

A microscopic image of plant cells, showing a network of hexagonal and pentagonal cells. Some cells are highlighted in blue, and one cell in the upper left is filled with a dark blue color. The overall shape of the cell cluster is roughly triangular, pointing downwards.

Cooperative Solutions

A Convergence for a Just
and Sustainable Economy

Program

**Aug
23rd**

9AM-6PM

8AM Networking Breakfast and Registration

Laura Jeffrey Academy

(1550 Summit Ave. St. Paul, MN - Parking on Grand)

Convergence Context

Across the Twin Cities, local innovators are advancing socially just and sustainable approaches to community wealth-building. Among many strategies, some include:

- urban farms employing people of color and local youth to increase healthy food access
- community-owned renewable energy and energy efficiency, empowering people from many socioeconomic backgrounds to cut costs of living and create clean energy
- transit-oriented development that makes communities more accessible, especially for those reliant on public transit
- redevelopment of aging industrial sites as vibrant, mixed-use, job-creating communities

These many diverse groups are unleashing a growing local economy rooted in justice, sustainability, and community self-determination. Yet many of these efforts remain fragmented projects, in need of greater technical and logistical support, and are lacking a shared framework for growing and sustaining the green economy. Cooperative Solutions - A Convergence for a Just and Sustainable Economy will catalyze collaboration through mutual support and grow a shared sense of purpose, driven by collective innovation.

Primary objectives:

1. Celebrate and showcase the abundant solutions Twin Cities communities and communities nationwide are already developing in a co-creative space that is rooted in the many cultures that make up our community.
2. Build community and a sense of solidarity among groups working in different communities and on different issues around shared visions for the future
3. Cross-pollinate and provide opportunities for shared learning among:
 1. groups in the Twin Cities working on various green economy solutions
 2. youth leaders nationwide developing green economy solutions in collaboration with their communities
2. Identify common goals, challenges, and ways to work together to grow the green economy
3. Identify new collaborations at the conference to achieve a greater impact around specific issues

Convergence Atmosphere:

- **Inspiring, solutions-oriented, and visionary.** The convergence will recognize the problems our communities face, but will focus on action, creativity, and passion for the better future we are creating.
- **Deeply participatory.** People attend because they are building or want to build a just and sustainable community. People engage in the event as participants, not audience. The convergence models an economy that is built collaboratively from the grassroots.
- **Empowered.** Participants feel agency and collective potential to make important change, and support each other with strategies to make that happen.
- **Connections Across Difference.** Participants engage in listening deeply and share insight across many issues, types of expertise, and personal identities

Convergence Tracks

The Sustainable Food Track explores creating jobs and business opportunities in sustainable agriculture that are accessible to low-income residents, sustaining rural Minnesota, creating healthy food systems, and more. Participating groups include:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Appetite for Change | Robbinsdale Food Coop/ Natural Family Buying Club |
| Community Table Cooperative | St. Olaf Community Campus |
| Hmong American Farmer Association | Urban Oasis |
| LET'S GO Chicago | Women's Environmental Institute |
| Main Street Project | Young People's Action Coalition |
| Sovereign Systems | |
| Brotherhood Inc. | |

The Clean Energy Track explore getting residential energy efficiency to scale in a way that works for everyone, creating community solar opportunities, getting our energy utilities to support clean energy, social justice, local control), and more. Participating groups include:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Common Sense Development LLC | Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light |
| Community Power | North American Water Office |
| Cooperative Energy Futures | Renewable NRG Partners |
| Innovative Power Systems | Sovereign Systems |
| Latino Economic Development Center | |

The Built Environment Track explores how to advance trends in community development to support whole communities that are materially and emotionally self-sustaining, by maximizing community assets through mixed-use design, empowering community engagement, creative financing and socially just economic development, and more. Participating groups include:

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Alliance for Metropolitan Stability | Corcoran Neighborhood Organization |
| Alliance for Sustainability | Divestment Student Network |
| Alliance to Reindustrialize for a Sustainable Economy | Responsible Endowments Coalition |
| BKV Group | Soulardarity |
| | University of MN Student Coop |

Cooperative Solutions Planning Team

Grand Aspirations supports teams of youth in 20 cities nationwide in organizing communities to create green economic opportunities through energy efficiency, green industry, sustainable food, transit access and clean energy.

ARISE supports community groups, technical experts, and issue advocates seeking to design and implement community-focused mixed-use redevelopments that strengthen the economy, communities, and natural resource base of the region.

The **Alliance for Sustainability** brings together citizen, congregational, business and government leaders to work collaboratively to create sustainable communities.

Movement Center for Deep Democracy - supports personal healing and social healing of citizens by working with and through conflict among people within and across the diversity of awareness of how to share the world with each other.

Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota works in collaboration with communities to revitalize traditions of caring for the land and of working together to create healthy environments and just, sustainable economies.

Sponsors and Supporters

Nexus Community Partners builds more engaged and powerful communities of color by supporting community-building initiatives that expand community assets and foster social and human capital.

Waite House programs integrate civic engagement with human services to bring about positive change within our core focus areas of Employment and Training, Health and Nutrition, Youth Development, and Basic Needs.

The **Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)** is dedicated to helping community residents transform distressed neighborhoods into healthy and sustainable communities of choice and opportunity — good places to work, do business and raise children.



