



ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019

Wisconsin Action Fellows at the State Capitol



**ALLIANCE FOR
CLIMATE EDUCATION**



LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LEAH QUSBA

This year marks my 10th year serving the mission of ACE, and I am humbled and thrilled to take on a new role this year as Executive Director—at a moment when our work is more critical than ever. Building on the incredible momentum of our outgoing Executive Director, Matt Lappé, this year marks a new era of growth and a significant evolution of our work.

We recently celebrated our 10-year anniversary as an organization, and in those 10 years, ACE has invested deeply in educating, training and empowering a generation of youth climate advocates. The three million young people we have engaged with our work are now leading the climate justice movement: [organizing strikes](#), [running for office and winning](#), calling on [2020 Presidential candidates to act on the climate crisis](#) on national television, and [suing the federal government](#) for climate inaction. It is clear that our investment in young people is having an immediate impact now, as well as guaranteeing a new generation of lifelong climate citizens who will continue to lead on climate change and clean energy in perpetuity.

At the same time, there is so much work yet to be done. Back in 2016, ACE came to a crossroads as climate denial reached the highest levels of our government. We decided to reevaluate our role in the climate movement and made several strategic decisions to expand our work. As a result, we have evolved our programs to operate at the nexus of the youth climate movement and democracy. After several years of investing in rigorous research to test our approach, we have successfully built a set of program offerings that blend cost-efficiency, rigor, scale, and measurable impact—all leading to the parallel goals of awakening a generation to the climate crisis, and using that awakening moment to increase diverse youth participation in our democracy.

My own journey to this work inspires my resolve to do all that we can during this critical window of opportunity. I grew up in the “Paper Valley,” a northeastern Wisconsin community on the banks of the Fox River with the highest concentration of paper mills in the world. As a high schooler, my hometown was designated as an EPA Superfund Site after 100 years of unregulated dumping by the paper industry. At the time, I had no way to express my anger and grief, or to organize with my peers to fight back. I felt marginalized, defeated, and alone.

Just 10 years later, I found my home at ACE—an organization with a mission to address just what I had so desperately needed as a teen—to awaken a new generation to a planetary emergency and empower them to take action.

Now, 10 years later still, scientists say we have just over a decade to act on climate change at a scale and speed that humanity is perhaps not yet able to conceptualize. And if we are to succeed, young people will most certainly be at the center of that success with their unique moral authority and power that they have demonstrated again and again. We will only succeed if we work diligently to make sure this generation has the opportunity to learn about what the climate crisis is, coupled with an immediate invitation to join the climate movement that they must lead. ACE’s work accomplishes just that, and more.

This year, ACE educated nearly 400,000 young people across the US on the science, impacts, and solutions of climate change through our flagship education program, Our Climate Our Future. We used that education moment as our first organizing opportunity to grow our movement. Our Youth Action Network—hundreds of thousands of youth strong—joined the Youth Climate Strikes, held their leaders accountable to meaningful climate solutions, and pushed climate change up the priority list for voters. ACE’s Our Climate Our Vote campaign registered thousands of first-time, diverse youth voters and reached more than 3.7 million young people, asking them to turn out to vote for climate leadership in 2018.

As I start my second decade with ACE, I know that it will be my last—because I have more hope than ever that another future is possible and that ACE’s work is absolutely critical to that reality. I hope you are as inspired as I am as you learn more about our work in the pages to come. We are launching into the year ahead, together with each of you, as 22 million young people become eligible to vote—and we double down on our efforts to activate a generation to use their powerful voices and votes to demand immediate, meaningful climate action from our leaders.

