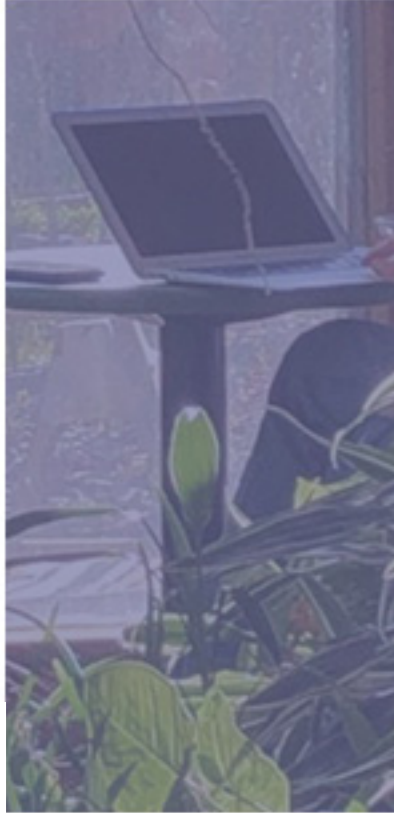
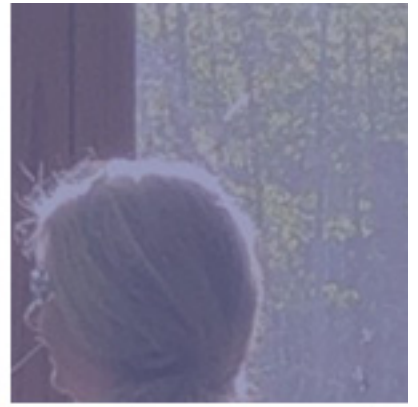




Annual Report 2020

Local Stories, Community Solutions

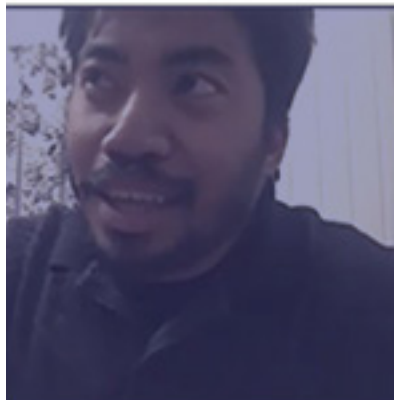


Meet the Team p2
In the last year, the League has added new board members and continued to build strong, diverse leadership.

Together Apart p4
Due to covid-19, we set aside plans... and jumped to supporting and growing our community online.

ARKCCL

ARKANSAS
CITIZENS'
CLIMATE
LEAGUE



The Climate League Team

The Board of Directors is the legal governing body for the League and is made up of volunteers from across Arkansas.



Board Chair
Sonnyah "Sonna" B. Key

Sonna moved from Fort Smith to Springfield, IL in 2020 to become pastor of Parkway Christian Church. She received her Masters of Divinity from Southern Methodist University-Perkins School of Theology.

She is a cross-culturally trained leader and has 20+ years of ministry experience. She is driven by her love for the church, community, and social justice.

Sonna is the founder of PACE and Bridges in Fort Smith and also led the city's Citizens' Climate Lobby chapter.



Administrator
Robert McAfee

Robert is a climatologist who has studied climate change and observed related changes in western Arkansas for more than four decades. He is a member of Citizens' Climate Lobby.

He was appointed by Governor Mike Beebe in 2007 as Climatologist to the Arkansas Governor's Commission on Global Warming.

He is now retired, but still devotes his time to helping to run the League, giving presentations and writing newspaper op-eds about the climate crisis and how we can solve it.

Treasurer
Keaton Smith

Keaton earned a Masters in Business Administration from the UofA.

He works as a bank relationship manager and also serves as an at-large Fayetteville School Board Member.

He is passionate about the Razorbacks, Northwest Arkansas,



Secretary
Fay Knox

For over two decades, Fay has worked at local community development and state-wide public policy nonprofits as development staff.

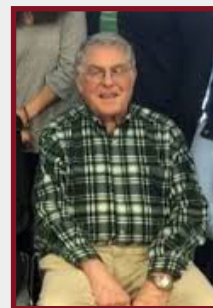
She is committed to helping find the financial resources to provide education, engagement



Director
Charles Sisco

Charles served 2 years in the Air Force during the Vietnam War, and then worked in internal medicine and as an allergy specialist for 23 years in Springdale.

