



# UMass CEE Solar Forum

September 19, 2023

# BGS

## Browning the Green Space

[INFO@BROWNINGTHEGREENSPACE.ORG](mailto:INFO@BROWNINGTHEGREENSPACE.ORG)

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# Our Story

Founder Kerry Bowie grew up in a fenceline community in Alabama and brings **25 years of experience** connecting communities, companies, and government.

Together, we are bridging the divide between **grassroots community groups** and **white-led organizations/corporations**.



Photo Source: NESEA 2022



# The Challenge

The racial wealth gap and climate change present an urgent and systemic challenge that requires our concentrated attention and investment.

## CAREERS



**Over 84% of employers** in the energy sector experienced difficulty hiring workers with technical training and certifications

## COMPANIES



Representation of women, Black, and Latinx individuals are **below national workforce averages** in the energy sector

## CAPITAL



**Less than 3%** of VC funding goes to Black and Latinx founders

## CONTRACTS



Less than **5% of contract dollars** from Fortune 100 companies are awarded to businesses owned by people of color

## COMMUNITIES



Black households spend **43% more of their income** on energy costs than White households

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## Our Vision

We seek to facilitate **a just energy transition** by putting Black and Brown communities first, and enabling systems change at the intersection of social, environmental, and economic justice.

## Our Mission

We are powering a just energy transition in the Northeast by **creating jobs, building wealth, and reducing energy burden** in Black and Brown communities. By removing barriers and expanding access, we seek to close the racial wealth gap while combating climate change.

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Photo Source: Valley Home Insulation



# Our Values

## COMMUNITY FIRST

We aim to serve and center Black and Brown communities in all elements of our work. Black and Brown voices and needs come first as we consider program design, resource distribution, and the impact of our work.

## CLIMATE JUSTICE

We believe strong and intentional partnerships support deeper diversity, equity, and inclusion and enable a just energy transition. While our programs focus on lifting up Black and Brown people, this is not at the exclusion of other underrepresented identities.

## TRUST

We acknowledge the existing asymmetry in access to information for the Black and Brown communities we seek to support. We are committed to being a truth-sayer in service of our partners and members.

## TRANSPARENCY

We strive to operate authentically and develop relationships founded in mutual respect. Building trust takes time and investment. We do this by listening first, then acting, and creating a feedback loop throughout our work.

## COLLABORATION

We believe in getting the work done together, not in competition with one another. We work to combat a resource scarcity mentality through systemic solutions and capacity building with our partners.

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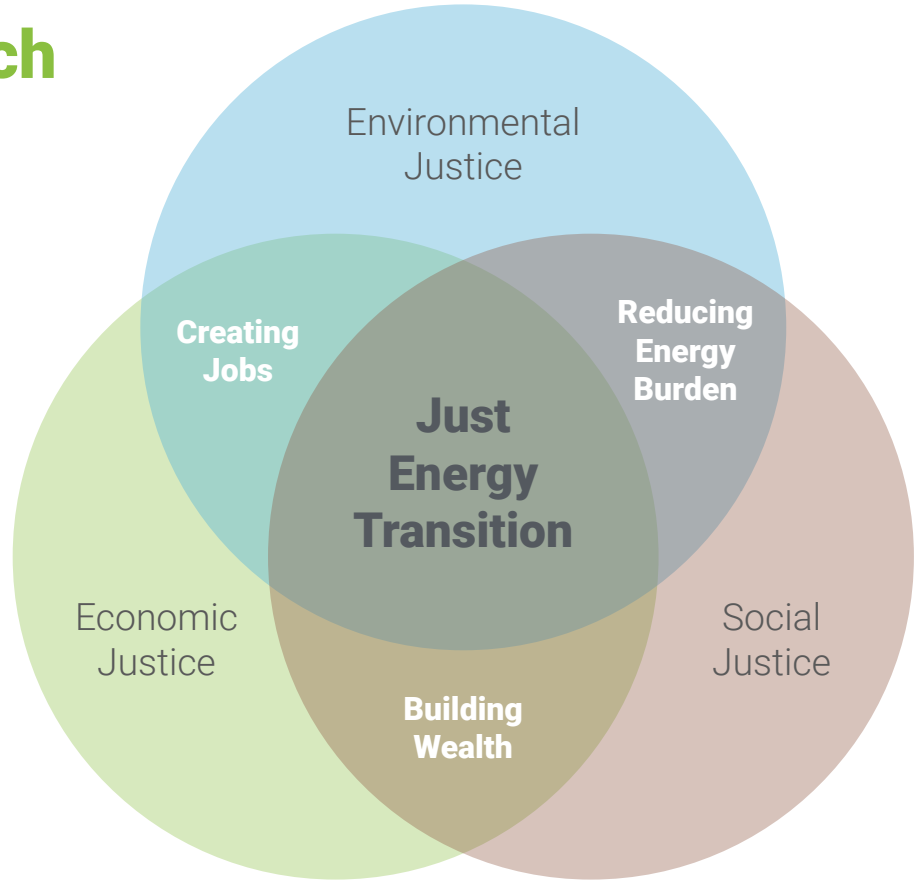
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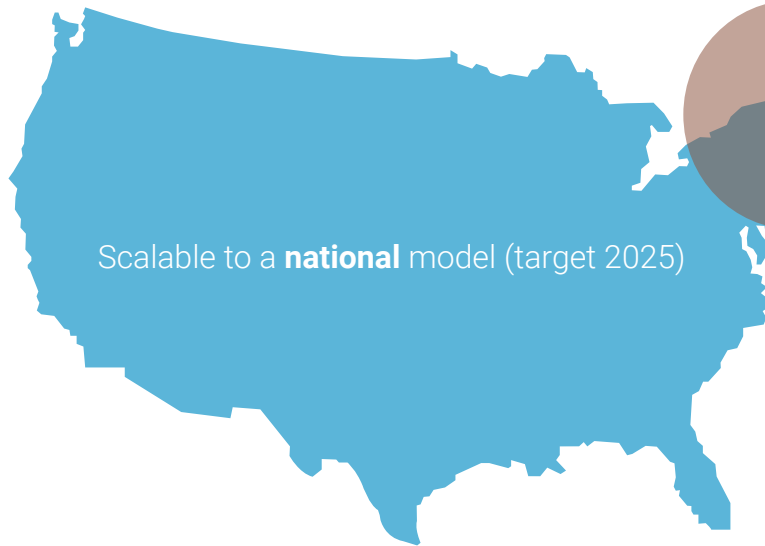
# Our Systems Approach