2018-19 SCHOOL YEAR IMPACT

364k

Students educated with
Our Climate Our Future

18k

Teachers supported to
teach climate science

3.7M

Young voters asked to vote for
climate leadership

ALL-TIME IMPACT

3M+

Students educated about
climate change, sparking
student action nationwide

285k

Members of
Youth Action Network
in all 50 states

1M+

Actions taken
by ACE youth

“IT ALL STARTED FROM JOINING ACE’S AFTER SCHOOL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM WITH MY FRIENDS AND NOW IT HAS SET THE COURSE FOR MY LIFE. I STARTED LEARNING ABOUT HOW CLIMATE CHANGE RELATES TO SOCIAL JUSTICE IN A WAY I DIDN’T RECOGNIZE AT ALL AND AFTER LEARNING ABOUT THAT INITIALLY I STARTED SEEING IN NEW YORK CITY THE WAYS THAT ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM MANIFESTED. IT’S BEEN A CRAZY JOURNEY SINCE THEN. SINCE MY TIME WITH ACE, I HAVE BEEN A PLAINTIFF ON A LAWSUIT SUING THE U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR FAILING TO PROTECT YOUNG PEOPLE FROM CLIMATE CHANGE AND PERPETUATING THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CRISIS. I NOW GO TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON WITH A FULL TUITION SCHOLARSHIP BECAUSE OF MY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY WORK. CONSIDERING THAT YOUNG PEOPLE REALLY ARE KEY TO SOLVING THE CLIMATE CRISIS, WE HAVE THE MOST URGENCY IN OUR HEARTS.”

