BLACK WOMEN FOR WELLNESS

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE NEWSLETTER

YEAR OF IMPACT







2025

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DEAR COMMUNITY,

THANK YOU FOR READING THE FIRST EDITION OF OUR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE NEWSLETTER! THIS NEWSLETTER REPRESENTS OUR COLLECTIVE INVESTMENT IN EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY AND BUILDING A MORE EQUITABLE FUTURE. THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS HIGHLIGHTED BELOW ARE ROOTED IN THE TRUST YOU'VE PLACED IN BWW AND OUR TEAM, AND WE COULDN'T BE MORE GRATEFUL.

AS WE CONTINUE OUR WORK IN UNITY, WE WILL BE USING THIS EJ NEWSLETTER AS A WAY TO STAY CONNECTED AND KEEP OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED. MOVING FORWARD, YOU CAN EXPECT TO BE UPDATED QUARTERLY ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS, UPCOMING EVENTS, AND OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE AND ENSURE YOUR VOICES ARE HEARD.

SINCERELY,
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TEAM

BLACK WOMEN FOR WELLNESS

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Black women and girls are under-protected from and under-informed about toxic pollution in their environment that affects reproductive health; this is rooted in systemic racism within the built environment of Los Angeles. Black Women for Wellness' Environmental Justice team works with and for the community we serve, in collaboration with non-profit, academic, and for-profit institutions, and alongside our fellow BWW programmatic teams to address environmental racism and advance reproductive justice.

Our program includes efforts to end neighborhood oil drilling within LA City and LA County, to educate about and address water inequity, to mitigate the lifecycle of plastic pollution, and to bring about green social housing. These program components were derived from deep community engagement and they continue to evolve and expand.

In addition to these buckets, BWW's EJ Built Environment program boasts an Environmental Justice Fellowship, partnerships to address pressing concerns such as extreme heat, and annual Earth Month programming.





IMPACT OVERVIEW

THROUGHOUT 2025, BWW'S EJ PROGRAM MADE SIGNIFICANT STRIDES TOWARDS OUR MISSION!

161	Hosted, attended and/or supported 161 events reaching over 14,000 people
7	Participated in 7 research projects
6,000	Led 3 canvassing efforts that outreached to almost 6,000 community members
15	Participated in 15 coalitions
13	Published 13 community education pieces

WHY DOES THIS WORK MATTER?

For far too long, zipcode has played an enormous impact in the health outcomes of Black communities. At BWW, we work to reduce toxic chemical exposures through community education and protection. We work in collaboration with our community, coalitions, and other partners to ensure that all people have a voice in the decisions that impact their environment.

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ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FELLOWSHIP

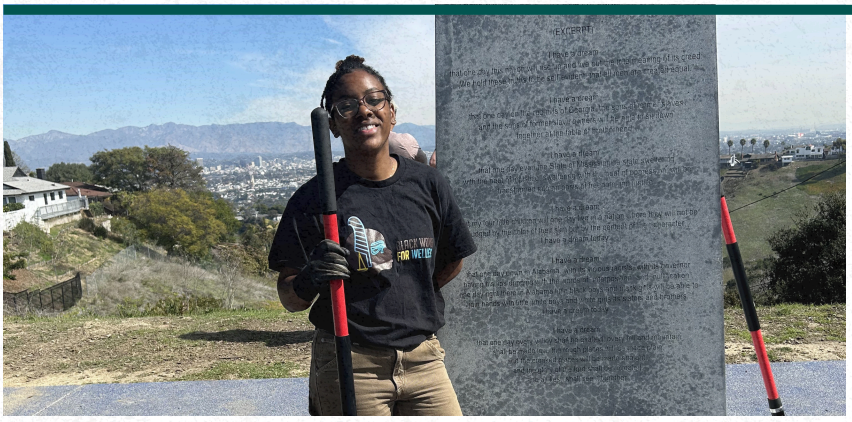


BWW hosts a 9 month Environmental Justice Fellowship which aims to support the development of future environmental justice leaders who are passionate about approaching environmental advocacy from a holistic perspective that centers reproductive health.