We are taking an **integrated approach** to tackling the systemic challenge presented by the deep racial wealth gap in our communities and the existential threat of climate change.



# Our Model

**BGS is the only organization** focused on a comprehensive approach to address DEI across key areas of clean energy and climate tech for our most vulnerable communities.



Scalable to a **national** model (target 2025)

## Boston origins

An exceptional, **diverse team of 75+ leaders** from clean energy organizations, economic and workforce development initiatives, and policy-making groups

## Growing Northeastern regional network

Expanding Boston proper and the **Massachusetts Gateway Cities** with a focus on NY

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# What We Provide

BGS is a coalition of cross-sector leaders striving to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in clean energy, climate tech, and beyond.

## CONVENING



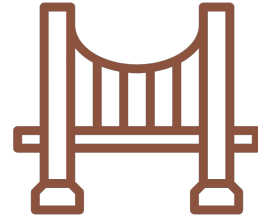
Our **focus area committees, coalition member engagements, events, and general body meetings** provide opportunities to convene stakeholders, discuss progress & challenges, and collaborate across sectors

## FILLING GAPS



Our **comprehensive focus** allows us to identify gaps and design systems-focused solutions at the intersection of climate change and racial equity

## BUILDING BRIDGES



Our diverse team and broad network allow us to build bridges and advance **initiatives across sectors** and focus areas leveraging each group's expertise and experience

