PennFuture is leading the transition to a clean energy economy in Pennsylvania, fighting big polluters with legal muscle, enforcing environmental laws, and supporting legislative policy that protects public health. PennFuture is engaging and educating citizens about the realities of climate change, and giving them the tools needed to influence lawmakers on the issues.

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Jacquelyn Bonomo, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
George Jugovic, Jr., Vice President of Legal Affairs
Joy Braunstein, Chief Development Officer
Rob Altenburg, Director, PennFuture Energy Center
Matthew Stepp, Director of Policy
Jay Andrews, Ph.D, Director of Outreach
Susanne Whitehead, Director of Development
Stephanie Rex, Director of Communications
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Alice Baker, Staff Attorney
Abigail M. Jones, Staff Attorney
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Emily Rinaldi, Northeast PA Outreach Coordinator
Alexander Cupo, Southeast PA Outreach Coordinator

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About PennFuture
PennFuture is leading the transition to a clean energy economy in Pennsylvania, fighting big polluters with legal muscle, enforcing environmental laws, and supporting legislative policy that protects public health. PennFuture is engaging and educating citizens about the realities of climate change, and giving them the tools needed to influence lawmakers on the issues.
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Sometimes numbers can speak to a nonprofit’s accomplishments – but it isn’t the only measurement we use at PennFuture to make our case for continued support. Our legal team is first-rate and it collectively provides more than $2 million in low-cost legal services to citizens, communities and conservation groups throughout Pennsylvania, so they may have a voice in decisions that will affect their health and environment.

In recent years, with run-away gerrymandering and an all-out attack on the environment coming from both Harrisburg and Washington D.C., our courts may be our best backstop. In these adverse times, PennFuture’s team serves as a watchdog over regulatory agencies, giving a clarion voice for environmental protection. They file technical comments, create action letters; and when needed, file court actions to force polluters to comply with the law. Case by case, we are building a legal legacy to ensure that Pennsylvania’s environment and public health are protected to the fullest extent of the law. Our hope is to provide a strong defense while far too many legislators are under the influence of dark money.

We must hold our lawmakers accountable. Working together with you and through our alliance with the Conservation Voters of PA, we must change the political climate in Harrisburg and Washington by calling out the many bad decisions that are being made to undermine climate protection efforts while the West is burning up and the South is experiencing historic hurricanes and floods.

What we are witnessing is not normal and foreshadows much worse in the days ahead.

We must use very tool in our tool box. Policy work, lobbying, education and outreach are the other means we use to lead the transition to a clean energy future in Pennsylvania and beyond. Meeting with legislators, community groups and technology experts, we prioritize action steps to protect our air, water and land, and empower citizens to build sustainable communities for future generations.

The urgency has never been clearer.

It takes more than numbers to explain all we do. Our staff is the heart of this organization, and every day, they work to ensure your constitutional rights to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of the environment are upheld.

As we close out this year, my retirement is imminent and Jacquelyn Bonomo, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, will now serve as President and CEO, bringing national experience and demonstrated passion and expertise to the role. I thank Jacqui and the PennFuture staff for a valuable experience and look forward to serving as PennFuture’s President Emeritus for one year.

Thank you for your continued support. We simply could not do what we do without you.

Larry J. Schweiger
President and CEO
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD

How did I find myself serving as the board chair of PennFuture? It probably started sometime in the 50’s growing up outside Erie, Pa. Back then, a 7 year old could tromp off with her friends and explore for hours and hours – and at times, find themselves miles away. Nature was my playground – a safe, exciting and an ever-astonishing gift. In the absence of TV and “required” extracurricular activities, magic was always waiting to be discovered. It was a time of wonder – and wonder is something we never forget.

When John Hanger and Jan Jarrett approached me to join the board of PennFuture, it was perfect timing. After years of environmental leadership in the late 80’s and 90’s, I admittedly became disen-chanted with the movement – primarily because few understood the economics behind any environmental solution. Bottom line: PennFuture got it and I found a home of “like-wondered” and accomplished individuals. Times were good in the early 2000’s – Gov. Ed Rendell was in office and environmental initiatives were unfolding with PennFuture’s leadership.