He became interested in climate change through a climatologist who called looking for a long-lost



classmate. He is also on the AR Citizens' First Congress Board.

Director
Chris Balos

Chris is a recognized community leader on climate change in Springdale.

He works as the Marshallese Outreach Coordinator for the Arkansas Support Network, volunteers with the Marshallese Educa-



Director
Paulette Meikle

Paulette is an Associate Dean, Professor of Sociology, and Interim Chair of the Department of Criminal Justice at the UofA-Fort Smith.

She has a Ph.D. in sociology, a masters of philosophy in geography and bachelors in geography.



Education Coord.
Jan Schaper

Jan is passionate about climate solutions, environmental justice, gardening, chocolate and visiting Arkansas State Parks.

She's been involved with the League since 2017 and lives in Russellville with her husband, cat and two dogs.



Jan is also the Citizens' Climate Lobby State Co-coordinator for Arkansas.

arkccl.org | info@arkccl.org | 479.462.8834 | 2610 W Hackett Road, Hackett, AR 72937



A special thank you to our advisory board...



Chair Emeritus
Chris McNamara



Shelley Buonaiuto



Christina May



Bob &
Nancy Brown



Bernadette Devone

The Arkansas Citizens' Climate League is a climate justice non-profit committed to deepening our understanding and application of the Jemez Organizing Principles. Our passion is creating safe spaces for discourse and encouraging, engaging and connecting advocates across race, life-experience, and zipcode.

Building Civic Commitment for Climate Action & Justice

From 2017-19, we focused heavily on identifying emerging leaders and funding individual scholarships to regional and national climate advocacy conferences. We continue to encourage these leaders as they take on issues in their own ways in their own communities. Through our participation in the Arkansas Citizens' First Congress, we collaborate with these leaders in supporting positive environmental, economic, civil rights and education legislation. We also have working relationships with Citizens' Climate Lobby, Police and Community Engagement of Fort Smith, the Central Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith and Parkway Disciples of Christ in Springfield, Illinois.

In 2020 due to covid-19, we set aside plans for an issues listening tour through South Arkansas and jumped to supporting and growing our community online. We pulled together an Earth Day Panel, hosted a "Local Stories, Community Solutions" discussion, as well as a documentary watch and share.

We approach "climate" as a broad unfolding crisis, enveloping bio-destabilization, racism, poverty, educational disparities, and disenfranchisement. It is a crisis demanding immediate action and fundamental change; realities which often operate on different timeframes, but which can be addressed through collaboration and relationships. That is where and how we work.





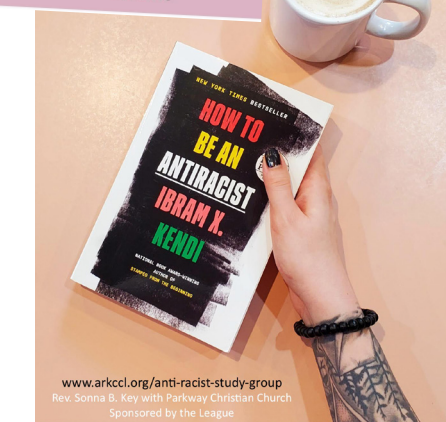
Environmental Justice



Facilitator: Malik Saafir
The intersection of *Faith*
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
TRAINING
October 29, 2020
@
6:30
Zoom

After our “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training”, the League co-sponsored with Parkway Christian Church of Springfield, IL a three-week study group in October based on Ibram X. Kendi’s book “How to Be an Antiracist.” The group was led by Rev. Sonna B. Key, League Board Chair, and offered three different levels of engagement to suit the schedules of its dozens of participants.

On Oct. 29, the League, in partner-



ship with Parkway Christian, sponsored a virtual training for people of faith who desire to become anti-racist. Facilitator Malik Saafir trains education, business, government, and

nonprofit leaders how to fight for human rights.

He spoke about how the New Testament inspires communities to liberate Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

The League is dedicated racial justice, urges individual and community action

George Floyd, another innocent black man, is murdered by policemen. He joins Breonna Taylor, Eric Garner, Philando Castile and countless others, tragedies resulting from systemic racism and oppression. Like climate change we must accept systemic racism as fact because if we don't acknowledge it, how can we begin to heal the injustice of 400 years of violence and racial inequity in this country. We understand that racism has been a driving factor in the climate crisis, as our economic system has in the past objectified and continues to increasingly objectify the environment and the people as resources to be exploited.