Embody

Deep Democracy



Agenda: Saturday August 23, 2014

| Time | Session Name | Content |
|---------------------|--|---|
| 8:00AM -9:00AM | Breakfast Meet-up GYM | As attendees register, gather, and get breakfast , we will connect with each other and set a tone of creative collaboration |
| 9:00AM -10:35AM | Opening Session GYM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tone-set by facilitators and community leaders • Interactive exercises that prepare us to actively participate and think creatively with vision and focus • Frames the exciting challenge we're collaborating around • Orientation to the day |
| 10:45AM- 12:00PM | Living Models - inspiring case studies | <p>These workshops provide concrete examples that give a sense of what is possible, introduce challenges to solve, and get ideas flowing.</p> <p><u>Food:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilient Food Systems and Scaling Up Rural - Project Main Street (Neil Ritchie and (Regi) Haslett Marroquin - F1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Justice Panel - Appetite For Change; Brotherhood Ink, LET'S GO Chicago - F2 • Root Strategies in Community Anchored Enterprise - Compost Coop (Northfield, MN) - Cliff Martin and Helen Forsythe - F3 <p><u>Energy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveraging Utility Franchise Agreements (Minneapolis and beyond) - Timothy DenHerder-Thomas - E1 • An Audacious Journey Towards Sovereign Systems (Mankato, MN) Bukata Hays and Reggie Edwards - E2 • Energy Coaches on Lake Street Corridor (Minneapolis, MN) - Matt Kazinka - E3 <p><u>Built Environment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Beacon of Community Owned Infrastructure (Highland Park, Michigan/Detroit) - Jackson Keoppel-BE1 • How "Stops-for-Us" Redirected Federal Funding for Local Benefit (Minneapolis, MN) - Joan Vanhala-BE2 |
| 12:00PM -12:45PM | Lunch | Eating and talking together with less structure keeps us healthy and happy, builds community, and creates space for new ideas |
| 12:45PM -2:00PM | Solution Strategy Discussions (in 3 Hub Rooms) | <p>These sessions create space for people working on similar projects and issues to share experiences then clarify and improve the strategy around their shared work.</p> <p>Facilitators:</p> <p><u>Food:</u> Sean Gosiewski, Collie Graddick, and Sam Grant</p> <p><u>Energy:</u> George Crocker, Timothy DenHerder-Thomas, and Kristen Eide-Tollefson</p> <p><u>Built Environment:</u> Savannah Duby and Zachary Zweifler</p> |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|--|
| 2:00PM -2:15PM | Quick break | This is the last opportunity for people to propose topics for “Collaboration Planning” in the GYM |
| 2:15PM -3:30PM | Tools For Change - work -shops | <p>These sessions build concrete skills that we can use across all tracks. They are interactive activities that allow practice and experimentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moving from Embodied Apartheid to Embodying Liberation - Embody Deep Democracy; Founder, T. Zea Leguizamon - F1 ● Pathway to a Worker Coop - LET’S GO Chicago; Peter Hoy - F2 ● Businesses in Relationship with Entrepreneurial Thinking - Ralph Jacobson and Jamez Staples - BE1 ● Community-driven Land Use Planning, Advocacy, and Development - Corcoran Neighborhood Association; Eric Gustafson - BE2 ● Emerging Innovative Finance Models for Community Business Development - Guncheon Financial, LLC; Kelly Guncheon - BE3 ● Linking Endowment Campaigns to Visionary Economies: Divestment, Community Investment, and a Just Transition - Greta Neubauer of the Divestment Student Network and Marcie Smith of the Responsible Endowments Coalition - E1 ● How Transformative Shifts in the Past Can Leap-Frog Us into the Future - Children’s Hope International; Jean Lee E2 |
| 3:30PM -3:45PM | Quick Break | During this time, participants should check topics and room assignments for Collaboration Planning |
| 3:45PM -5:00PM | Collaboration Planning (Could be by the most relevant hub room; location determined at the event) | <p>For the closing session, collaborations participants proposed will be developed together to identify resources available, primary goals, timeline, and next steps of action that will grow a just and sustainable local economy.</p> <p>Facilitators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Food</u>: Collie Graddick, Sam Grant, and Lexi Close ● <u>Energy</u>: George Crocker, Timothy DenHerder-Thomas, and Kristen Eide-Tollefson ● <u>Built Environment</u>: Savannah Duby and Zachary Zweifler |
| 5:00PM -6:00PM | Closing Session | The closing session allows synthesis and report-back of the work of the day, including reconnect us to our shared purpose and identifying next steps going forward. Closing inspiration. |
| 6:00PM - 7:00PM | Reception | More time for networking and interaction over snacks for those who wish. |

Creative Opener: 9:00am

Original spoken-word performances by young artists responding to historic separation and a need for alliance in a time of transition.