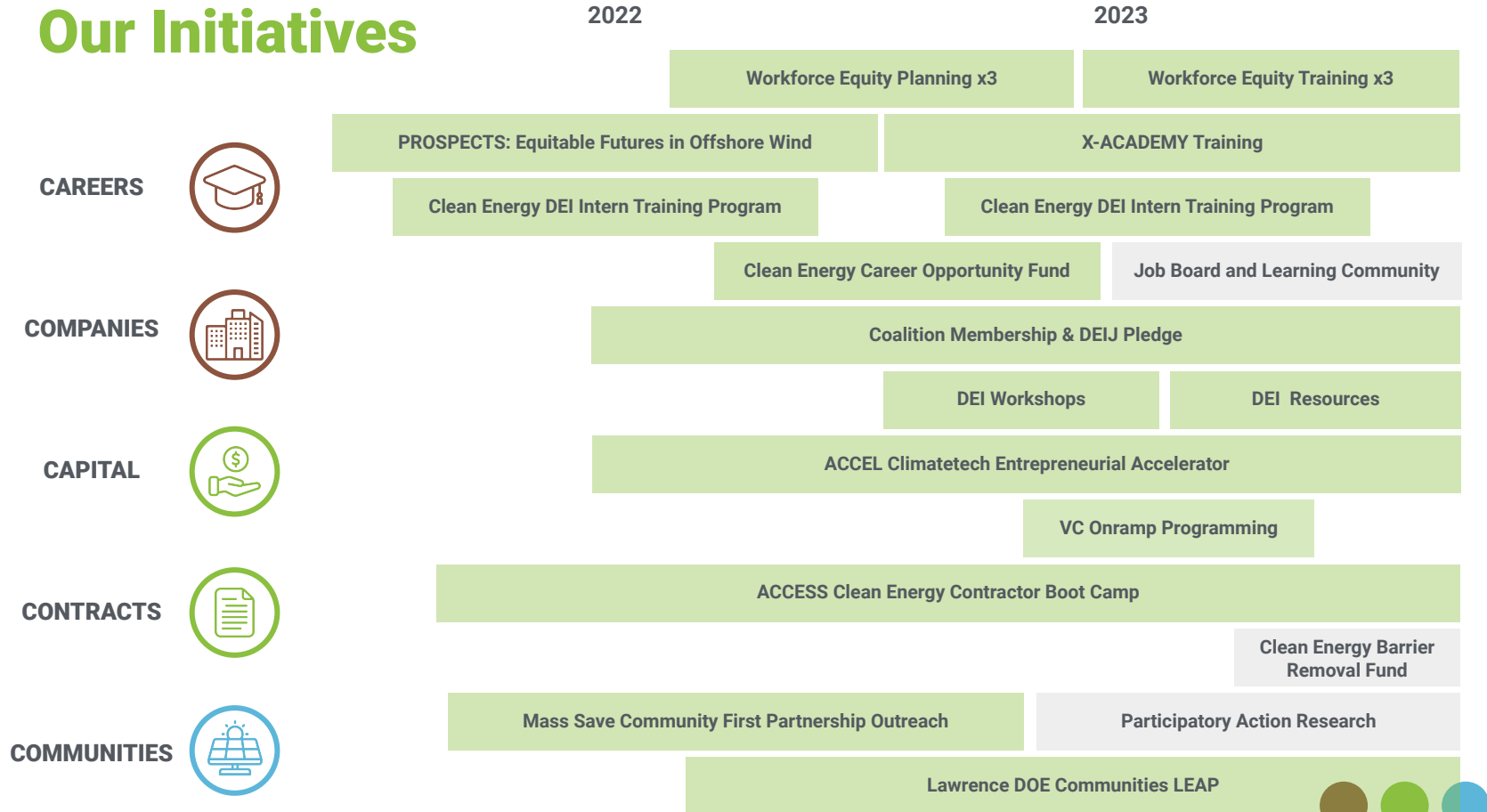
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# Our Initiatives



# Equity Workforce Training Programs

- Collaborative
  - State, City offices, local CBOs, BPS, Community Colleges, Industry Technical Trainers, Unions, Wraparound Service Providers, etc.
- Range of Participants:
  - Returning Citizens, Vocational/Technical High School students, Black and brown contractors and their new hires.
- Participant Trainings Provided:
  - Fundamentals of the green building trades
  - HVAC/Heat Pumps
  - Energy Auditing/ HERS rater
  - Green Project Management
  - Weatherization/Glazing
  - Professional skill development & workplace readiness
  - Career Development and Green Career Awareness Training
- Mentoring
- DEIJ training & support for company employer partners through BGS Coalition Member cohort models



# Equity Workforce Development



PROGRAMS



# Equity Workforce Development



The **US-based X-Academy professional offshore wind career development program** will build off the successful UK pilot and will center DEIJ as a core element of its design and implementation. Launched in partnership with Xodus, this **two-year development program for graduates of 2 and 4 year post secondary degree programs** will provide underrepresented groups from EJ communities with the knowledge, skills and experience required to thrive in a career in the offshore wind sector.

## Establishment of US X-Academy and adaption to US market

September-November 2023

## Establishment of DEI OSW Working Group

November 2023

## Recruitment & Hiring of First Cohort

November 2023 -December 2023

## X-Academy Pilot cohort

Spring 2024 - June 2026

### X-ACADEMY MODEL

- 2 year professional program for graduates of 2 and 4 year degree programs
- Engaging in real world energy projects with developers

### PARTICIPANT SUPPORT

- Full time positions with benefits
- Increased access to offshore wind job opportunities
- On-the-job technical and behavioral training including offshore wind experience and enabling tech experience
- Mentorship, coaching and early career networking

### INDUSTRY SUPPORT

- Strategic workforce planning and added capacity for training
- Developing pipeline of diverse talent

### DEI SUPPORT

- Development of an OSW DEI Working Group to support companies and participants



# Equity Workforce Development

## MassCEC Targeted Internship Program



## BGS was a training provider for 3rd summer

### 2023 Metrics:

- 17 students at 13 companies
- Hosted program-wide employer DEI workshop
- Completed weekly student workshops
- Facilitated 5 intern meetups
- Created Slack engagement channel
- Launched Mentoring program
- Still in progress:* Surveys & Evaluation



# Hiring to Diversify

Where does bias show up throughout the employee journey?

