

spotlight

2025 Issue 2



Climate justice organizers from across Latin America convened in Bolivia to share strategies of resistance. Photo credit: Plataforma Latinoamericana y del Caribe por la Justicia Climática

Uniting against Big Polluters in the Amazon

An unstoppable force for climate justice in Latin America

“We are uniting to protect our forests, rivers, and communities from corporate abuse and extraction. Together, we are resisting and saying no to false solutions!”

NATHALIE RENGIFO ALVAREZ | LATIN AMERICA
CLIMATE CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR

Learn more!

See the real impact of false solutions in Latin America:
MapaFalsasSoluciones.com

Support this work:

CorporateAccountability.org/Spotlight

From battling forest fires to stewarding the land and waterways of the Amazon, the people of Latin America have long led the movement against corporate exploitation of people and the planet.

But across the region, Big Polluters are descending on these communities and targeting these territories for profit: extracting from the earth through ranching, mining, and drilling and harming people’s lives, traditions, and livelihoods.

To successfully confront large transnational corporations, we need to build deep relationships with the people who are on the front lines of challenging this corporate abuse. And our Latin America climate campaign is helping to bring together climate justice organizers, peasant communities,

and Indigenous leaders from across the region through convenings like the Climate Justice Assembly.

In these collective spaces, activists and community leaders are sharing stories of struggle against Big Polluters, exchanging strategies for resistance, and crafting joint plans to challenge corporate abuse as one united force. This is critical in the lead-up to the next U.N. climate talks in Brazil this November, where we must bring the demands of the people to a space overrun by Big Polluters.

With your support, we are creating a movement for climate justice that centers people’s needs and stretches beyond borders. And together, we are building the power needed to oppose Big Polluters in Latin America and beyond!

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Our shared victories are a bright light of collective power

Dear friend,

When I was young, my mother organized parents in our low-income Mexican neighborhood. Together, they kicked Coca-Cola products and other junk food out of our school. They started a co-op where single moms earned money making homemade food for us. She showed me that a small group of people can take on a transnational corporation—and win.

That truth grounds me today as the regime in the White House tries to dismantle government, sell off its most profitable parts to corporations, and privatize its most essential services. It's all about profit—for the billionaire class, not people.

But in these pages, you'll read how Pittsburgh voted to keep their water system public—a collective win years in the making. It's part of a growing wave of campaign victories against water privatization that members like YOU have helped build. Each win is a bright light cutting through the darkness of corporate greed and showing what's possible when people organize.

Year after year, we organize, campaign, and win. Together, we challenge harmful privatization and corporate greed, because our basic needs and rights shouldn't be up for sale. And together, we protect our freedom to breathe clean air, drink clean water, and take care of our communities, because we all deserve a future where everyone, not just the ultra-wealthy, can thrive.

This work is rooted in that shared vision of justice, dignity, and collective power. Our victories matter—now more than ever. They remind us of our strength, our solidarity, and our refusal to back down.

I'm deeply grateful to be in this fight with you. Together, we're challenging the corporate power behind this regime. Together, we'll make it through this moment to build the future where everyone thrives—no exceptions.



Onward,

A stylized blue ink signature of Ari Belathar.

Ari Belathar
Executive Director

Saving lives by curbing Big Tobacco

We support the movement countering the industry's influence in the Global South

"We're protecting people from the greedy grasp of Big Tobacco and making it harder for this abusive industry to interfere with our lives."

DANIEL DORADO | TOBACCO CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR

From high school students in the U.S. to elders in Ecuador, everyone deserves to live a healthy life without being lured into addiction.

But tobacco corporations are finding new ways to sell and obscenely profit from their deadly products—by targeting young people and people living in the Global South.

For decades, we've documented Big Tobacco's attempts to influence public health policies across Latin America. More recently, we contributed strategic research and supported advocacy efforts that helped advance new laws in Peru and Ecuador, alongside leadership and the work of many local and regional allies.

Peru's recent decision to ban the advertisement of all tobacco and nicotine products, and Ecuador's step to protect the country's mental health policies from Big Tobacco, will help safeguard more people, especially young people, from the industry's deceptive marketing and a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

With each victory, we and our allies are contributing to making the world a healthier place to live in.

Take action!

Demand Big Tobacco pay for its abuses: MakeBigTobaccoPay.org/TakeAction

Q&A

Member spotlight: Julian Kunnie



Julian is a professor and a student of Earth Mother and all life. Julian uses “we” in the Indigenous tradition to recognize one’s innate connection to the Earth and all living things.

Describe your role in the social justice movement.