Nicholas “Nick” Metcalf, MSW, a long-time community activist who has worked, lived, and loved in the LGBTQ community for over 20 years. Nick is an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe located on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota where he grew up. Nick is a first generation college graduate of an immediate family of 13 brothers and sisters and over 100 first cousins, nieces, and nephews- most who continue to reside on the reservation. Nick attended the University of South Dakota for his Bachelors in Science (Math/Psychology), attended Minneapolis School of Massage and Bodywork for a certificate in Massage Therapy, and received his MSW in Family Therapy at Augsburg College. Nick currently works at Minnesota Department of Human Services. Nick works and volunteers in the Twin Cities community for a variety of community projects and initiatives, especially in Communities of Color. Nick is an emerging writer/poet who manages a blog entitled, “Nickizms”. Nick is a proud parent of 2 teenage kids.

Tou SaiKo Lee is a spoken word artist, mentor, hip hop emcee and community organizer residing in St. Paul, Minnesota. He teams up with his grandmother Youa Chang who does the traditional Hmong art of kwv txiaj (Hmong Poetry Chanting) to form the group “Fresh Traditions.” He has a passion for working with and mentoring youth at schools and community centers across the country. He co-founded “The H Project” an Arts for Social Change effort to raise awareness about the Human Rights Violations of Hmong people in the jungles of Laos. Along with emerging Hmong teen he created the Blackbird Elements music project for In Progress to give opportunities for upcoming Hip Hop artists to represent their stories and struggles through songs. He organizes an annual Hip Hop event that includes a huge b-boy jam in July called Boom Bap Village to coincide with the Hmong Sports tournaments. In 2010 he was featured in an online documentary in 2010 through National Public Radio called State of the Re: Union – Twin Cities: Hmong Hip-Hop.

Louis Alemayehu is a writer, educator, activist, poet, father, grandfather of African and Native American heritage. He facilitates workshops on racism, culture, environmental justice and community building. Louis is a co-founder of the *Native Arts Circle*, the oldest Native American artists organization in the Upper Midwest, and is a founding member of the poetry/jazz ensemble, *Ancestor Energy*. Louis works deeply across multiple cultural communities with the *North American Water Office* who’s mission is to phase in modern renewable energy and energy efficiency systems and technologies, and phase out abusive energy practices: with *Ce Tempoxcalli* for Chicano cultural arts and environmental justice; with AfroEco for food security and reclamation of African/African American environmental wisdom and connection to the land; and with *Multicultural Indigenous Academy* for intercultural education. In 2012, Louis returned to the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs (HECUA) as a Community Faculty member where he teaches *Environmental Sustainability*.

My name is **Jake Virden**, i am an emcee and a participator in popular education. i was born in 1985 and raised in N.E. Minneapolis by Leon and Mary Virden. I am proud to be a part of the revolutionary potential and beauty of the multi-racial working class of the mid-west.

Living Models: 10:45am-Noon

FOOD TRACK

Resilient Food Systems and Scaling Up Rural - Project Main Street: Neil Ritchie and (Regi) Haslett Marroquin - F1

Come learn about the Main Street Project that is working to build a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable food system with the power to revitalize rural communities. Learn how combining economic development principles and social justice values with a deep understanding of ecological connectivity, can integrate over 14 agricultural enterprises.

Bios:

Reginaldo (Regi) Haslett-Marroquin began working with Main Street Project in 2006, but has a long history of successful transnational entrepreneurial leadership. He began working on economic development projects with indigenous Guatemalan communities in 1988, and has served as a consultant for the United Nations Development Program's Bureau for Latin America and advisor to the World Council of Indigenous Peoples. He founded the Fair Trade Federation and co-created Peace Coffee, and then went on to work with woodland owners in the Midwest and Guatemala where he organized several stewardship-certified cooperative forestry businesses. Regi was recognized for his work in 1996 when he was named one of the Twin Cities International Citizens of the Year. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Northfield Area Foundation and is an active member of the Rotary Club of Northfield. Regi is the architect of MSP's Sustainable Food and Agriculture program and operates an experimental research and training farm near Northfield.

Niel Ritchie is founder and chief executive officer of Main Street Project. He grew up in Iowa, studied rural sociology at the University of Iowa, and has worked to change the trajectory of U.S. farm and food policy for more than 30 years. Previously, he served as a policy analyst and national organizer at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, and prior to that as executive director of Minnesota PIRG. He also helped found the Minneapolis-based Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, managed a series of statewide and Congressional campaign in Iowa and Minnesota, and was active in the presidential campaign of Congressman Richard Gephardt, a family farm champion. Niel is on the board of directors of the national Rural Community Assistance Partnership and the Alliance for Aviation Across America, a national organization focused on maintaining rural vitality and access to services. In addition, he serves on the steering committee of the National Rural Assembly.

Contact: regi@mainstreetproject.org, nritchie@mainstreetproject.org

Root Strategies in Community Anchored Enterprise - Compost Coop - North Country Community Justice Collaborative: Cliff Martin and Helen Forsythe - F2

Take in the breadth of powerful projects being carried by youth of the North Country Community Collaborative and dive into the inter-workings of their community and worker owned cooperative that collects and processes Northfield's compost from anchor institutions, businesses, and households. Build on your own understanding of community wealth-building through popular education style exploration of the project's characteristics and strategies for financial stability, replicability, and supporting the creation of a culture of connection and cooperation.

Bio:

Cliff Martin and Helen Forsythe are organizers with Young Peoples Action Coalition (A high school radical movement building organization).

