

# TISHMAN ENVIRONMENT AND DESIGN CENTER



# ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

A few weeks ago, young people all over the world marched for a global climate strike during the UN Climate Summit to demand that world leaders take decisive action on climate change. These young people, including our New School students, are part of a transformative moment in history when the climate crisis can no longer be ignored and perhaps can no longer be reversed. The Tishman Environment and Design Center is focused, now more than ever, on ways to align with and help catalyze our community to advance climate and environmental justice.

Earlier this year, I participated in the creation of a landmark climate platform, the [Equitable and Just Climate Platform](#), developed through a historic collaboration of Environmental Justice and national environmental organizations. The Tishman Center also joined with our affiliated faculty, students and staff at the New School [to stand with](#) the global group of leaders, universities and governments who have [declared a climate emergency](#). These public commitments reflect our mission to use design, policy and social justice approaches in solidarity with frontline communities advancing climate and environmental justice.

In 2018-2019, The Tishman Center continued working with our partners and the campus community on these global challenges. Earth Week featured a series of programs with new faculty member, Leonardo Figueroa Helland, focused on Indigenous-led activism. The Center also deepened its contributions in the interdisciplinary field of waste and justice with our first Center-led ULEC and with a [national report on waste incinerators](#) and environmental justice with our long-term partner, [GAIA](#). The last year, was an opportunity to begin reflecting on the progress made since our re-launching under Michelle DePass as our first three year strategic plan came to a close. The Center is currently completing an evaluation of the Strategic Plan and preparing our vision for the next three year plan. The Tishman Center also launched a new website which was completed this summer [www.tishmancenter.org](http://www.tishmancenter.org).

Our Director, Joel Towers, is taking a much-deserved sabbatical during the 2019-2020 school year. I will serve as Director alongside, Brian McGrath and Timo Rissanen who continue to serve as Associate Directors. Adrienne Perovich and Mike Harrington remain our steadfast Assistant Directors. We look forward to continue working with you this academic year.

## ANA BAPTISTA

DIRECTOR, TISHMAN ENVIRONMENT AND DESIGN CENTER  
CHAIR, ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

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## WHAT WE DO

*This summer, the Tishman Center updated its mission statement and vision:*

### Mission

The Tishman Environment and Design Center integrates bold design, policy and social justice approaches to tackle the climate crisis and advance environmental justice.

### Vision

We are a collaborative resource center and convenor for environmental justice groups, designers, policy makers, students and faculty that supports and advances bold environmental and climate justice action in accordance with the Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing. We will advance more equitable and just sustainability policies within the university and we will be leaders in the fight for climate justice!

## FACULTY GRANT RECIPIENTS

The Tishman Environment and Design Center supports innovative, interdisciplinary research designed by New School faculty with a core focus on social justice, climate change, and urban systems. In 2018-2019, three faculty members received grants.

### **Oliver Kellhammer, Parsons, Lecturer**



The project focused on bioremediation of styrofoam using mealworms. He collaborated with the Lower Eastside Ecology Center. Through this research, Oliver was able to observe how much foam waste a group of mealworms could eat, what kinds of foam they were more likely to ingest and alternative uses for the leftover foam. He plans to continue this research and utilize its results in practical, scientific and artistic ways.

### **Donna Maione, Parsons, Professor**



The project investigated textile waste. She was interested in the connection of textiles with community building and conducted community based textile reuse workshops. Donna hired students to serve as research assistants and held a number of workshops at a community space in Brooklyn. She was able to help workshop participants become more aware of the issue of textile waste and what they can do personally and in their communities to curb waste.

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## David Smyth, Eugene Lang, Associate Professor

