'LL BE SOME DIRECT AND INDIRECT CONSEQUENCES OF SOMEBODY ELSE BUILDING FOR US, AND THAT MIGHT NOT BE WHAT WE WANT"

—JERJUAN HOWARD, UMOJA VILLAGE