**Recruitment**

**Retention/Retainment**

**Promotion**

## **Job Descriptions**

- Examine for implicit bias
- Language used
- Requirements of position
- Where are you posting?

## **Company Policies and Culture**

- How do you support employee growth?
- How many other women, Black and Brown employees are there?
- In what positions?
- Do you have policies in place that address microaggressions and other issues that come up?
- What are the employee engagement opportunities?



# The BGS Coalition

A cross-sector initiative designed to **connect, support and educate organization leaders** as they work to advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) principles internally within their own organizations and collectively throughout the clean energy and climatetech sectors.

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## CONNECT

- Online Community
- Networking Events
- BGS Committee Participation
- Sector-specific DEI Working Groups
- Company Directory

## SUPPORT

- Accountability check-ins on DEI Commitments
- Recruitment Support
- Ecosystem Project Mapping
- Partnered Funding Opportunities

## EDUCATE

- DEI Expert Led Workshops
- Peer to Peer Learning Sessions
- DEI Toolkit
- Shared Learning Resources





# BGS DEIJ Organizational Pledge

At the core of the Coalition Membership is the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Pledge. Through signing the Pledge, Companies declare their organizational commitment to advance DEIJ within their own organizations and the broader ecosystem. BGS team members assist companies with resources, accountability check-ins, data collection and impact measurement so that they may take action and make measurable progress.

## PLEDGE COMMITMENTS

- Take Responsibility as Leaders
- Support Personal Development on Conscious Inclusion
- Prioritize Improvement and Encourage Courageous Conversations
- Establish Transparent and Just Hiring and Compensation Practices
- Focus on Retention and Career Advancement
- Create a Culture of Belonging
- Engage in Accountability and Evaluation



# Coalition Member Workshops & Toolkit

Companies may participate in group workshops with professional DEI facilitators to advance their DEI initiatives. These cross-company group sessions will allow for peer learning and collaborative problem solving. Additionally, a BGS Company Toolkit will provide roadmaps, assessment tools and strategy resources for actionable learning.

## Example Workshop Topics

- Unconscious Bias in the Workplace
- Creating an Inclusive Culture
- Recruiting and Hiring Inclusively
- Supplier and Vendor Diversity
- Running Inclusive Meetings
- Addressing Microaggressions

## Example Toolkit Resources

- Organizational assessment tools
- Hiring and recruiting strategy & resources
- Vendor procurement support
- Promotion, career development and compensation resources



# Coalition Members



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# Our Board of Directors



**Kerry Bowie**  
*BGS President*  
Managing Partner



**Dan Goldman**  
*BGS Vice President / Treasurer*  
Co-founder and Managing Director



**Jacquie Ashmore**  
*BGS Secretary / Clerk*  
EVP of Development  
Engineering



**Amanda Downey**  
*BGS Director*  
Vice President, Business Performance  
and Planning, New England Jurisdiction



**Nicole Obi**  
*BGS Director*  
President and CEO



**Abel Vargas**  
*BGS Director*  
President



**Eric Graber-Lopez**  
*BGS Director*  
President



**Dana Rebeiro**  
*BGS Director*  
Massachusetts Liaison



**Kristen Hurley**  
*BGS Director*  
Chief Strategy Officer



# Focus Area Committees

## CAREERS



**Stephen Alkins Ph.D.**  
Diversity, Equity, Access,  
Inclusion & Belonging  
Officer

## COMPANIES



**Jeremy McDiarmid**  
Managing Director &  
General Counsel

## CAPITAL



**Julianne Zimmerman**

## CONTRACTS



**Daryl Wright**  
Chief Strategy Officer

## COMMUNITIES



**Isaac Baker**  
Co-CEO, Founder



**Maggie Teliska**  
Mgr, BESS  
Technical Services



**Shawn Jones**  
Managing Director, Storage  
Development



**Spencer Irvine**  
Emerging Business  
Manager



**Shonté Davidson**  
Principal Owner



**Mary Wambui-Ekop**  
Asset Manager



# Organizational Development

## MEMBERSHIP



**Tamika Jacques**  
Director of Workforce  
Development and Supply Chain

## FUNDRAISING



**Sarah Kearney**  
Founder and Executive Director

## MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



**Ted Dillon**  
Chief Operating Officer

## POLICY COORDINATION



**Susannah Hatch**  
Director of Clean Energy Policy



**Maya Nitzberg**  
VP of Community



**Peter Rothstein**  
Board Member and Former  
President



**Joy Yakie**  
Environmental Justice & Outreach  
Manager



# Our Team



**Kerry Bowie**  
Executive Director



**Esmé Park**  
Executive Assistant



**Alisha Harrington**  
Deputy Director  
Workforce Development



**Hadas Webb**  
Deputy Director  
Business Development



**Megan Aki**  
Deputy Director  
Community Development



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