Today is a different story. Although PennFuture finds itself with stellar staff and leadership, the state and national political scene is dismal with fossil fuel money dismantling environmental protection, even as the effects of climate change are more evident every day. The sad news is that Pennsylvania has the third largest carbon footprint in the nation and is lightyears behind neighboring states in addressing climate change with renewable energy initiatives.

The citizens of Pennsylvania need PennFuture now more than ever and we are determined to deliver on our mission to lead the state in the transition to a clean energy economy.

• When I became board chair last June, we were a board of five – today the board is comprised of 15 passionate individuals from around the state
• Under the leadership of our president Larry Schweiger, PennFuture formed a group of like-minded individuals in the President’s Leadership Council who contribute with their perspectives and circle of influence
• PennFuture now has an alliance with the Conservation Voters of PA, giving us the leverage of a C-4 organization to gain latitude with legislators who support PennFuture’s work
• The Clean Energy Pittsburgh pilot project has been launched and it is our hope that this becomes the blueprint for other communities throughout the state
• Advocates for Conservation and the Environment (ACE) organizes teams of volunteers to educate state and federal legislators on conservation and environmental issues.

. . . all accomplished within the last year.

PennFuture has big plans and with our 20th anniversary next year, it is perfect timing to address the biggest challenge of our lifetime: climate change. Just thinking of how much we – together – can accomplish makes me wonder . . . and fills me with excitement.

Thank you for your continued support, for stretching beyond your comfort zones and contributing to a future world where the magic is still possible.

Char Magaro
Chairperson
PennFuture
When Dawn and Brian Gorsline purchased property in Fairfield Township, they were overjoyed.

In 1999, Dawn and Brian were looking for property that would allow them to build a home to raise a family in a healthy and safe environment – a place where they could conserve land, grow Christmas trees and watch generations of their family experience the beauty of nature at its fullest.

Their search led them to an area in Fairfield Township, Lycoming County, zoned Residential-Agriculture. Dawn had grown up in the area and her family still lived there. “It was the perfect place with the best people living in it,” she said.

Little did she realize that several years after building her dream home, Dawn’s desire to protect her family’s way of life would involve her in a constitutional law case – with the help of PennFuture’s legal team – that would lead all the way to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

In 2013, a neighbor mentioned to Dawn that a company, Inflection Energy, was looking at locating a shale gas well pad near their homes, and that a township meeting had been scheduled. Dawn recalls the meeting. “It was filled with angry people who had a lot of questions,” she said. It was at this meeting that she met one of PennFuture’s legal team members, who, after studying the township’s zoning ordinance, said, “We have a case.”

Because the township’s ordinance did not expressly regulate oil and gas development, in order to allow shale gas development in its R-A district, the township had to find that use of the land for construction and operation of a well pad was “similar to and compatible” with other land uses expressly allowed in the district. Despite opposition from those most impacted by the well, the township’s board of supervisors approved use of the land to construct and operate the well pad. Within 3,000 feet of the pad were 126 drinking wells. The owner of the property on which the well pad would be located lived in another township.

PennFuture, representing the Gorslines and their neighbors, the Batkowskis, challenged the township’s decision in Common Pleas Court.

Dawn and her neighbors quickly experienced the impacts associated with construction of a gas well pad in a residential neighborhood. Seismic “thumper” trucks showed up unexpectedly; strangers with chainsaws appeared in backyards without permission; helicopters hovered overhead and dropped cables across those same properties. It generally felt like life had gone from predictable to chaos in a few short months.

When Inflection began constructing a holding pond for the well pad despite the pending appeal, PennFuture’s legal team sprang into action and obtained an injunction to prevent further construction activities until the judge could rule on PennFuture’s challenge. After deliberation, Judge Mark Lovvechio issued a decision in favor of the Gorslines and Batkowskis, reversing the township’s conditional use application. Judge Lovvechio believed that Inflection had failed to show that the proposed land use was “similar to and compatible with” other land uses expressly allowed in the district.