Cliff is also a budding organic egg farmer through FTP farms (a youth/worker/community owned cooperative farming operation). He is an organizer, teacher, and strategist at the North Country Community Justice Collaborative (A collaborative of members that pioneers community wealth building strategies for local, sustainable, and systemic change). He also plays movement folk music in the Liberty Orchestra, enjoys breakdancing, and lives everyday in anticipation for the next contra-dance (like a square and swing dance thing).

Helen works with North Country Community Justice Collaborative to move towards local and systemic solutions to the shortcomings of our current economy . She loves to sing, namely folk and bluegrass music. She picks a mean banjo and plays movement folk music with the liberty orchestra. She teaches banjo and piano to folks of all ages.

Contact: Cliff Martin; martiniscliff@gmail.com

Food and Justice Panel - Appetite For Change; Brotherhood Ink, LET'S GO Chicago; Facilitator: Hana Tanberg - F3

Learn about how interlocking food, and business, and personal well being is giving traction to transition and bringing health to communities, through three efforts - Appetite for Change's Fresh Corners Initiative, putting locally grown veg in corner stores and educating the community through growing and cooking - LET'S GO Chicago growing local veg in yards with youth and selling shares of the produce - and Brotherhood Ink, using small business development, including a catering venture, to create pathways to stability and support to young men at risk of being part of the criminal justice system.

Bios:

Hana Tanberg - Facilitator - For the past summer Hana has been involved with Grand Aspirations as a program leader focused on the urban agriculture movement in the Twin Cities. She is also a founding member of BIJA LLC, which is a group focused on developing a hyper local food system through a farm to table model. Hana currently resides in South Minneapolis and will continue to build connections with various organizations and people working towards a green economy.

Molly Costello is a founding member of **LETS GO Chicago**, a youth led program supporting a summer program and a yard sharing network of shared vegetable gardens on private land, among other projects building community and greening the area. She is an artist, activist, and growing agriculturalist. She loves to keep her hands dirty with one material or another and is passionate about agriculture, place-making, and bringing the spirit back into our daily work. Molly currently coordinates the Rogers Park Yard Sharing Network and Community Supported Agriculture operations of LETS GO Chicago and spends a lot of time planting, harvesting, and distributing fresh, local food.

Zoe Hollomon is Project Manager of the **Fresh Corners Initiative**, a 3 year project that will connect North Side growers with corner stores, restaurants, and other places where North Minneapolis residents can access fresh fruits and vegetables. Zoe works on policy, systems and environmental change with community partners (Youth Farm, Afro Eco, Project Sweetie Pie, West Broadway Farmer's Market, Community Table Cooperative, and others). The project is led by youth and other community leaders to develop policies and best practices for increasing access to fresh healthy foods and building the local economy. Before coming to AFC, Zoe was the Enterprise Director at the Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP) in Buffalo, NY for 7 years. She developed *Growing Green Works*, MAP's youth-led social enterprise and taught the business and economics of food to youth as part of their green job training program, *Growing Green*, while heading up all market-based ventures there, including their Mobile Market and a commercial scale aquaponics system.

Brotherhood, Inc. aspires to create a pathway out of poverty, gangs and incarceration by offering comprehensive and culturally-sensitive educational opportunities, social services, legal services and in-house employment all under one roof. Purposes of these programs are to promote the reintegration of young men back into the community who have been, or are at risk of being, part of the criminal justice system. The programs offer a wide range of educational programs so Participants may strengthen and develop their education, life skills, financial management, business skills and entrepreneurial endeavors. Together they develop small businesses (social enterprises) that hire Participants as transitional employees, where they can build a resume and gain work experience. Brotherhood Inc, created "Brotherhood Brew" as their first venture, successfully selling and vending coffee, tea and snacks as a catering venture.

ENERGY TRACK

Leveraging Utility Franchise Agreements - Community Power: Timothy DenHerder-Thomas - E1

Follow the story of Community Power's organizing journey, starting with the primarily youth led campaign - Minneapolis Energy Options - which brought control of our local utilities to the forefront of Minneapolis political dialogue through a grassroots campaign targeting the city's expiring franchise agreements with Xcel Energy and Centerpoint Energy and pushed the city to explore forming its own clean energy utility. Learn why it began and how a small group of community organizers unleashed this idea and built the coalition, community organizations, and relationships to make it happen.

Bio:

Timothy DenHerder-Thomas co-founded Grand Aspirations, which supports teams of youth innovators nationwide to create green economic opportunities for themselves and their communities through energy efficiency, green industry, sustainable food, transit access, and clean energy. Timothy graduated from Macalester College, where he helped secure bold carbon neutrality policies and pioneer the Clean Energy Revolving Fund (CERF), which supports self-financing sustainability projects. From there, he launched Cooperative Energy Futures (www.cooperativeenergyfutures.com) and helped form the Our Power campaign (www.mnourpower.org) to expand access to energy efficiency and clean energy in South Minneapolis. In 2011, Timothy helped convene Minneapolis Energy Options (now Community Power), a coalition effort that is transforming the City of Minneapolis's relationship with Xcel Energy and Centerpoint Energy to build a new foundation for greater community and city control over energy decisions.