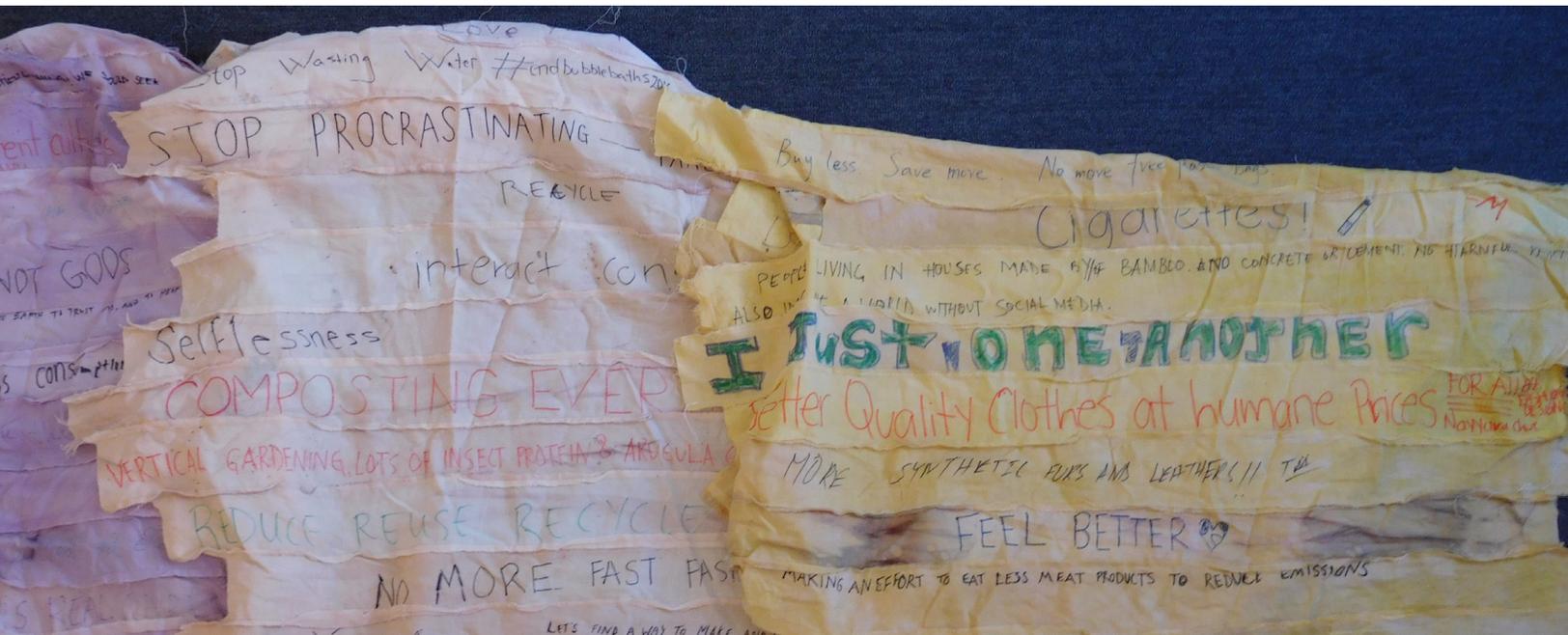


The project focused on how to make science labs more sustainable. Most science labs, for safety reasons, tend to throw away a lot of materials instead of recycle or reuse them. David saw this as very wasteful and wanted to know which materials can actually be reused, repurposed or recycled. She was able to implement processes to recycle and reuse waste materials in the University Center science lab. She plans to continue working on this issue with other universities in order to share information about what works, what other institutions are doing and what could be possible to reduce waste in our teaching laboratories.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Tishman Center is excited to announce the launch of an innovative new leadership program for activists in the Environmental Justice movement. In 2018, we embarked on an assessment of the need for and interest in an environmental justice movement leadership program, surveying and interviewing more than 200 movement leaders. The Northlight Foundation, formerly the Dan and Sheryl Tishman Foundation, invited us to conduct this assessment. From this study, we developed a program designed specifically to support the impact of the Environmental Justice (EJ) movement to respond in a time of growing climate urgency and inequalities. The program seeks to support social movement and organizational effectiveness using a Just Transitions framework. This program is led by faculty members, Dr. Ana Baptista and Dr. Sujatha Jesudason and will be housed at the Tishman Center in collaboration with [Social Movements and Innovation](#).

The program will launch in 2020.



## RESEARCH AND PARTNERSHIPS

### U.S. Municipal Solid Waste Incinerators: An Industry in Decline



In May, The Tishman Center released a [report](#) with the [Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives](#) (GAIA) detailing the economic indicators of the industry's decline and the disproportionate impact on environmental justice communities. An [interactive map](#) was also created to show the prevalence of incinerators sited in environmental justice communities and the amount of toxic pollutants released. The report served in support of local and national campaigns to design alternative,

zero waste systems. The report received wide national and local media coverage including placements in [The Conversation](#), [PBS](#), [VOX](#), and was referenced in Senator Bernie Sanders' Climate Platform in which he referenced the need to invest in alternative waste systems that divert subsidies from unjust incinerator industries.