At the League, we open connections and conversations among people of all cultures. We support environmental justice and understand that until we all do well, we cannot have a healthy society or healthy communities free from systemic racism.

The solution to stopping these acts of systemic racism must begin with each individual.

At the League we use as our guide the Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing (for Environmental Justice). The six guidelines which direct our actions are:

1. Be inclusive
2. Bottom-up organizing
3. Let people speak for themselves
4. Work together in solidarity and mutuality
5. Build just relations among ourselves
6. Commit to self-transformation

Our hope for the future of our nation and the world rests on all those who are actively committed to acknowledging racism and to doing the challenging, and profoundly rewarding, act of listening, of reconciling and of creating communities and social institutions that foster well being. White people will never be able to truly understand the fear and frustration of people of color subjected to centuries of discrimination and oppression, but those of us who are white can learn to better appreciate the struggle people of color have navigating our white-centric community each and every day, and learn to become effective allies in the struggle.

We will continue our work at the intersection of racism and climate disruption and bring to the forefront justice for the marginalized and the planet.

In solidarity,
The Arkansas Citizens' Climate League

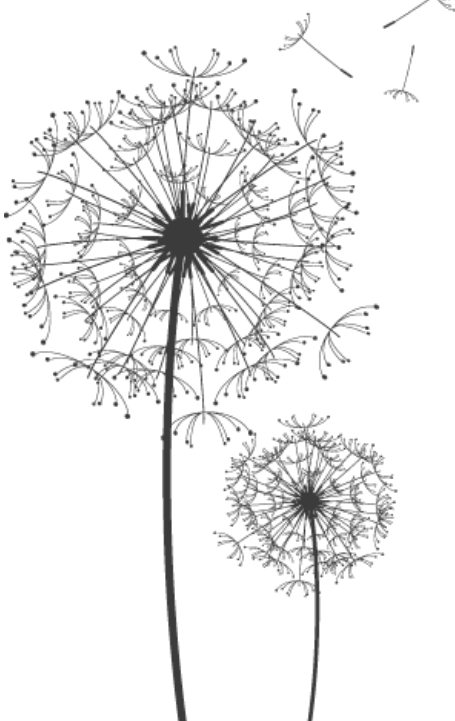


Together Apart Zoom Events

In 2019, The League raised around \$29,000 during our Accord, our annual signature event, and this year we were poised to do even greater things. Then Covid hit us. We had to make tough decisions—hard decisions. We canceled The Climate Accord to protect the health of our team, supporters and community. Then we slashed our budget to the bare bones.

But like a dandelion, we stayed strong. They may look like a weed, and it is often aggressively removed. They are hard to uproot. The top is pulled but the long tap roots remain. They are a force of resilience and resistance.

We decided to re-group, and re-focus. We decided to choose the path of resilience.



We decided to embrace the challenge of building a virtual community. We decided to shift our focus from gathering to connecting. We decided that Covid would not be the end of our story, but the beginning of a new way forward.

We took this opportunity to continue hosting virtual events after our Earth Day event, which around 40 people attended.

Our Climate Justice Event Series sold 104 ticket total with \$775 in donations.

Sept 14 Enviro-Justice Primer: A Conversation About Building Community: Facilitate by Rev. Soniyah "Sonna" B. Key League Board Chair and Senior Pastor of Parkway Christian

Oct. 20 Climate Justice: Local Stories Community Solution: Discussing intersection of race and climate and the disproportionate impacts of climate change globally.

Dec. 8 "Rising Tide: Priced Out of Miami" CBS Documentary: Viewing and discussion on the disproportionate impact of climate change

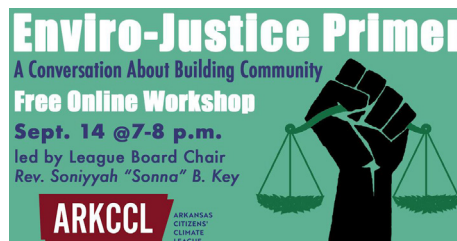
Making these virtual events possible is much more than scheduling a time slot on Zoom; there's the production work involved: recruiting participants, working with them, promoting the event and reaching out to our allies for advice and support.

