

Young Leaders History



When Got Green started in 2008 the main focus of our work was job training. As such, much of Got Green's work at the time was led by young adults. As Got Green moved from job training to policy advocacy some of the young leaders left. In 2013 there was a push for more young adult leadership as such the "Young Workers in the Green Economy" was formed which is now known as, "The Young Leaders in the Green Movement."

The Young Leaders started as a committee of 8 people tasked to develop a survey that asked, what did young adults see as barriers to their employment and what were their priorities around the environment?

That summer the Young Leaders conducted face-to-face surveys with 150 young adults of color – the majority living in poverty – about their barriers in attaining employment and their priorities for the environment. When survey participants were asked "How important for you is it to work in a job that is 'green' or good for the environment?" two out of three young adults chose 4 or 5, on a scale of 1–5, with 1 being least important and 5 being most important. Many survey participants noted a lack of paid work experience as a major barrier to employment.

From there the Young Leaders released the findings of their community research project in a report titled Environmental Justice, Jobs and Education: Young Adults in Seattle Speak Up.

Following the release of the community research project, Got Green's Young Leaders in the Green Movement zeroed in on what they could do to address the lack of access to paid work experience. They interviewed leaders from the \$15 Now campaign, met with Mayor Murray's staff, learned about current internship opportunities through the City of Seattle's Office of Personnel, and researched other programs for youth to get hands-on work experience, including the Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP).

While many of these already offer comprehensive ways to address youth employment needs, community members and young adults have recommendations to build upon these programs and make the scope of the City's efforts reach even more young adults and help the fight against climate change.

In response to this The Young Leaders have launched the "Green Pathways" campaign. The Green Pathways campaign is working to create comprehensive work experience opportunities that:

- Are both good for the environment and our communities
- Have a racial equity lens in their outreach and ways to retain participants. This includes paying a living wage.
- Creates career pathways.