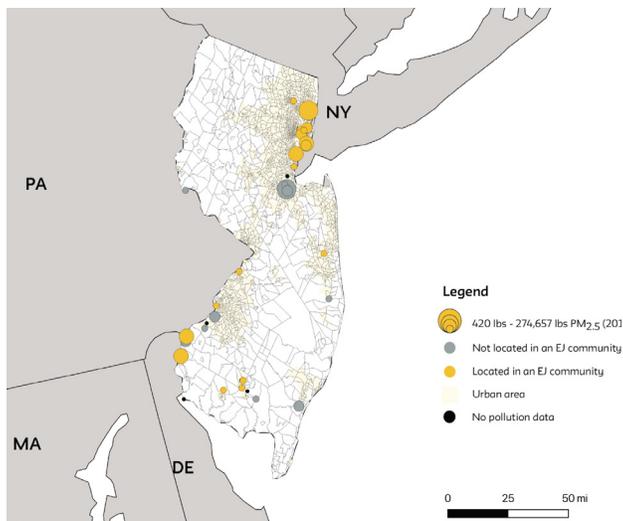
### Gulf Coast Fund Archive Website



The Gulf Coast Fund Website is an archival project of the Tishman Center. This project archives the best practices of the Gulf Coast Fund— a grantmaking fund built to create an inclusive, bottom-up disaster response in the wake of the 2005 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The Gulf Coast Fund created

a network of local, grassroots organizations and activists who continued on after the 2005 hurricanes to help disburse pooled philanthropic funds to front-line communities. Michelle DePass acted as co-founder of GCF and provided insights and feedback on the archival project. The [website](#) includes an [interactive timeline](#) documenting the major milestones and historical context of the Gulf Coast Fund and a tool kit with links to resources for groups or communities looking to apply a similar model to their own disaster preparedness or recovery efforts.

## Climate Mitigation and Equity Report



Why Equity is Critical for Effective Climate Mitigation Policies, is an ongoing research project, in collaboration with two New School visiting scholars, the [Center for Earth Energy and Democracy \(CEED\)](#) and the Urban Environmental Policy Institute (Thomas Edison State College). The research includes an equity analysis of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate mitigation policies of three states. These state case studies critically examine climate and energy policies and explore methodologies for equity analysis that can be applied to related state and national policies.

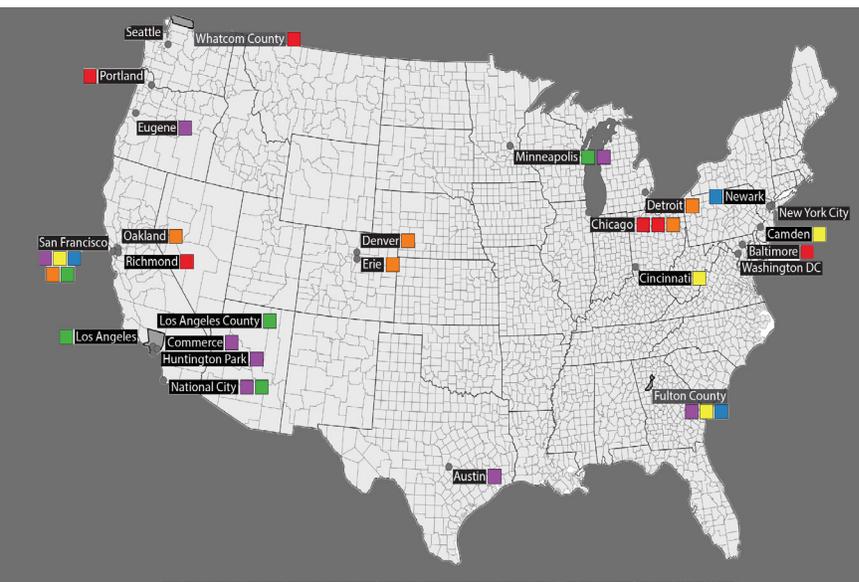
## Environmental Justice and Philanthropy Alignment Landscape Assessment

Across the country, environmental justice and communities of color are leading powerful campaigns aimed at achieving a Just Transition. Yet funding disparities persist for the grassroots environmental and climate justice sectors in comparison to larger environmental organizations. The Building Equity and Alignment for Impact ([BEA-I](#)) initiative invited the Tishman Center to co-create a research project designed to assess and map this mis-alignment of funding between regional funders and grassroots groups in two regions, the Upper Midwest and the Gulf South. This research will help inform BEAI members and philanthropic organizations seeking to better align and increase funding to the grassroots climate and EJ sectors. The report will be widely disseminated among funder and environmental networks.