- Vic Barrett,
ACE Action Fellow Alum and Activist of the Decade



FEATURED PROJECTS & CAMPAIGNS



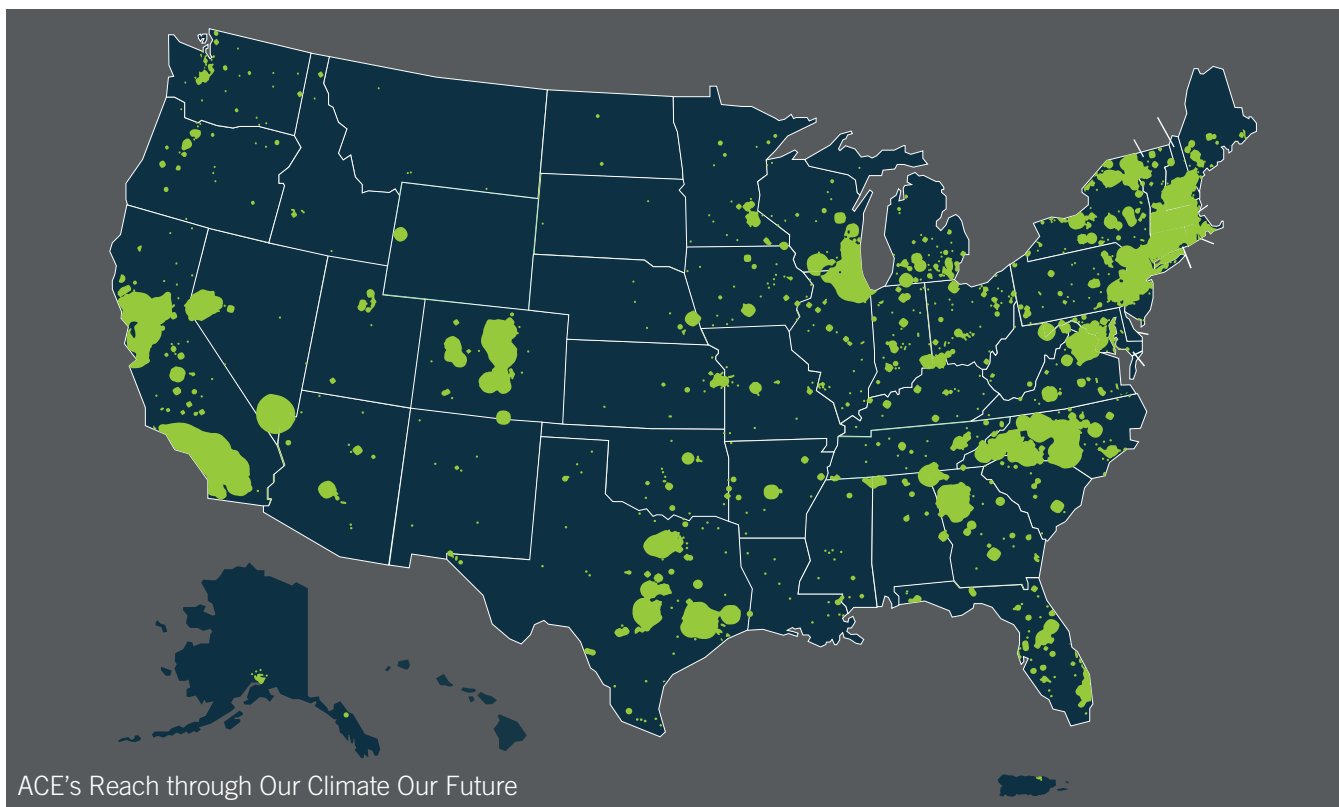
MOBILIZING YOUNG CLIMATE VOTERS



ACE Action Fellows at the #VoteTogether rally they organized in North Carolina

ACE launched the [Our Climate Our Vote](#) campaign to register and turn out young climate voters in the 2018 midterm elections. ACE reached over 3.7 million young people through social media; personally contacted more than 350,000 prospective youth voters; inspired 3,300 youth in 12 key states to mobilize peers for civic engagement; and registered more than 5,300 first-time youth climate voters, over

half in Florida. Through a randomized controlled trial with the Analyst Institute, we demonstrated that our approach to increase voter turnout among youth was as effective as similar programs and achieved at a lower cost using climate-themed messages, demonstrating the efficacy of our approach as we launch into the 2020 presidential elections when over 22 million young people will be eligible to vote.



1 MILLION STUDENTS REACHED THROUGH OUR CLIMATE OUR FUTURE

Our Climate Our Future is ACE's award-winning, interactive, modular video education resource that educates young people on the science, impacts, and solutions of climate change. The video series is aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and uses the power of peer-to-peer storytelling to humanize climate impacts and inspire students to take action. Students who view Our Climate Our Future are invited

to join with nearly 300,000 members of ACE's Youth Action Network. This year ACE achieved the major milestone of reaching over 1 million students in all 50 states since the program launched in 2016, with 50 percent coming from our top tier geographies, including California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin.



CLASS OF 0000: ZERO EMISSIONS, ZERO EXCUSES, ZERO TIME LEFT, OR ZERO VOTES

The Class of 0000 was a student-led campaign spearheaded by ACE and our Action Fellows that took over the 2019 graduation season for climate action. Hundreds of graduation speakers across the country delivered the same message to our elected leaders in their commencement speeches: Have a plan to get to zero emissions or get zero of our votes. Class of 0000 members (both speakers and

non-speakers) participated in the campaign by taking a variety of actions from registering to vote with the Class of 0000 to lifting up the stories of their fellow graduates on social media. Over 3,400 young people signed up to take action; more than 560 speakers representing 42 states joined the campaign; and youth reached over 87 million through earned and social media.



ACE GAVE ME SO MANY IDEAS AND RESOURCES. IT WAS EXCITING TO SEE SO MANY TEACHERS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY THINKING AND TALKING ABOUT THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.

- Katy Wood, Lincoln School, Providence, RI
ACE Teacher Network Member





ACE Action Fellow April Springer reporting from the Global Climate Action Summit.



YOUTH REPORTING FROM THE GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION SUMMIT

In September 2018, a group of Action Fellows represented ACE at the Global Climate Action Summit, which brought together climate activists and global leaders to plan and commit to addressing the climate crisis. Action Fellows served as youth reporters, interviewing climate change champions to share ideas on solving this crisis, as a part of the Youth Hub within the Summit's Digital Media Zone. ACE youth conducted about a dozen interviews including Hakim Evans who interviewed [Jamie Margolin](#), founder of Zero Hour, Aryaana Khan spoke with [Summit participants](#) about their climate hopes, and Celeste Tinajero interviewed

[UN Youth Envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake](#) and former EPA Administrator [Gina McCarthy](#). We shared this content with our national Youth Action Network as well as climate movement partners. In the lead up to the Summit, Action Fellows called for meaningful climate action as a part of the March for Climate, Jobs & Justice. Action Fellow Maxine Jimenez spoke as a keynote speaker at the “Education: Key to Long Term Action” affiliate event. She shared her personal story about being an immigrant youth of color, her climate activism, and her journey into civic leadership as student president at her university.