We’ve been an activist for more than 50 years, educating students about the communities that have occupied Turtle Island (the traditional, Indigenous name for North America) and other Indigenous lands everywhere, supporting the process of reclaiming Indigenous languages and cultures, and helping people reconnect with the Earth.

You are part of the Reading Towards Corporate Accountability group. Why are groups like this important?

Change happens when small groups of people get together and empower each

other. The reading group gives us the chance to reflect and discuss the roots of the oppressive systems that dehumanize people on their own land.

What concerns you the most about the role that corporations play in the world?

Corporate power is at the root of many interlocking issues: colonialism, militarism, racism, sexism, and discrimination. Corporations have turned everything, from people to natural resources, into commodities. That’s why Corporate Accountability’s work to educate people about corporate abuse and to organize strategic actions that affect corporations’ bottom lines is critical.

We are living in a very difficult and unprecedented time. How are you moving through this moment?

We must stay rooted. We can do that by being in community and observing the rest of nature and returning to nature as we are—from the birds taking care of each other to the ants collaborating to build huge anthills.

Read more!

Check out the extended conversation with Julian: CorporateAccountability.org/JulianKunnie

Keeping water in public hands

Pittsburgh residents protect water from corporate control in historic vote

Water is one of our most basic needs—and one that Pittsburgh residents recently protected for generations to come!

This spring, thousands of people voted to ban the sale or lease of the city’s water system to private corporations. But this wasn’t Pittsburgh’s first fight against water privatization.

In 2016, we joined a coalition that successfully exposed Veolia for its role in the city’s lead crisis. Under Veolia’s management, the city’s water authority switched a corrosion control chemical to a cheaper alternative without the required state approval. This happened under a contract that incentivized cost-cutting by giving Veolia a cut of every dollar “saved.”

Though we and our allies made sure the world knew Veolia’s track record in the city and staved off another corporation’s privatization attempt in 2019, the threat of privatization still loomed.

So when the opportunity to ratify this victory arose, Pittsburgh activists moved quickly. They put anti-privatization on the ballot, while we partnered with Pennsylvania United to host a day of action encouraging residents to show up to the polls. And despite industry pressure, the ban passed with 78% of the votes.

Pittsburgh’s story proves that through community organizing and collective action, we can take on the most powerful corporations—and win!

“People across the city sent a clear message to the private water industry that their water is not for sale.”

NISMA GABOBE | SENIOR RESEARCHER

Learn more!

Read our solidarity statement: CorporateAccountability.org/Media/FlintPittsburghStatement

Fanning the flames of resistance

People across the U.S. resist the corporate takeover of our government

"There's room for everyone to be a part of the national movement to challenge our communities and defend our freedoms."

ARI RUBENSTEIN | MANAGING CAMPAIGNS DIRECTOR



Corporate Accountability organizer Teehan McGinness (right) and two friends at the Hands Off! protest in Boston last April. Photo credit: Teehan McGinness

Regardless of where we live, how much money we have, or who we choose to love, we all want to live in a world where our government works for us so we can all thrive.

But in the U.S., corporate CEOs and the politicians in their pockets have turned our government into a weapon against us. They've established a reckless regime that is putting our lives in danger, throwing families into crisis, and attacking our freedoms—all so they can consolidate even more power and reap even more profits.

History has shown us time and again that the many can defeat the money. And from big cities on the East Coast to small towns in the American Midwest, millions of people are mobilizing in opposition to the cruel actions of the current administration.

Corporate Accountability's people-powered campaigns are helping to build this active base of folks agitating for change, with programs like our People Over Profit (POP) Corps and the Rise for Freedom trainings. Through these offerings, we are uniting our members across the political spectrum and sharing with them the skills and strategies needed to confront and stop the harms of this administration.

Everyone has a role to play in defending our democracy—and each person's freedom to make a good living, care for their family, drink clean water, and breathe unpolluted air. And if you are outraged by the current regime's assault on people and the planet, we hope you'll join us!

Take action!

Join the POP Corps:
CorporateAccountability.org/PeopleOverProfitCorps

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

Contact Associate Membership Director Adjwoa Addae at info@CorporateAccountability.org or 617.695.2525.

Visit our website at CorporateAccountability.org/MonthlyGift.

Send your gift 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!



"I believe that our health, our lives, and livelihoods should come before corporations' interests and agendas. This work is critical to preserving our world's health for future generations. Thank you, Corporate Accountability!"

BRANT GOODE, RN, MPH | PROUD PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE AND MONTHLY DONOR



CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY
10 Milk Street, Suite 610 • Boston, MA 02108
617.695.2525 • CorporateAccountability.org



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