## Local Land Use Policy for Environmental Justice

Along with NRDC and commissioned by The Chicago Environmental Justice Network, which includes LVEJO, Southeast Environmental Task Force, Southeast Side Coalition to Ban Petcoke, People for Community Recovery, Ixchel and Blacks in Green,

the Tishman Center produced [Local Land Use Policy for Environmental Justice](#). The report provides a comprehensive look at recent efforts in 23 cities, three counties and two utilities across the United States to address environmental injustices through innovative reforms of zoning, land use, and other local policies.



## SUSTAINABILITY CURRICULUM

### Waste and Justice ULEC

Tishman Center Director Joel Towers and Associate Director Timo Rissanen co-taught ULEC 2392 - Waste and Justice. The class was attended by 100 students and received overwhelmingly positive reviews by students. We are planning to continue this course in upcoming academic years due to its relevance and popularity.

### Affiliated Faculty Seminars

The Center hosted two affiliated faculty seminars in the Spring of 2019. These seminars were structured as discussion sessions where faculty could receive feedback on current projects, research or writing. Genevieve Guenther led a session on her current book project about climate communications and another session was led by Ana Baptista and Brian McGrath focused on the production of a public exhibit for the Humanities Action Lab. Affiliated faculty can propose a topic or their project or research for a seminar. We plan to continue these seminars, as they have been well received by participating faculty.

## CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY

### Good as New

The 2018 Good as New free sale served over 100 students that were able to get gently used materials from the dorms, staff, faculty and academic buildings. This program continues to divert usable materials from the waste stream into the hands of students that can make use of them. As of 2019, 643 families have made use of the materials from the free sale. Going forward, this initiative could have greater impact and serve more people if there is greater integration of the program across the university and clear directives from university leadership to ensure adequate resources and support staff are allocated for the collection of materials and promotion of the initiative. There is also potential to expand Good as New to a digital platform that would allow year round trading directly between people in TNS community. Also, this program will be presented as a poster at the 2019 AASHE conference in Spokane.