Contact: Timothy DenHerder-Thomas; timothydht@gmail.com

An Audacious Journey Towards Sovereign Systems - Sovereign Systems: Bukata Hays and Reggie Edwards - E2

Join Sovereign Systems co-founders for a discussion exploring an ongoing “Audacious Journey” to bring sovereignty into the lives of low to moderate-income people via renewable energy. The presenters will discuss their journey to leverage the collective power of low to moderate-income people to initiate renewable energy projects. Walk their vision, struggles with agencies and policies, projects, and strategies moving forward with small wind and solar projects to large scale ventures.

Bio:

Bukata Hays co-founded Sovereign Systems, LLC with Reggie Edwards in 2010. Bukata also serves as the Executive Director of a community-based non-profit which focuses on proactively addressing demographic changes and inclusion. As Executive Director, he has worked with several districts around educational equity. Prior to this role, he serves as a department coordinator, multicultural recruiter and college Sociology instructor at a small, Midwestern, private, Liberal Arts Lutheran college for 6 years. Bukata is a member of or on the board of numerous organizations in Mankato, including the NAACP (President).

Reggie Edwards, co-founder of Sovereign systems, brings all this business, government and educational training to bare to “bring sovereignty to the lives of low to moderate income people through business development, particularly through renewable energy, nutritional water, and technology investments. He has spent the last 14 years in government executive leadership and 4 years prior in management in the private sector, and has helped with the Midwest renewable energy valley economic development strategy. He is now using education to learn more about organization and systems dynamics.

Contact: Bukata Hays; sovsystems.bukata@gmail.com

Energy Coaches on Lake Street Corridor - Latino Economic Development Center, Lake Street Council, Metro Clean Energy Resource Team (Metro CERT): Matt Kazinka - E3

Learn about the potential for small businesses to reduce energy usage and improve their bottom line together at the same time and gain insight into the mindset of small business owners (particularly immigrant business owners) and the barriers for them to considering energy efficiency as a viable option.

Bio:

Matt Kazinka has worked closely with partners in South Minneapolis to design and practice models for engaging small business owners in clean energy solutions. As the Green Initiative Coordinator at the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC), Matt engaged immigrant business owners on the diverse commercial corridor of Lake Street in the resources and opportunities available for them to save money through energy efficiency. As a result, he and several others at partner organizations Lake Street Council and Metro CERT have developed a pilot model for coaching small business owners to invest in energy upgrades in their business, which is now being launched and tested across Minneapolis. Matt was also a co-founder of Grand Aspirations in 2008, which has given him a means for supporting and replicating similar models for building the green economy in communities across the country.

Contact: mkazinka@gmail.com

BUILT ENVIRONMENT TRACK

A Beacon of Community Owned Infrastructure - Soulardarity: Jackson Koepfel - BE1

Discover a new definition of infrastructure as you learn how Soulardarity flipped the crisis of darkness into opportunity, when over 1000 of the city's streetlights were decommissioned and removed by the local utility of Highland Park, MI within Detroit. See how solar streetlight installation is being used as a tool to build the social and organizational power for Highland Parkers to address the deeper issue of ownership, which underlies the city's history.

Bio:

Jackson Koepfel grew up in New York City, and went to school at Oberlin College in Ohio. He has supported direct action work on fossil fuel resistance. After coming to Highland Park in the summer of 2012, he took technical trainings and hands-on courses in solar electric through the Midwest Renewable Energy Association. He's working on Soulardarity out of a belief that people need alternatives to fossil fuels, and that social justice is a necessary dimension of those alternatives.

Contact: jackson.soulardarity@gmail.com

How “Stops for Us” Redirected Federal Funding for Local Benefit - Alliance for Metropolitan Stability: Joan Vanhala - BE2

Learn how the Stops for Us campaign brought in millions of additional investment on the Green Line, Central Light Rail Corridor, through community led efforts that leveraged the Principles of Environmental Justice and Federal level policies to secure 3 more stops in environmental justice communities. Learn about the community organizing strategies employed with East University Avenue – the historic Rondo Community and the adjacent Asian small businesses to grow community agency and changing federal transit evaluation measures.

Bio:

Joan Vanhala joined the Alliance in February 2008 as a coalition organizer. Joan has an accomplished career that includes: expertise in community organizing to achieve lasting results through effective partnerships; leadership development to sustain organizing efforts for long-term community strength; and the inclusion of racial equity as a necessary component of grassroots community development. Her previous work experience includes organizing a restorative justice program in Seward and Longfellow neighborhoods, grassroots leadership development at Family & Children’s Service, and organizing diverse communities in the Phillips neighborhood. Joan has a degree in Community Organizing, Leadership Development: Methods and Practices from Metropolitan State University. Joan serves as the lead staff person on supporting local environmental justice communities along planned transitways by providing technical and organizing assistance on how to leverage community benefits from these major transportation infrastructure investments.

Contact: joan@metrostability.org

Solution Strategy Discussions: 12:45-2pm

Solution Strategy Discussions will be broken into the three tracks (Energy, Food, and Built Environment) from which participants will engage in facilitated discussions around specific goals relevant to that track. Within these sub-groups, facilitators will support the group in identifying best practices, major barriers, changes needed, and groups and resources available to work on them for specific community solutions. **Facilitators:**

FOOD TRACK - F1

Collie Graddick, is a second generation African-American organic farmer and works for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Collie is the Co-Founder of the Community Table Cooperative and serves on the boards of Gardening Matters, Women’s Environmental Institute and Alliance for Sustainability.