Camille Samuels completed a story map titled Community Pressure Makes a Local Gem: Oil Drilling, Community Advocacy, and the Environmental Justice History of Kenneth Hahn Park. This story map was drafted from deep research into the recreation area and the Inglewood Oil Field, 37 1:1 community interviews, and data from years of BWW's community engagement. The map was featured in an LA Times article about the future of LA, and it is being used to support the EJ Delegation Pilot Program.

Sophie Sylla completed a zine and research project titled Where We Ought to Be: Environmental and Reproductive Justice in South Los Angeles - Resistance & Repair. This zine was curated and created from collective dreaming workshops with youth, BWW community members and from Sophie's participation in BWW programming.





CAMILLE SAMUELS
COHORT 1



SOPHIE SYLLA
COHORT 1

Over the course of 9 months, our fellows shared their growing knowledge widely, giving 15+ presentations to BWW members, South LA community groups, academic partners, and local government officials and agencies. They also hosted or participated in 60+ community events! This allowed them to build relationships and foster important dialogues about EJ and RJ within the Black community in South Los Angeles.

LAUNCH OF COHORT 2

We're so excited to get to work with Lukke Thorpe, EJ Fellow, and Rovanni Castillo, Beauty Justice Fellow!

END NEIGHBORHOOD OIL DRILLING



Los Angeles City and County are home to thousands of urban oil drill sites that most harm communities of color. BWW is actively engaged in City, County and State efforts to end neighborhood oil drilling and turn polluted sites into community-serving land uses.

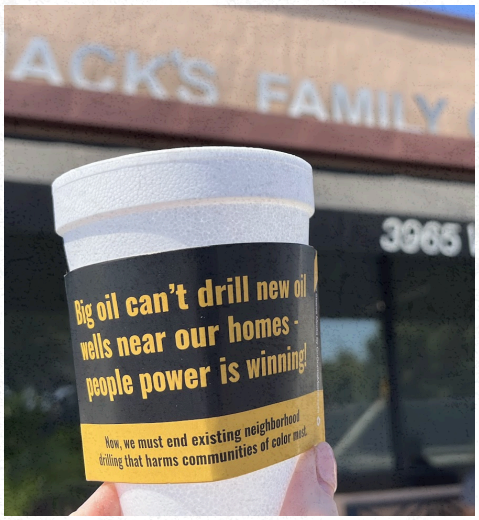
Notably, BWW is leading community-based advocacy to shut down the Inglewood Oil Field which is the largest urban oil field in the Country. BWW serves as steering committee members of the Stand Together Against Neighborhood Oil Drilling coalition and the LA County coalition against oil and gas.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Launched an Environmental Justice Delegation of local residents in collaboration with SCOPE and Rising Communities, so that those living near the Inglewood Oil Field are actively involved in the process to shut it down, and have a say in what it becomes.
- Advocated for ordinances in LA City and County to end neighborhood oil drilling and put existing drilling on a path to phase out.
- Pushed for better community protections for residents on the frontlines of oil drilling. In the City, through STAND LA, we fought for greater regulations on toxic acid maintenance operations. In the County, we provided community feedback and insight on an LA County motion which calls for better protections of the health and well-being of residents
- Hosted a community potluck with STAND-LA coalition & participated in a community advocacy day at LA City Hall, where community members shared their experiences with local leaders.
- For the fourth year running, we called residents living near the Inglewood Oil Field to provide updates about the site and check in about concerns.
- Engaged in 5 toxic tours to provide education about the health impacts of oil drilling

IMPACT

Oil drilling in Los Angeles disproportionately harms low-income, Black and Brown communities by exposing them to toxic chemicals and contaminating their neighborhoods. These impacts are a result of longstanding environmental racism and the prioritization of profit over people. Through our advocacy and activism, we uplift the voices of the communities that are most impacted.



