

# spotlight

2023 Issue 3



Latin America Climate Campaign Organizer Martin Vilela speaking at the first regional Make Big Polluters Pay meeting that happened in Lima, Peru, in May. Photo credit: The Latin America Climate JUSTICE! Campaign.

## Exposing Chevron's continued harm

### Uplifting our allies during Anti-Chevron week

**“Chevron’s ‘net zero’ plans are nothing more than a PR ploy that conceal its destructive agenda.”**

RACHEL ROSE JACKSON | DIRECTOR:  
CLIMATE RESEARCH AND POLICY

#### Learn more!

Read the full report on Chevron’s harmful plans:  
[CorporateAccountability.org/  
Chevron'sJunkAgenda](https://CorporateAccountability.org/Chevron'sJunkAgenda)

#### Support this work!

[CorporateAccountability.org/  
Spotlight](https://CorporateAccountability.org/Spotlight)

At a time when systemic transformation is urgently needed, Chevron continues to spur harm and delay justice for communities affected by its business across the globe.

Ecuador, Nigeria, and Richmond, California—these are just some of the places where people have long demanded justice from Chevron for its decades of harm. And with many communities actively campaigning for justice in the face of corporate intimidation, it’s even more important for us to stand in solidarity with them.

One way that we are doing so is by exposing Chevron’s junk climate action as merely more business as usual. In May, we released a hard-hitting report

that exposes Chevron’s “net zero” schemes as cover for unprecedented expansion of oil and gas, and peels back the curtain on some of its lobbying to manipulate climate action and policies.

Our research was covered by media outlets like The Guardian and more. The strong response to our findings further affirms the demands that communities on the front lines of the crisis have been making.

And together, we continued to escalate global pressure on Chevron as well as its enablers—making it more costly for them to continue deceiving the public, harming communities, and polluting and extracting from the Earth.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## A fortune cookie in 1995 pointed me toward organizing—and I've never looked back

**Dear friend,**

I pushed aside the remains of my lo mein at a small corner restaurant in Philadelphia's Chinatown, and cracked open the fortune cookie. The slip of paper inside read: "You are broadminded and socially active."

I had recently returned from living in South Africa during the turbulent and momentous time when Nelson Mandela was elected president. Decades of violent apartheid had been officially defeated by the tenacious, visionary organizing led by Black South Africans.

Now, I was back in the U.S. and headed toward graduate school and an academic career. But having witnessed the world-shifting results of organizing, I was no longer sure that was the right path for me. I had just been offered a job door-knocking for Clean Water Action, and I was trying to decide what to do.

I was 24, feeling a little lost, and looking for direction. That message, bland as the cookie, nevertheless reflected back to me who I was.

Now yellowed and tattered, that slip of paper is still taped to my bookshelf. I've always been grateful for that fortune. It pointed me toward a life of organizing—and I can't imagine doing anything else.

It has been my greatest joy and inspiration to do this work in friendship, partnership, and coalition with people around the world, for almost 30 years. Together, we organize every day toward holding corporations and people in power accountable for the harms they cause.

I see the tangible impact Corporate Accountability and our allies around the world make. I am moved by how much we accomplish when we build together toward what is necessary, not what is politically feasible. And I'm inspired to be traveling this path—which I was nudged onto by a fortune cookie—with you.



Onward,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patti Lynn".

**Patti Lynn**  
Executive Director

## Challenging Wells Fargo executives

We expose a toxic legacy

**"We can't let Wells Fargo continue exploiting and profiting from Black communities."**

ANN-MICHELLE ROBERTS | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF EQUITY & MAJOR GIFTS AND BLACK COLLECTIVE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

This year, Wells Fargo's annual shareholders' meeting took place against a backdrop of public scrutiny of the corporation's legacy of racism, exploitation, and harm.

Corporate Accountability's Black Collective has spent the past year researching and mapping out Wells Fargo's long trail of abuses against Black and brown communities. So when the opportunity to directly challenge Wells Fargo presented itself, we and our allies jumped into action. Funding and investing in institutions and activities that harm Black communities—from police foundations to climate-destructive projects—are just a few examples of how Wells Fargo perpetuates systemic racism today, despite its claims otherwise.

And in addition to calling out their hypocrisy, we challenged Wells Fargo to make its political spending transparent, and to begin addressing the corporation's past wrongs against communities of color.

Your support makes it possible for us to speak truth in the face of enormous power, and to hold abusive corporations like Wells Fargo accountable. Thank you!

### Watch now!

Ann-Michelle speaks truth to power at Wells Fargo's annual meeting:  
[CorporateAccountability.org/WellsFargoSHM](https://CorporateAccountability.org/WellsFargoSHM)

# Q&A

## Member spotlight: Dan Crawford



Dan D. Crawford, now retired, is a former philosophy professor and a longtime supporter of Corporate Accountability.

### What led you to become such a staunch supporter of Corporate Accountability?

My longtime support for Corporate Accountability goes back to when the organization had a different name! I've continually been impressed by the clearly articulated issues, the well-thought-out strategies, and effective campaigns. This is why I've deepened my support and continued to give every year.