We want to thank everyone who participated and supported our online events. A special thank you to all our panelists!

Watch Recorded Events at ARK CCL - YouTube



On Earth Day 2020, Climate activist Chris Balos, retired science professor Art Hobson, McElroy House Director Meredith Martin-Moats, and mental health professional Joanna Person-Michener discussed the impacts of collective crisis, climate change, environmental justice and more from their personal experience and professional knowledge.



As the climate crisis continues, we are regularly dealing with natural and social disasters that first and most heavily affect marginalized communities and people of color.

League Board Chair Rev. Soniyah "Sonna" B. Key, gave an overview of the history of the environmental justice movement, and examined practical tools and techniques that we can use to help us better engage environmental justice issues.



How is climate change impacting Arkansans? How can we respond effectively and with compassion to this local and global threat?

Our amazing speakers Sharon Chapman, Paulette Meikle, Svetla Dimitrova, and Fernando Lopez tackled these questions in their informative, insightful, and galvanizing presentations!



At our final event in our 2020 virtual Climate Justice Series, we discussed "Rising Tide: Priced Out of Miami", a CBS documentary focused on the climate gentrification happening right now in Miami.





6

ARKANSAS CITIZENS' CLIMATE LEAGUE

#OurClimateStory

From July 22 to the beginning of August, the League encouraged our supporters and social media follows to share their part of #OurClimateStory as a way to stay engaged while physically apart.

We asked people "What are you seeing and experiencing in your life that's different because of the climate crisis? How do you feel? What actions are you taking? What solutions would you like to see?"

Decide on and create your part of #OurClimateStory. This could be a video, a song, visual art, a poem, a few words, a photo, etc.



Jo Elsen shared on Facebook: "Here's my climate story. We love our honey bees. Right now it's getting too hot. They need flowering plants so they can survive the winter. This is cooled sugar water....Well...it starts out cool." (See top photo)

Marti Olesen shared a poem titled "Letter from Tomorrow Water":

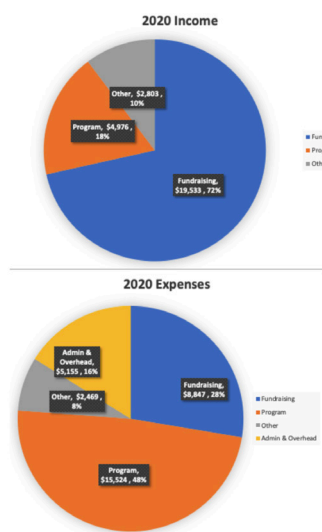
Watercolors sit boxed on the shelf
The colors inside, dull, and opaque.
Where's the water?
That clean easy fluid that brings color to life,
The water, the water.
I remember water.
We had water when I grew up.
There was muddy water in the streets
After rainstorms in summer,
Turquoise water in the Caribbean
As our cruise ship chugged from Haiti to Jamaica
When I was six years old.
Hurricane waters threw that ship ashore,
With siren squalling
Like an indignant cat from the tub.
I remember water.
We used to wash our hair in it,
And lie down, submerged in its warmth
At night before sleeping.
I know, you can't imagine --- such waste,
Such decadence. But it was the ignorance
Of the time. We all shared in it.
Today the watercolors sit on the shelf
And passersby whisper
"Can you imagine? The waste!
They mixed their paints with water.
And we, we buy it when
We can find it, illegally on the black market,
Just for a taste, a sip, a reminder
Of the blue we once shared.



BY THE NUMBERS



*The League saw lost in revenue due to Covid preventing in-person events. In 2019, The League raised around \$29,000 during The Climate Accord, our annual signature event.



Greening the World with Justice: Moving Forward in 2021

“Greetings All,

You made it possible! We wrapped up 2020 with a strong online community despite the Covid pandemic. We have begun to re-envision who we are and what we want to become. We realized the need to expand the work we started in Arkansas. What would happen if we like the dandelion allowed the winds of change to help us spread the good news? Our strength is in our resilience!

Because of you the pandemic did not stop the work of **greening the world with justice**. Reflect with us on our journey this far and beyond:

LOOKING BACK: Our history

From 2015 through 2019 we focused heavily on identifying emerging leaders, funding individual scholarships to regional and national climate advocacy conferences and expanding the diversity and inclusion in our work. The League moved towards working with marginalized communities: meeting with individuals and listening to their interests. Over time relationships emerge, trust happens and the working together begins to address their concerns.

