



AMERICAN CLIMATE
LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Faith in Place

faithinplace.org

This guide offers a successful and stepwise model for you to replicate in your community. It is part of a series featuring the award-winning programs from the finalists of the American Climate Leadership Awards 2022 by ecoAmerica.

OVERVIEW

Our project organized, empowered, and mobilized people of faith to advocate for Illinois public policy that centers climate justice. Working in collaboration with our faith partners and Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition allies, we advocated for policy committed to renewable energy paired with investment in the communities that have not historically benefited from the transition to clean energy, i.e., communities of color and communities reliant on fossil fuels industries. In September 2021, these goals were enacted into Illinois law as the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

- 1. The messenger matters.** Hire outreach staff from the communities where they will conduct their outreach and organizing. Outreach staff should live in, reflect, and be fluent in their communities' cultures, values, and contexts. Outreach staff become trusted local messengers, which creates more effective connections that result in increased organizing outcomes.
- 2. Get in where you fit in.** Meet Green Teams where they are in terms of their current capacity, skill sets, and environmental awareness. Public policy advocacy can be a difficult step for many; do not engage too early, but rather consider another entry point. When members are ready to participate in advocacy, invite them to do so. Facilitate Green Team members' advancement "up the ladder" to advocacy.
- 3. Coaching.** Green Teams can fail without consistent and effective coaching. Celebrate successes.
- 4. Meaningful opportunities.** Seek out opportunities (e.g., Listen, Lead, Share) to learn from Green Teams about what is important for them and their communities. Practice active listening.
- 5. Find allies.** Join in coalition with allies from labor, business, the environmental movement, and others.

Faith in Place is an ACLA 2022 Finalist. For more information and replication guides, go to ecoAmerica.org.