Sam Grant is a regenerative organizer, focused for 30 years now on an approach to organizing that regenerates ecosystems, organizes sustainable and inclusive communities and works to end global apartheid in all forms. As a founder and director of Afro Eco - he is currently focused on development of a local food system in north Minneapolis that seeks to increase community resilience and co-produce

community health and wealth. He has supported development of 25 urban farms, employing 10 urban farmers and 10 young urban agriculture apprentices. Sam Also volunteered for the Environmental Justice Working Group for the City of Minneapolis Climate Action planning process. He worked to incorporate community resilience strategies into that plan. Sam is also founder and organizer for the Movement Center for Deep Democracy, through which he organizes social innovation labs- including a 3 day lab just completed on integrated watershed management and sanitation in Ethiopia. Sam is in the City of Minneapolis community environmental advisory board and the executive committee of the Northstar Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Sean Gosiewski is the Executive Director of the Alliance for Sustainability and has 30 years of experience bringing diverse community leaders together to envision and build sustainable communities. Sean has organized annual Sustainable Communities Conferences since 2002 bringing together 500 to 800 urban and suburban Twin Cities neighborhood leaders to share their successful projects related to energy conservation, community solar, urban agriculture, tree planting, water quality and zero waste. Sean regularly convenes citizen leaders from 20 metro cities with Environmental Commissions to share best practices for becoming climate resilient. The Alliance for Sustainability is also convening a learning community of metro area local food hubs that are linking immigrant and urban farmers to larger markets for their vegetables through aggregation, processing and shared marketing. Sean has also mobilized citizen support for the Metropolitan Council to adopt climate mitigation and adaptation as key goals in their Thrive MSP 2040 Sustainable Regional Development Framework.

Lexy Close is from Johnson City, TN. She spent six years in Worcester, MA studying International Development and Social Change, a program that contained a good mix of anthropology, economics and political science studies. After working internships with international NGOs in Namibia and Tanzania, she decided that jet-setting around the world wasn't going to fix problems abroad or at home. In 2010 she returned to East Tennessee and worked on organic farms. In 2012 she helped found Build It Up East TN, an organization devoted to local food and sustainability. As a part of BIU, she has helped start a new community garden, two edible community parks, and taught numerous workshops on gardening and food preservation.

ENERGY TRACK - F2 + breakouts

George Crocker is Director of the North American Water Office (NAWO), which focuses on electric utility wastes and the disproportionate adverse health and economic impact of electric utility wastes on Indigenous Peoples, People of Color and those who live at subsistence levels. NAWO's mission is to phase in modern renewable energy and energy efficiency systems and technologies, and to phase out destructive electrical generation technologies and obsolete, abusive energy management practices. George has been active as an energy organizer for over 30 years and helped lead the fight over Prairie Island nuclear waste that resulted in the first utility-scale deployment of renewable electrical generation in North America, and was instrumental in advancing utility scale C-BED (Community-Based Energy Development). George is a co-convenor of Minneapolis Energy Options, and currently serves on the Steering Committee for Community Power.

Timothy DenHerder-Thomas co-founded Grand Aspirations, which supports teams of youth innovators nationwide to create green economic opportunities for themselves and their communities through energy efficiency, green industry, sustainable food, transit access, and clean energy. Timothy graduated from Macalester College, where he helped secure bold carbon neutrality policies and pioneer the Clean Energy Revolving Fund (CERF), which supports self-financing sustainability projects. From there, he launched Cooperative Energy Futures (www.cooperativeenergyfutures.com) and helped form the Our

Power campaign (www.mnourpower.org) to expand access to energy efficiency and clean energy in South Minneapolis. In 2011, Timothy helped convene Minneapolis Energy Options (now Community Power), a coalition effort that is transforming the City of Minneapolis's relationship with Xcel Energy and Centerpoint Energy to build a new foundation for greater community and city control over energy decisions.

Kristen Eide-Tollefson is a third generation Minnesota small business person and an academic used bookseller and owner of the Book House in Dinkytown, near the University of Minnesota Campus, since 1976. In 1993 Kristen moved with her husband, Ted, to Florence Township on Lake Pepin. She became involved in energy politics when our township was chosen for an alternative site to Prairie Island, for nuclear waste from the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant in Red Wing. Since 1995 she has lobbied on sustainable and community based energy initiatives including a number of energy planning and siting dockets before the Environmental Quality Board and the Public Utilities Commission. Kristen's heart-work is in grassroots community organizing, having supported a number of communities involved in controversial projects, such as large transmission projects, silica sand, and transportation corridors. Her goal is always to try to move the ball towards transformation of our understanding of our roles and resources as citizens, and to serve the common good.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT TRACK - BE1 + breakouts

Savannah Duby has 8 years of environmental organizing experience, with a focus on youth outreach, and one year of experience community organizing for equitable and sustainable development and livelihood creation in the Twin Cities. In Grand Aspirations, Savannah is a volunteer leader and a program leader for the Twin Cities Summer of Solutions. A core team member of ARISE, Savannah engages the public and constituents around mixed-use sustainable development opportunities and convenes coalition meetings. As the Youth Climate Coordinator at the Will Steger Foundation, Savannah supports Midwest youth networks organizing around climate issues, helps run events, and co-convenes local gatherings with Sam Grant, engaging organizers of different backgrounds to explore cross-movement building and supporting young white organizers in processing issues of privilege and oppression. While in undergraduate education, Savannah was the event planner and outreach coordinator for the Local Foods Coop at Grinnell College.