ENDING THE LIFECYCLE OF PLASTIC



The harms associated with plastic must be addressed at every stage of the plastic lifecycle, from the extraction of fossil fuels that are used to form plastics through to the disposal of plastic products. Low income communities and communities of color are already overburdened by overexposure to plastic, and face harm at each stage of plastic's formation and use.

While many efforts are placed on consumer behavior, our team works toward systemic change so that less plastic is produced and alternatives are made more available. We are also continuously working to provide education about the health harms of plastic, particularly their negative impacts on reproductive health.

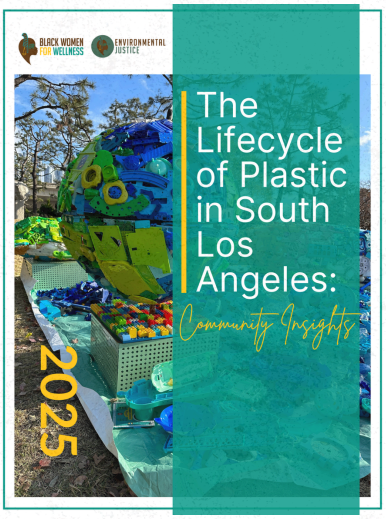
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed and launched our report, The Lifecycle of Plastic in South Los Angeles: Community Insights gathered from 35 one-on-one in depth community interviews and 2 years of community engagement. We also successfully hosted a report launch event with over 110 RSVPs and every seat taken.
- Continued participation in the Global Plastic Treaty negotiations which included participation in INC 5.2 in Geneva, Switzerland. BWW also co-hosted a press conference while in Geneva and drafted a fact sheet titled "The Stories We Carry: Listen to Black Voices" to highlight the particular experience of Black communities in the US being harmed by the lifecycle of plastic pollution and the need to have a UN Environment Assembly major group for communities of the African Diaspora. This effort was highlighted in Grist, New Indian Express, and other media publications.
- Hosted a community listening session as well as 1:1s with community members and doulas to discuss community-based solutions to plastics.
- Served as an Environmental Justice consultant on a UCLA Luskin study about the lifecycle of plastic in California.

IMPACT

With polluting industries primarily concentrated near Black and Brown communities, our team aims to protect community health and develop community-rooted solutions.

With our participation, we bring the experience of Black communities to the forefront and push for solutions that not only reduce environmental harm, but are applicable and affordable.



WATER EQUITY



Our EJ team has been working for years to understand and address our community's water quality, affordability, and accessibility concerns. Water is closely linked to our health, and clean water is an essential human right for everyone.

Clean water is also a reproductive justice issue, because it is crucial for fertility, healthy pregnancies, and to raise healthy children!

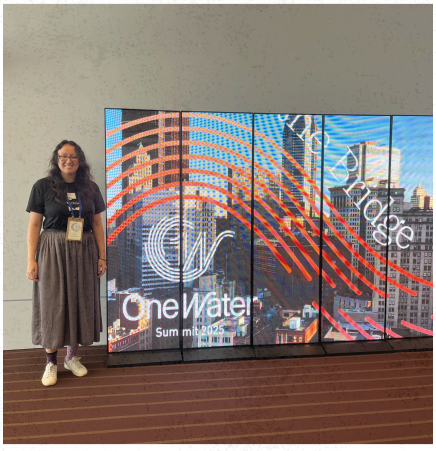
Our team is working to provide education and resources, while also uplifting community concerns to water decision-makers in Los Angeles and California.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Hosted 2 educational workshops about water equity with school students,
- Hosted a training workshop for medical students in California's Central Valley to highlight the water concerns and experiences of Black residents
- Developed and distributed additional educational materials with information about drinking water and water filters, including a postcard that is used for BWW tabling.
- Joined ReDesignLA, a collaborative group of CBOs and Tribal partners managed by Council for Watershed Health, to build BWW's capacity to develop a community-led project with water and other community benefits. Entering this space has allowed us to connect more deeply with partners working on water equity issues, and explore new collaborations.
- Deepened our engagement with the Metropolitan Water District - who supply water to over 19 million people across Southern California - through workshops, public comment, and a press conference.