BUILDING UP: Mid-course redirection

In 2020 due to Covid 19, we adjusted our course from in-person community engagement to online community building. You can see on pages 4 - 7 the highlights of our work from last year. We continued collaboration in SE Arkansas and with Citizens' First Congress. Our resource development efforts added new donors and sustaining contributors.

MOVING FORWARD: How we will continue

During 2021 we will confer with individuals from diverse backgrounds to help us better re-imagine how the League will do the work necessary for climate justice: including Board development, more volunteer participation, sustainable resource development, and measurable metrics for our work.

Our motto **green the world with justice** is huge. These five words sum up our approach and our commitment to real measurable actions. Climate change is a broad, unfolding crisis demanding immediate action and fundamental change to assist individuals and communities to become advocates for their own environmental and climate justice matters. We're committed to do the work!

Your continued support helps us realize that the best is yet to come. Our sincerest appreciation to all who have supported the ARKCCL in so many ways. ”

Gratefully yours,
Rev. Soniyah (Sonna) B. Key

“Not all storms come to disrupt your life, some come to clear your path.”
— Anonymous



Rev. Soniyah (Sonna) B. Key
League Chair of the Board

“Our motto green the world with justice is huge . . . our commitment to assist individuals and communities to become their own advocates for . . . justice.”



Nature Unraveled by Paulette Ann Meikle

Meandering Missouri River aches,
Sneezing from the reek of pollutants
Her sneeze echoes way across to Oregon to the
Painted Hills. And they shed a tear, a colossal
tear. The bowels of the Onondaga Lake rumbles
in discomfort from toxic waste, while native
ancestors bow to the nations of the Iroquois.
Earth has lost its innocence, they cry.

The air struggles to breathe as
greenhouse gases permeate.
Mother Nature sighs we love humanity
but do they love us?
This lopsidedness mired in one-sidedness,
an unfolding ecological imbalance.
Trees ask we give our life-sustaining oxygen,
what do you offer in return?

The dew of heaven forms
droplets of diamonds on pure white lilies
In untold reverence, they release a calming
fragrance and butterflies flutter in pleasure.

In this moment of historic quandary,
Skewed by political melodrama
the rhetoric is bold; justice, conservation,
and beauty. We must preserve,
it's the hope for our future generation.

People! People! Play your part!
Ecological justice, one system of giving and
taking. One united clamor for equality, the
bonding of reciprocity; you win, earth grins. You
lose, earth groans, you create, she recreates.
Connected, connected in time and space in
majestic harmony. Will you cooperate?
Signaling love in liberty, liberty in caring, warm
kinship, vitality, resolve, life!

Birds do their thing bonded in ecological
orchestra day after day. Waters of the earth,
solid, liquid, and gas, flowing in all their cycles,
replenishing, life-giving!

Flaming California hills, sweltering intensity,
Flora bowed in reminiscence of their chlorophyll
perfume. Perfume overshadowed by plumes of

ash shocking the tender lungs of sparrows.
With tear-clouded eyes, imperial pigeons
rush southward. Sorrowful as they perch on
parched plains.

Earth unraveled, earth disheveled.
Patterns of temperature and precipitation
reluctantly altered.
The fruit of trees trapped in severed branches.
Resident geckos and squirrels huddle in pain.

Rabbits burrow deep
Chameleons hide behind a big boulder
Trying to resist the heat
Wild bees flee buzzing, Oh
how we miss our spot.

People walking in their own shadows
Seas rising. Relocate, evacuate, they say,
but where to? We are all connected
in temporal space and ecological destinies.

Rivers dredged but not restored
Resident salmon are nostalgic
Remembering times of pristine
meandering flows with their young frolicking
in seaweeds. Floundering flounders reimagine
an existential trail.

Mighty King Solar remains, undaunted
Emitting sturdy golden rays down on
the tattered bounty.

With new energy, we ascend
to the mountain an airy ascent into replenishing
space. Inspired we return, declaring we can
make a change. Together we must fight. We
must persevere. Our ancestors demand it,
justice mandates it and our children deserve it.

We have this audacity, this bodacious audacity
to honor ourselves in preserving the
environment, revering the life-giving intricacies
of ecology. Ecology intertwined within our
bosoms, embedded in our souls, the nurturing
sprout of our being, our virtues, our justice.