### You've been particularly engaged with our water campaign. Why are you so passionate about water justice?

I find it insidious that corporations are trying to make a profit off a need as basic as clean water. It's yet another example of how corporations are taking over our

lives while ruining the environment and tearing our communities apart. I appreciate the approach Corporate Accountability takes to organizing. By partnering with organizations on the ground, they work collaboratively to challenge corporate power—that's important and powerful.

### I've been told that you are an avid music fan. How are you using music to build a more just world?

Fifteen years ago, I built a music hall on my property in rural Pennsylvania and started a concert series in my community. I invite vocal musicians or ensembles from Europe and America to perform at no cost to people who are interested in listening to music of the highest quality.

Music has a healing power that can transport people and help us overcome our fears. And I'm all for doing things that bring people together in person. I use music to do that—build community with the people around me, regardless of who they are.

### Read more!

Check out an extended interview: [CorporateAccountability.org/DanCrawford](https://CorporateAccountability.org/DanCrawford)

## A global demand for justice

We ramp up the call to Kick Big Polluters Out

**"We're chipping away at the corporate power that has held us back from progress for far too long, and opening up more possibilities for climate justice."**

CORINNE JAGER | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF MAJOR GIFTS

In fewer than 10 years, the movement to Kick Big Polluters Out has gone from being perceived as a far-fetched dream to a call that even leaders from the richest and highest-polluting countries are endorsing.

Most recently, members of U.S. Congress and European Parliament came together in a historic movement to demand an end to fossil fuel industry obstruction of climate action.

This is the first time that government officials in some of the most polluting countries in the world are directly calling

out the corporate capture of climate policy and urging the implementation of conflict-of-interest measures at the U.N. climate talks.

Corporate Accountability led this unprecedented organizing through the Kick Big Polluters Out coalition, a network of around 500 organizations around the world that we coordinate.

We are sending a clear message that it's past time for world leaders to respond to the people's demands and deliver true climate justice. And we couldn't have done it without your support!



This cross-parliamentary letter is the strongest statement that lawmakers from the U.S. and the EU have publicly made against the fossil fuel industry. Photo credit: Corporate Europe Observatory

### Take action!

Add your name to the demand to Kick Big Polluters Out: [KickBigPollutersOut.org](https://KickBigPollutersOut.org)

# Stopping privatization threat in Houston

How we and our allies are protecting the human right to water

**“Water systems should always be managed for people and the planet, not the shareholders of any private corporation.”**

NEIL GUPTA | WATER CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR

Earlier this year, Corporate Accountability learned of plans advancing to privatize Houston’s Southeast Water Purification Plant, which serves one million people.

This meant that the city could place a major part of its water system under corporate control for decades. So we quickly alerted grassroots organizers at West Street Recovery, who immediately understood what was at stake—and together, we sprang into action to stop this threat.

Despite the immense risk that this plan poses to Houston’s residents, the city offered little transparency about the process, and no public input on the proposed contract. So we worked closely with West Street Recovery to raise public awareness, bring more community activists and residents into the campaign, and build opposition to this plan.

We also exposed the disastrous track record of the water privatization industry on the local evening news. More specifically, we revealed that the city was considering a partnership with Inframark, which has been the subject of a criminal investigation after allegations that it was falsifying records and doctoring samples related to its wastewater treatment in a different part of the city. This news generated public outrage, and after weeks of public pressure, the City



We are using the momentum from this win to build power behind the demand for the city to abandon its push for privatization of the Southeast Water Purification Plant, which serves one million people. Photo credit: Benjamin Rauls, Unsplash.

of Houston announced that it was ending its contract with Inframark.

The termination of this contract is a huge step in the right direction for taking back public control and stopping water privatization in other parts of the city. And we and our allies are using the momentum from this win to build power behind the demand for the city to completely abandon its plans to privatize Houston’s water.

## Take action!

Keep water in public hands!  
Urge your elected official to support the WATER Act:  
[CorporateAccountability.org/SupportWATERAct](http://CorporateAccountability.org/SupportWATERAct)

## Make a monthly gift

Sustain this work to protect human rights, people’s lives, and the planet.

**Contact** Adwoa Addae, senior membership manager, at [info@CorporateAccountability.org](mailto:info@CorporateAccountability.org) or 617.695.2525.

**Visit** our website at [CorporateAccountability.org/MonthlyGift](http://CorporateAccountability.org/MonthlyGift)

**Send** in the enclosed envelope.

## Why monthly giving?

Your gift works faster and more efficiently to make a bigger impact. You receive insider campaign updates to keep up to date on the influential role you have in creating a more just and equitable world. It’s easy to participate, and you help save resources and expenses.

**Thank you for your partnership!**



**“Clean air, safe water, healthy food—these are all rights that corporations should not be able to take away from anyone. Corporate Accountability’s campaigns are critical to protecting these rights. By giving monthly, I’m playing my part in making sure that we all have what we need to live fulfilling lives.”**

RICHARD SILBERT | LONGTIME VETERAN’S SERVICES OFFICER AND MONTHLY DONOR