Zachary Zweifler is the Head of Development at the Alliance to Re-Industrialize for a Sustainable Economy (ARISE), an organization devoted to regional organizing, master planning, and economic development with an emphasis on access to all stakeholders and best known for their work on the Ford Assembly Plant in Saint Paul, MN. Zachary has worked on projects across the country ranging from large scale transportation projects to master planned community development. He is passionate about the redevelopment of retired US industrial centers to ensure their communities re-establish themselves as economic engines while following current smart growth sustainability and equity guidelines.

Tools for Change: 2:15-3:30pm

Moving from Embodied Apartheid to Embodying Liberation - Embody Deep Democracy; Founder, T. Zea Leguizamon - F1

Unlike "Classical Democracy" which focuses on majority rule, Deep Democracy starts and stays with the margins, fostering inclusivity to improve awareness through; rank

awareness, levels of consciousness awareness, margins awareness, and body awareness. It is a philosophical basis for Process Work; a psycho-social-political theory and method. Come explore these tools with your own real world examples and see for yourself how your work is authentically moved in generative ways, not possible with mainstream tools.

Bio:

Zea Leguizamon is a movement specialist. She facilitates change making to improve relationship for couples, and groups blending **Process Oriented Psychology** and Somatic Movement Therapy. Prior she served cross-cultural connections through advocacy in anti-violence community organizations for over 15 years. Her focuses were on domestic, familial, sexual assault, trafficking and hate crime. Zea has culminated 8 years of research in her field of Social Somatics. An emerging field, which aims to improve interpersonal cross-cultural relations by employing embodiment explorations of our soma, meaning the body.

Contact: zea@embodydeepdemocracy.com

Pathway to a Worker Coop - LET'S GO Chicago; Peter Hoy - F2

Become familiar with the steps of establishing a worker coop and learn how to work through some of the friction of internal cooperative business relationships, through the experiences of the Hub Bike Coop and applying Grassroots Ecology.

Bio:

Peter Hoy is a founding member of LETS GO Chicago and future worker-owner of Grassroots Ecology, an emerging cooperative landscaping company. He has been engaged in environmental activism since 2009 and has four years of experience teaching environmental education and solution-based organizing to children, teens, and young adults. When he's not working on community projects, Peter can be found at his day job restoring native ecosystems at the Emily Oaks Nature Center.

Contact: petermhoy@gmail.com

Businesses in Relationship with Entrepreneurial Thinking - Ralph Jacobson and Jamez Staples - BE1

Explore how “thinking like an entrepreneur” can help advance your business and build community, through good negotiation skills and understanding the importance of humbling oneself for success, recognizing that no business stands alone.

Bios:

Ralph Jacobson tried farming early in his life, found it more difficult than he could handle, and retreated to enjoying the easy task of selling solar in Minnesota. He went through a 1-year solar training program in 1979, found that only partly prepared him for a career in solar energy, and went back to college and earned a BS in Materials Science and Engineering at the U of MN. There he got really excited about

photovoltaics. For the past 25 years, he has been creating opportunities in solar for himself and others, by growing a business and serving on the boards of the MN Renewable Energy Society and the MN Solar Energy Industry Association.

Jamez Staples is a Minneapolis, Minnesota native. He is President and CEO of Renewable NRG Partners, a company with a mission of the developing the green infrastructure and development that creates economic opportunity that is inclusive of all minority and cultural groups. Mr. Staples holds an Associate of Arts degree in Business from Normandale Community College and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Marketing Management and Innovation from Concordia College. He is passionate about community economic development, work force enhancements, and environmental sustainability through various means. His hobbies include international travel, skiing, fishing, reading, and participating in community issues directly related to the metropolitan area of North Minneapolis.

Contact: jstaples@renewablenrgpartners.com, ralphj@ips-solar.com

Community-driven Land Use Planning, Advocacy, and Development - Eric Gustafson - BE2

Walk through the process of mixed-use site planning and development, learning from the Lake and Hiawatha Midtown Farmers Market site redevelopment with the neighborhood organizer. Here perspectives on:

- Community engagement, building a vision, and building support
- Working effectively with government agencies and officials
- Cultivating positive relationships with developers
- Opportunities and challenges in funding sustainable projects

Bios:

Eric Gustafson is executive director of the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization and has staffed its land use and housing efforts since 2005. Eric leverages partnerships with residents, government, non-profits, for-profits, academia, artists, and others in pursuit of grassroots community development. He was recently appointed by the Minneapolis City Council to its Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission.

Contact: eric@corcoranneighborhood.org

Emerging Innovative Finance Models for Community Business Development - Kelly Guncheon - BE3

Learn about new creative strategies for community investment in small local businesses, taking off around the US. Compare these models with your own experience and explore how the Twin Cities effort to launch a community investment portal could launch a new support network for young businesses, following the new JOBS Act.