## EVENTS

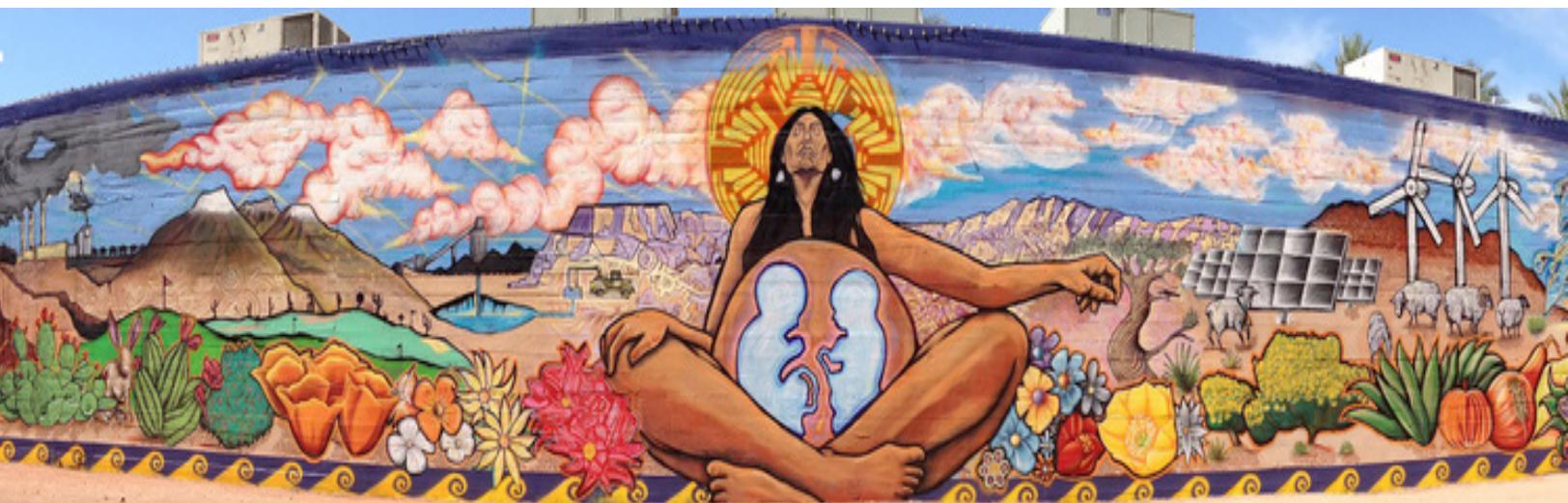
### Earth Week

The Tishman Environment and Design Center held its annual Earth Week celebration from April 22-26, 2019. The keynote panel focused on indigeneity and climate change and featured speakers from indigenous communities throughout the Americas. The Tishman Center is exploring a new focus on indigeneity in collaboration with Milano Professor Leo Figueroa who led the Earth Week events alongside NSSR Professor Abou Farman. They worked closely with the Tishman Center to plan two day panels on indigeneity and climate change.

The [keynote event](#), “Indigeneity and the Defense of Mother Earth,” took place on April 22, 2019 and was moderated by Milano professor Leonardo Figueroa. The panelists represented indigenous groups from across the Americas and included: Tom BK Goldtooth, Eriel Deranger, Dali Angel Perez, Sonia Guajajara and special commentary from Suzanne Benally. The event was cross promoted as an official side event by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The second day of the panel, “[Indigeneity and the Responsibilities of Scholar Activism](#),” was moderated by SPE professor Abigail Perez Aguilera and focused on academia’s role in interacting with indigenous communities facing climate related adverse impacts.

Other Earth Day events included a panel discussion with alumni of color from the Environmental Policy and Sustainability Management program that focused on equity and inclusion in the growing environmental and energy sector and was moderated by alumn, Mike Harrington. The Center also hosted a film screening of “The Human Element,” a documentary about how climate change affects both people and physical environments, promoted by our Trustee and supported by the Tishman Family.

Our signature Earth Week celebrations on campus continue to serve as a platform for increased public visibility for our university’s commitment to and engagement with critical environmental issues of the day. These events promote productive and provocative dialogue with contemporary thought leaders, activists and academics focused on activating action.



## Social Media Statistics

As the hub for sustainability engagement on The New School's campus, the Tishman Center uses social media to share information about opportunities, activities, and events related to sustainability, climate, and the environment on campus and in the surrounding community. We also use our Facebook and Twitter profiles to share faculty and student publications as well as important news and current events related to the Center's mission. This year, we wanted to use our social platforms to engage with our audience and get more involved with conversations around environmental justice and climate change online.

We have grown our presence on Facebook and Twitter by 23% and 12%, respectively. Our engagement with the public via these platforms was bolstered by the release of two high profile national reports in the academic year that garnered a significant amount of press, including stories in the Guardian and a number of local news publications.

We also utilized social media to share our work, including the Earth Week keynote panels and our faculty grants. We hope to build on creating and sharing content about the work we are doing that is visually engaging and easy to digest for the public. We plan to keep building on this success to become a hub for digital engagement on environmental and climate justice topics for both The New School and the general population.



*In the News:*

DATE	NEWS OUTLET	ARTICLE
1/12/2018	School Construction News	<a href="#">The New School Takes on NYC's Zero Waste Challenge</a>
2/28/2018	New School News	<a href="#">The New School Community Disrupts Climate Injustice</a>
4/4/2018	New School News	<a href="#">Milano and NSSR's Darrick Hamilton Joins Bernie Sanders' Inequality in America Town Hall</a>
8/27/2018	NewSchool News	<a href="#">Environmental Policy and Sustainability Management Alums Taylor Morton and Molly Johnson Land on Influencer Lists</a>
9/10/2018	New School News	<a href="#">Alexandria McBride, EPSM '16, Named Chief Resilience Office for Oakland, California</a>
9/10/2018	New School News	<a href="#">New School Faculty and Staff Support Antigua and Barbuda Installation at International La Biennale di Venezia Architecture</a>
9/17/2018	Vox	<a href="#">Why fashion brands destroy billions' worth of their own merchandise every year</a>
11/08/2018	The Nation	<a href="#">The Fate of the Earth Depends on Women</a>
11/13/2018	Forbes	<a href="#">Back To The Burner: Black Friday Is National Throw-Away Day</a>
12/20/2018	Fashion United India	<a href="#">Parsons School of Design Appoints new Dean</a>
2/21/2019	NRDC	<a href="#">New Report: Land Use Reforms Can Break Cycle of American Environmental Racism</a>
3/21/2019	Grist	<a href="#">Can New York have a Green New Deal and a new fracked gas pipeline?</a>
4/19/2019	Resilience.org	<a href="#">Tar Sands Songbook</a>
5/7/2019	CityLab	<a href="#">Which Cities Have Concrete Strategies for Environmental Justice?</a>
5/12/2019	Grist	<a href="#">Which cities have concrete strategies for environmental justice?</a>
5/14/2019	Nonprofit Quarterly	<a href="#">Can Zoning for Environmental Justice Reverse a Century of Zoning Racism?</a>
5/14/2019	Colorlines	<a href="#">Does Your City Employ Environmental Justice Best Practices?</a>
5/21/2019	The Guardian	<a href="#">Revealed: 1.6m Americans live near the most polluting incinerators in the US</a>
5/22/2019	Hudson Valley Post	<a href="#">Report: Hudson Valley Incinerator one of the top Polluters in the United States</a>
5/22/2019	Yubanet	<a href="#">4.4 million people in the U.S. are exposed to pollution from waste incinerators</a>
5/22/2019	Insider NJ	<a href="#">Study Shows Incinerators are in 80% of EJ Communities Nationally &amp; NJ</a>