IMPACT

Through our ongoing work, our team continues to uplift community concerns and center our water equity efforts around the lived experiences of the Black community.



We continue to highlight the system injustices that for far too long have determined which communities have access to safe, affordable water.



ADDITIONAL IMPACT

THOUGH WE FOCUS ON OUR CORE PROGRAMS, BWW SERVES THE PRESSING NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY AND OUR WORK GOES BEYOND THESE MAIN INITIATIVES.

CHECK OUT OUR OTHER EFFORTS IN 2025!

Key Achievements:

- Deepened engagement in the CA Green New Deal Coalition's Green Social Housing campaign by supporting planning and development of an Organizing School.
- Co-authored a Transportation and Maternal health study with UCLA which is published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.
- Hosted and supported Earth Month Programming which included hosting our annual earth month event at Kenneth Hahn, supporting SCOPE's earth month event, supporting Good Earth's earth month event, educational social media posts, launching our Plastics report with a launch event and media coverage, participating in the Theodore Payne Native Plant tour, a Heal the Bay panel, and more!
- Facilitated 2 mutual aid air filter donations to residents impacted by the LA Wildfires, in collaboration with LA City.
- Hosted a session in Black Mamas Matter Alliance's E-learning series about the intersection of reproductive and environmental justice.
- Hosted a session for YOLO Lactation & Doula Services continuing education program for Doulas.













THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TEAM



TIANNA SHAW-WAKEMAN

Environmental Justice
Built Environment
Program Director



ZOE CUNLIFFE

Environmental Justice
Built Environment
Program Manager



REGINA MARTIN

Environmental Justice
and Civic Engagement
Associate



STEPHANY CARTNEY

Environmental Justice
Built Environment
Program Coordinator



LUKKEE THORPE

Environmental Justice
Built Environment Fellow

PREVIOUS EVENTS






In April, our EJ team hosted our third annual Earth Week event with community members. Folks enjoyed a yoga session in Kenneth Hahn Park, followed by a discussion of the Inglewood Oil Field, which is visible from the park.

On November 6 2025, we hosted a listening session for community members to collectively discuss solutions to the lifecycle of plastic here in South LA. A lot of great ideas were shared about how we can work together to transform our neighborhoods for the better!



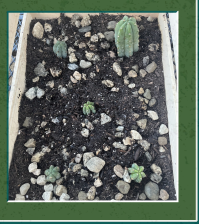
In November and December, our team hosted workshops with middle school students and high school students in South LA. We shared insights about water quality and water conservation, and students engaged in fun activities while discussing and envisioning solutions for the future of LA's water.









UPCOMING EVENTS



RSUP HERE

SUNDAY MARCH 8 12PM, TRUE INDIGO FASHION SHOW MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ART, 3650 WEST MARTIN LUTHER KING JUNIOR BLVD, SUITE 283

Black Women for Wellness is hosting a fashion show! Black women are overexposed to plastics and toxic chemicals in their built environment, in beauty, and in fashion. The fashion sector is filled with plastic-based clothing materials and synthetic dyes filled with toxic chemicals. We will be showcasing sustainable fashion that uplifts the beauty of Black people and is culturally rooted. Join us for a fashion show focused on the rich history of indigo textile dyeing and the importance of centering Afro-Indigenous practices in sustainable fashion.

This event is free and open to the community, and we would love to see you there!