Bio:

Kelly Guncheon is an independent CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER®, owner of Minnetonka-based Guncheon Financial, LLC, and a specialist in socially responsible investments. A Chicago native, he's an habitual volunteer, having started up Westside Progressives and currently working with other community groups such as Urban Homeworks, Habitat for Humanity, Loaves and Fishes, and mn350.org

Contact: kelly@guncheonfinancial.com

Linking Endowment Campaigns to Visionary Economies: Divestment, Community Investment, and a Just Transition - Greta Neubauer and Marcie Smith - E1

Join Greta Neubauer of the Divestment Student Network and Marcie Smith of the Responsible Endowments Coalition to learn about how student fossil fuel divestment campaigners around the U.S. are building community reinvestment demands into existing divestment campaigns. Greta and Marcie will share about the power of community-student campaign partnerships, cooperative financial models for shifting institutional resources into community hands, and an existing project to do this very thing at a national scale. This will be a participatory session that aims to leave participants equipped with a new fluency around cooperative finance as well as insight into coalition-building, collaborative visioning, and campaigning.

Bios:

Greta Neubauer is a rising senior at Middlebury College, where she co-founded the Middlebury's fossil fuel divestment campaign in 2012. She has been involved in national divestment organizing for the past two years as an original member of the Divestment Student Network, organizing national gatherings and solidarity actions as well as participating in national strategic planning. Greta has also worked with 350.org, New Yorkers Against Fracking, Movement Generation and the Climate Justice Alliance. She is from Racine, Wisconsin and looks forward to connecting with people doing Midwest movement work!

Marcie Smith is executive director of the Responsible Endowments Coalition. She is a movement-builder working at the intersection of solidarity economics, climate justice, gender, and the law. She began organizing around climate issues as an undergraduate, where she started her campus's first environmental organization, co-founded the Kentucky Student Environmental Coalition (KSEC), served on the Student Environmental Action Coalition's national council. She served as co-chair of U.S. Youth for Sustainable Development (SustainUS) from 2008 to 2010, becoming deeply involved in international youth organizing within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Over the past four years, Marcie has been focused on supporting sustainable, community-directed, anti-oppressive economies. She has worked on related projects with Grand Aspirations, Energy Action Coalition, the New Economy Coalition, the Sustainable Economies Law Center, Carolina Common Enterprise, and the UNC Center on Poverty, Work, and Opportunity. She is also founder and current chair of Full Circles Foundation (FCF), a holistic, entrepreneurial, grassroots empowerment track for girls in the Southeast.

Contact: marcie@endowmentethics.org, gretaneubauer@gmail.com

How Transformative Shifts in the Past Can Leap-Frog Us into the Future - Jean Lee - E2

Exercise your mind in this fast paced interactive workshop, exploring how urgent ingenuity and collaboration have shifted the course of history in the past. Draw lessons from the space race, the birth of the Internet, and youth leadership development at the Millennium Young People's Congress to troubleshoot barriers and challenges in building new and better futures in our lifetime and beyond, as Astronaut Buzz Aldrin and Astronaut/U.S. Senator Dr. Harrison Schmitt and others have done.

Bio:

Jean Lee is the President, Executive Director of Children's Hope International with over 27 years doing legal advocacy & legislation. She has spent 50 years supporting R & R Family Centers doing shelters, transitional & permanent housing and services. Jean has participated in APAHC, the Housing Consortium of trusted professionals and organizations in all areas of housing, and D-APAC – the Asian Pacific American Caucus & Council. Jean was on a Governor's Sub-Cabinet, presented at the Governor's Conference, conferences of a U.S. President and Vice-President, and many other local, state, national and international conferences. She was an organizer and mentor at the Millennium Young People's World Congress to train next generations of world leaders with Pro Tem U.S. President of the Senate Senator Dan Inouye, the United Nations, King of Morocco and others; and has been working with others to pioneer and build alliances in new frontiers.

Contact: childrenshopeinternational@hotmail.com

Collaboration Planning: 3:45-5:00pm

The final breakout session of the convergence, the Collaboration Planning Sessions will be breakouts based on action ideas proposed by convergence participants during lunch and break times. The sessions will be facilitated by the groups of track facilitators listed in the Solutions Strategy Discussions tracks, as well as some additional volunteer facilitators participating as attendants. Participants will engage a set of focused questions to identify the goals, assets, roles, timeline, process, and message of what they want to do together.

Closing: 5:00-6:00pm

Everyone regroups to share insights and new action steps, and to reflect on the similarities and differences among what people share on the Collaboration Walls. The group will observe emerging patterns of relevant history/context people expressed and trends in people's visions are for what we want to transition our systems to.

Reception 6:00-7:00pm

Thank You

Thank you to [Nexus Community Partners](#) for sponsoring this event. Thank you to [Waite House](#) for providing catering. Thank you to all the organizations on the planning team: [Grand Aspirations](#), [Movement Center For Deep Democracy/AfroEco](#), [Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota](#), [ARISE](#), and the [Alliance for Sustainability](#). Thank you to all the presenters and facilitators who have taken time to help shape the space for empowering constructive dialogue and action planning, that builds on all our different experiences. Thank you to all who attend, who bring valuable insights into the sustainable and just pathways forward.



Embody Deep Democracy



Alliance for Sustainability

Ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just and humane