DATE	NEWS OUTLET	ARTICLE
5/22/2019	The Post Star	<a href="#">Report: Hudson Falls trash plant among country's 'dirty dozen' incinerators</a>
5/23/2019	Waste 360	<a href="#">Study Claims Millions in the U.S. are Exposed to Waste Incinerator Pollution</a>
5/23/2019	Whyy.org	<a href="#">Incinerators in Camden, Chester among nation's most polluting, report finds</a>
5/30/2019	Newsday.com	<a href="#">Report: 2 LI trash-burning plants among highest mercury emitters</a>
6/10/2019	Millbury - Sutton Chronicle	<a href="#">Wheelabrator Millbury is cited as a top polluter, example of 'environmental apartheid'</a>
6/11/2019	Long Beach Post	<a href="#">Long Beach is one of 2 cities in California that still burns trash. Will the future be greener?</a>
6/28/2019	Green Biz	<a href="#">5 things you should know about the impact of burning trash</a>
7/15/2019	Middletown Press	<a href="#">America's youth think they can save the world and get rich</a>
8/8/2019	Bloomberg Environment	<a href="#">INSIGHT: Don't Incinerate Waste; Get Circular, Optimize Plastics</a>
8/29/2019	The Post Star	<a href="#">Public comment open for Wheelabrator air permit renewal in Hudson Falls</a>

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# THANK YOU

A special thanks to our funders and partners. We are so grateful for your hard work and support. Together we are increasing the sustainability of our communities and amplifying the environmental justice and climate justice movements with design, policy, social justice, and interdisciplinary approaches.

## Funders



## Partners



# WHO WE ARE

## Leadership and Staff



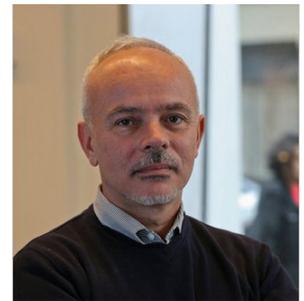
**JOEL TOWERS**  
Director



**ANA BAPTISTA**  
Acting Director



**TIMO RISSANEN**  
Associate Director



**BRIAN MCGRATH**  
Associate Director



**ADRIENNE PEROVICH**  
Assistant Director



**MIKE HARRINGTON**  
Assistant Director



**MICHELLE DEPASS**  
Senior Advisor



**KEVIN CAPUNO**  
Research Assistant



**AMANDA SACHS**  
Research Assistant



**ANNA YULSMAN**  
Research Assistant



**CLAUDIA ROT**  
Research Assistant



**JENNIFER SANTOS**  
Research Assistant



**MOLLY GREENBERG**  
Research Assistant

## Advisory Committee



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Chemistry



**ERIK EIBERT**  
Assistant Director, Sus-  
tainable Initiatives,  
Buildings



**ISELLA RAMIREZ**  
Project Manager, Hester  
Street Collaborative



**NADIA ELROKHSY**  
Assistant Professor of  
Sustainable Interior Design



**TIMO RISSANEN**  
Committee Chair  
Assistant Professor of  
Fashion Design and  
Sustainability



**TOKUMBO  
SHOBOWALE**  
Chief Operating Officer

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