TOOLS FOR TEACHING CLIMATE CHANGE

Last summer, ACE partnered with the National Center for Science Education and George Mason University to offer a five-part professional development webinar series [Turning Misinformation into Educational Opportunity](#), which was designed to support teachers in identifying climate denial propaganda disseminated by fossil fuel interests and provide those teachers with tools to introduce climate education based on consensus science. Nearly 200 teachers across the country participated in the series learning about scientific consensus on climate change, using climate models in the classroom, local climate impacts and more. We created a social media video series [Teacher Talk](#) to feature teachers bringing climate change into the classroom and inspire peer educators. ACE also expanded its lesson plan series,

adding three new customized resources: [Agriculture and Climate Change](#), [Coal Ash Dumping: A Problem-Based Learning Exercise](#), and [Introduction to Climate Justice](#). These lesson plans accompany our Youth & Climate video series featuring young people highlighting climate change impacts on agriculture in Georgia, discussing the justice impacts of coal ash on rural North Carolina communities, and sharing the disproportionate effect of air pollution on communities in the southside of Chicago.

Finally, ACE hosted its 4th annual Climate Teach-in during Earth Week featuring Alexandria Villaseñor founder of Earth Uprising, Rose Strauss a youth organizer fighting for a Green New Deal, and Scott Denning a renowned climate scientist.



ACE Action Fellow Kaniyah Purcell presenting on climate justice



ACE Action Fellows discuss a Green New Deal with Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes.



ADVOCATING FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

This winter and spring, ACE Action Fellows organized youth-led actions in support of the Green New Deal, calling on local governments to adopt resolutions in support of this ambitious, comprehensive national policy platform to address climate change. ACE's North Carolina Action Fellows called on the city of Raleigh to adopt an energy justice resolution, and Action Fellows in Milwaukee

successfully advocated for the passage of a local Green New Deal Resolution by the Milwaukee Common Council.

ACE also mobilized Youth Action Network members in support of a Green New Deal. Youth shared videos on social media explaining the Green New Deal, signed petitions to call for local action, and called on elected leaders to support bold climate policies.

“ACE HAS PLAYED A HUGE ROLE IN MY LIFE. ACE SUPPORTED ME TO RUN MY HIGH SCHOOL'S FIRST-EVER ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB. AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, ACE HELPED ME MAKE CONNECTIONS WITH LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS WHO GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK IN MY DREAM CAREER AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR. OVER THE YEARS, ACE HAS PROVIDED ME WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO SPEAK PUBLICLY ABOUT AND BRING AWARENESS TO THE ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND HOW ALL OF US CAN BE INVOLVED IN SOLUTIONS. ABOVE ALL, ACE PROVIDES US YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A PLATFORM AND CONTINUOUSLY REMINDS ME HOW POWERFUL OUR GENERATION CAN BE IF WE STAND UP AND FIGHT FOR WHAT WE BELIEVE IN.”