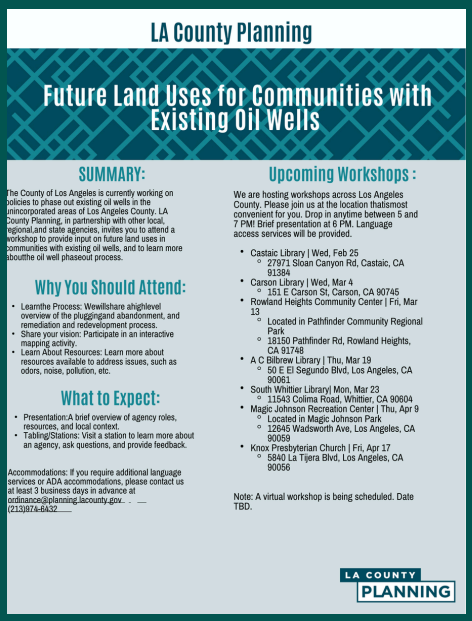


RSUP HERE

SATURDAY, APRIL 11 AT 10AM, FLOW INTO ACTION, EARTH MONTH CELEBRATION AT KENNETH HAHN STATE RECREATION AREA, 4100 S. LA CIENEGA BLVD. LOS ANGELES, CA 90008

Join Black Women for Wellness Environmental Justice Team to celebrate earth week with a day of connection and movement. Together we'll explore how access to clean air, safe water and green spaces shape our health and wellbeing. Explore all of the work that our team is doing to address the environmental injustices our community faces. Enjoy a session of FREE for all levels yoga session designed to help you relax and ground yourself in nature. Feel free to grab a mat, and a friend. Hope to see you there!

UPCOMING EVENTS



LA County Planning

Future Land Uses for Communities with Existing Oil Wells

SUMMARY:

The County of Los Angeles is currently working on policies to phase out existing oil wells in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. LA County Planning, in partnership with other local, regional,and state agencies, invites you to attend a workshop to provide input on future land uses in communities with existing oil wells, and to learn more abouthe oil well phaseout process.

Why You Should Attend:

- Learnthe Process: Wewillshare ahighlevel overview of the pluggingand abandonment, and remediation and redevelopment process.
- Share your vision: Participate in an interactive mapping activity.
- Learn About Resources: Learn more about resources available to address issues, such as odors, noise, pollution, etc.

What to Expect:

- Presentation:A brief overview of agency roles, resources, and local context.
- Tabling/Stations: Visit a station to learn more about an agency, ask questions, and provide feedback.

Accommodations: If you require additional language services or ADA accommodations, please contact us at least 3 business days in advance at ordinance3@planning.lacounty.gov. . . — (213)974-6432____

Upcoming Workshops :

We are hosting workshops across Los Angeles County. Please join us at the location thatismost convenient for you. Drop in anytime between 5 and 7 PM! Brief presentation at 6 PM. Language access services will be provided.

- Castaic Library | Wed, Feb 25
  - 27971 Sloan Canyon Rd, Castaic, CA 91384
- Carson Library | Wed, Mar 4
  - 151 E Carson St, Carson, CA 90745
- Rowland Heights Community Center | Fri, Mar 13
  - Located in Pathfinder Community Regional Park
  - 18150 Pathfinder Rd, Rowland Heights, CA 91748
- A C Bilbrew Library | Thu, Mar 19
  - 50 E El Segundo Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90061
- South Whittier Library| Mon, Mar 23
  - 11543 Colima Road, Whittier, CA 90604
- Magic Johnson Recreation Center | Thu, Apr 9
  - Located in Magic Johnson Park
  - 12645 Wadsworth Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90059
- Knox Presbyterian Church | Fri, Apr 17
  - 5840 La Tijera Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90056

Note: A virtual workshop is being scheduled. Date TBD.

LA COUNTY PLANNING

LA County Department of Regional Planning is hosting community workshops to educate more about the oil well phase out process and hear from the community about future land uses in communities with existing oil wells.

Learn more about plugging and abandonment of wells, share your vision for the redevelopment of the oil field and access resources to address current issues like odor, noise and pollution.

The Knox Presbyterian Church community meeting on Fri, Apr 17 is closest to the Inglewood Oil Field and is an excellent opportunity to have your voices heard!