

Project Description

Community Housing & Empowerment Connections Inc. (CHEC) and the partners of the Delaware EJ Community Partnership aim to develop and implement an online initiative entitled: *Building Community Power on the Frontlines: Through Justice-Oriented Online Mapping Tools and Resource Guide*, that will provide data-driven support for community resilience to climate change and related impacts and environmental justice interest throughout the state of Delaware.

This proposed project will target underserved and vulnerable communities in all four counties (Wilmington, New Castle, Kent and Sussex), including Indigenous communities, low-income communities, and communities with heightened risk and increased sensitivity to climate change and that have less capacity and fewer resources to cope with, adapt to, or recover from climate impacts. The degree of risk and sensitivity stems from physical (built and environmental), social, political, and/or economic factors, which interact with each other and are exacerbated by climate impacts. These factors include, but are not limited to, race, class, sexual orientation and identification, national origin, and income inequality. This program seeks to support environmental justice and build community power on the frontlines by facilitating the involvement of underserved and vulnerable communities in existing partnerships and the development of justice-oriented online resources that address the unequal distribution of environmental vulnerabilities to climate change and related impacts.

The justice-oriented online tools and information will foster climate resilience by improving the capacity of Delaware's low income BIPOC communities to prepare for, withstand, respond to, and recover from hazardous events or disturbances related to climate change, which poses risks to human health, the environment, cultural resources, the economy, and quality of life. These climate changes are expected to create further challenges to protecting human health and welfare and the environment, and impact vulnerable and underserved, and Indigenous communities disproportionately. The six focus areas for resourcing low income, BIPOC communities through this online project, include: 1) communication at the Local, regional and national levels to develop holistic, equitable, and effective meta-narratives, messages, and messengers across the Climate and Environmental Justice movement, 2) leadership development of BIPOC and other under-resourced community-focused efforts (e.g., resourcing climate and EJ movement leaders, mentorship programs, etc.) that develop and expand diverse leadership in the climate and EJ movement in and around Delaware, 3) advocacy tools & training for community and state-level advocacy, organizing, and power-building training programs, including existing ones, that develop fieldwide, 21st-century advocacy capabilities, 4) data & information that support data democratization and broader, equitable access to information about climate change, environmental justice issues, and policy formulation that can build and diversify power in Delaware, 5) relationships & trust with Cross-issue networks focused on developing shared trust and connection and/or building alignment across differences (e.g., BIPOC

and other under-resourced community-focused initiatives & centered frameworks/initiatives, rural-urban engagement, etc.) to unlock new strategic possibilities and 6) philanthropic innovation efforts that advance streamlined grantmaking processes, decentralized decision-making, and equitable funding across environmental that respond to community-identified challenges.