- Celeste Tinajero,
ACE Action Fellow Alum





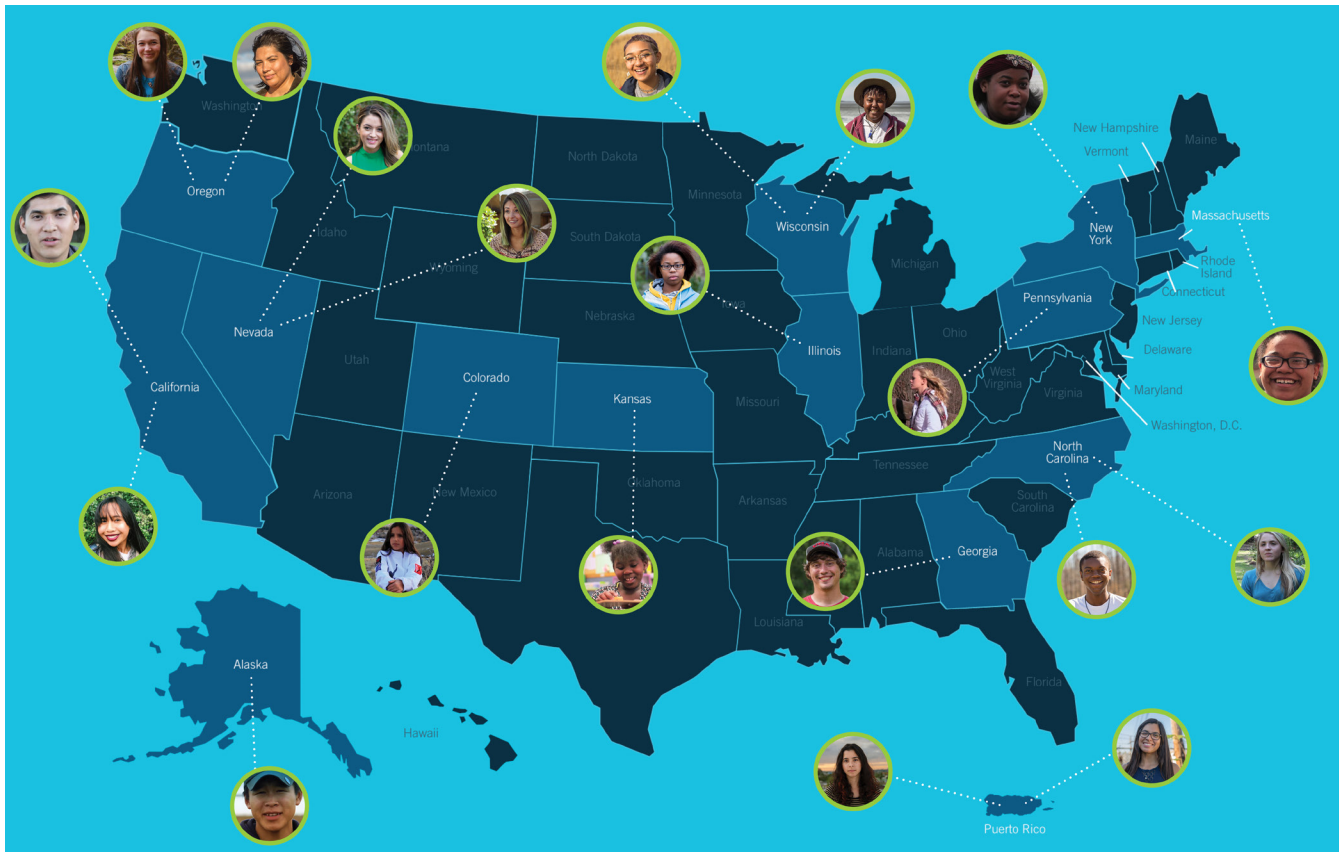
YOUTH CLIMATE LEADERSHIP IN NORTH CAROLINA

Twenty ACE Action Fellows in North Carolina advocated for an equitable, stable climate future. They met with Governor Cooper's office and the Department of Environmental Quality to share their priorities for a just transition to clean energy and were invited to consult about how to best engage youth around the Governor's initiatives to address climate change. Fellows participated in the Historic Thousands on Jones Street Moral March, facilitated a workshop on a Green New Deal at the North Carolina Climate Justice Summit, and

advocated for a local energy justice resolution before the Raleigh City Council. They also helped to mobilize youth within the Energy Justice NC Coalition and spoke before State Senate Committees against legislation enabling Duke Energy to bypass public input to increase rates. Finally, Action Fellows registered and mobilized peers to turnout to vote for the climate in the midterm elections, including organizing a "Party at the Polls" to encourage voter turnout.



North Carolina Action Fellows at the Historic Thousands on J Street Moral March on Raleigh.



Youth & Climate stories from across the country

ELEVATING YOUTH VOICES AND STORIES

ACE harnessed the power of youth storytelling to promote an urgent, hopeful narrative about climate change that inspires peers to take action. This school year, ACE produced and amplified four new video stories of young climate leaders from communities across the country. **Tonyisha Harris**, a student leader at Loyola University in Chicago, shares reflections on climate justice, coal-fired power plants, and air pollution in her neighborhood as well as the vital role of her generation in civic engagement. **Clarissa Roman**, a student at the University of Nevada-Reno, discusses wildfire smoke and its effects on her community and family. **Issac Smith**, a high school student in Raleigh, North Carolina and ACE Action Fellow, discusses the health and financial burdens of climate change and how he has

transformed anger around the climate crisis into action and leadership. **Yamile Salgado**, a high school student in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and ACE Action Fellow, shares the role that art has played in her own climate activism and encourages peers to explore their role within climate solutions.

ACE also produced about a dozen timely short videos which we shared on social media, with the Youth Action Network and with our partners. Topics have been far-ranging, including the **California wildfires**, the **Rise for Climate March**, and how youth responded to the last UN Climate Change Conference held in Poland, COP24. In total, these shorts have received over 2 million views throughout the 2018-19 school year.



Caitlin Gatchalian with ACE Action Fellows at the Global Climate Action Summit



PROFILE: CAITLIN GATCHALIAN, ACE INTERN, YOUTH FUNDRAISING ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER, AND ACTION FELLOW ALUM

I first heard about ACE 14 years ago when a teacher recommended that I apply for the ACE Action Fellowship program. It was one of the best decisions of my life. I learned so much through the Fellowship and had an amazing mentor who taught me about the power of storytelling and using my voice to fight for change. From understanding the science of climate change, I knew that I had to do something for my community. ACE taught me how to lobby, speak at public hearings, and network with people to create collaborations and collectives that aim for a common goal.

A few years later, I decided to launch a Facebook fundraiser to give back to the organization that had

given me so much. As a student at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, I was invited to join the Youth Fundraising Advisory Board to guide ACE's fundraising, gain important fundraising skills, and launch a peer-to-peer campaign. Soon after, I joined ACE as a Development Intern and started helping lead the [Youth Fundraising Advisory Board](#) by organizing workshops and coaching members to launch their fundraising campaigns.

With ACE, I know that my work is not only impactful, but also meaningful in what I'm trying to accomplish. I am very happy to be working for ACE and I'm excited to see what we do together in the future.



“ONE OF THE THINGS I REALLY LIKE ABOUT ACE IS THE CREATIVITY AND THE
CONSTANT GROWTH. YOU NEED TO HAVE CONSTANT SUPPORT FROM FUNDERS
TO ENABLE EXPERIMENTATION TO SEE WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T WORK.
I WILL SUPPORT THAT FOR AS LONG AS I CAN. THE MORE SUPPORT GROUPS LIKE
ACE HAVE, THE MORE ENCOURAGING AND HOPEFUL THE FUTURE IS.”

- Cathi Seligmann,
ACE Supporter of the Decade

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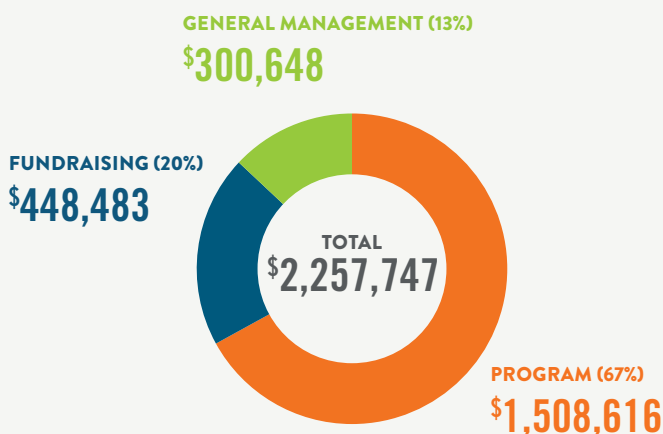
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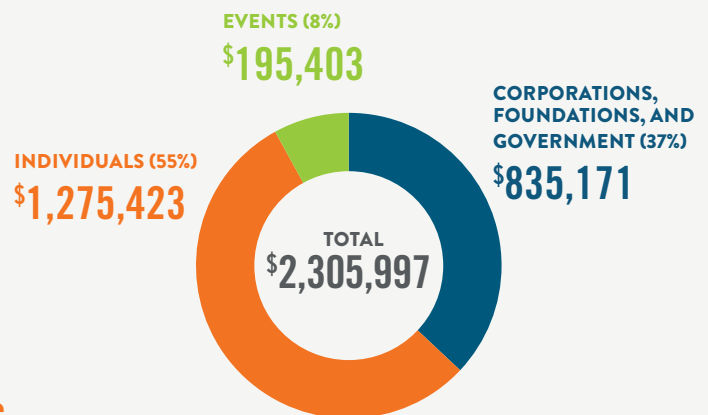
Board Chair Michael Haas at
ACE: 10 Years Young with ACE youth

ACE OPERATING EXPENSES & REVENUE 7/1/18 to 6/30/19*

EXPENSES



REVENUE



*Unaudited financials

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“FOR EVERY TEACHER THAT GETS CONNECTED TO ACE’S CONTENT, CURRICULUM, AND RESOURCES TO HELP STUDENTS UNDERSTAND CLIMATE CHANGE, THE MOVEMENT IS GOING TO CONTINUE TO GROW AND THERE WILL BE LESS DENIAL AND MORE ACTION BEING TAKEN.”

-Leigh Metcalfe, ACE Teacher of the Decade



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