Not to be outdone, Inflection appealed its loss to the Commonwealth Court. After written and oral argument, a three-judge panel of the Court reversed the Common Pleas Court’s decision. The opinion was extraordinary in that the Court held that an
industrial land use that uses heavy machinery, large diesel engines, and involves the storage of highly flammable material, toxic waste and explosives, and generates waste characterized as industrial by the state of Pennsylvania, was “similar to and compatible with” other land uses expressly allowed in the R-A district, such as single family homes. The ruling effectively cut an exception in the zoning ordinance so wide that it would result in shale gas development being allowed everywhere, regardless of the nature of the zoning district. It was an outrageous demonstration of judicial overreach.

Not giving up, PennFuture sought allocator permission to have the case reviewed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Only a small percentage of these types of petitions are granted by the Court, but this one of them. The case presents for decision the issues of whether shale gas development constitutes an industrial land use, and whether the government violates the constitutional rights of existing property owners who relied on the township’s zoning scheme by allowing incompatible land uses in the zoning district in which the residents reside. The case was argued on March 8, 2017. The case has the potential to establish statewide precedent on a number of important environmental and public health issues facing Pennsylvania.

Dawn feels strongly that clean air and clean water should never be threatened and that we – all of us – need to fight for our basic rights to protect those natural resources and public health and safety. Dawn teaches third grade and environmental science at her primary school and regularly emphasizes to her students that, “wherever you step, there is life where you walk. You cannot just abuse the land and expect good results.”
After the 2017 presidential election, Brian Polilli knew he needed to get involved in the democratic process to make a difference on environmental issues – he just wasn’t sure where to turn.

“Post-election, I was pretty aggravated about the direction of the country and since then, we have seen a lot of environmental standards being relaxed. The global warming issue is something we can’t continue to drag our feet on,” Polilli said. “I have always been concerned about these issues and the election motivated me to take a further look at what I could do.”

When he found PennFuture’s newly created Advocates for Conservation and the Environment (ACE) Program, he discovered an outlet and the guidance needed to take the first steps to meet with his elected officials. This program enables volunteers to voice their concerns about environmental issues directly to their elected representatives in their home district offices.

PennFuture’s ACE program organizes teams of volunteers to educate their state and federal legislators about conservation and environmental issues. ACE volunteers provide policy makers with an opportunity to learn from concerned citizens who live in their respective districts about environmental and public health issues that affect their communities.

“ACE committees meet with Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives, to advocate policy rather than to advance an ideological agenda,” said Jay Andrews, Ph.D, PennFuture’s Director of Outreach. “Such pragmatism is not just for show; it is an effective way to realize tangible benefits for our members, for the public, and for the environment. ACE is about policy, not partisanship.”

Polilli, 39, of Phoenixville, Pa., is a scientist with Johnson & Johnson. As an ACE volunteer, he recently participated in two meetings that engaged State Rep. Becky Corbin’s (R-155) office, and State Sen. John Rafferty’s (R-44) office.

“These meetings are valuable no matter what happens. When you show your elected officials that enough people are concerned, it matters,” Polilli said. “We are trying to educate them and I learn something more as well in terms of the process. It helps when you participate in conversations and have experience with your elected official, rather than just reading about them in an article.”

PennFuture outreach staff worked with Brian and other volunteers prior to the meeting, providing talking points and information about key environmental issues in his district, including education on methane pollution, watershed protection, and policy proposals that advance energy efficiency.

Polilli’s biggest takeaway from the program is that the process is not as daunting as others may think. He is also more aware than ever that regular citizens need to voice their concerns about the environment to their elected officials to make sure progress is made.

“Don’t just assume the right thing is going to get done,” Polilli said. “That is frequently not the case. If you really believe certain things should be done, complaining about it on Facebook doesn’t do anything. This is an opportunity. It is far less intimidating in the moment than you might think. These are professional people who are pleasant to talk to. If you go in to have a conversation, they will listen. If you know a little bit of information and are reasonably engaged on an issue, it’s easy enough to talk about it.”

For more information on the ACE program, visit www.pennfuture.org.
PENNFuture’s new alliance with Conservation Voters of PA strengthens our impact

In January 2017, PennFuture and Conservation Voters of PA (CVPA) formed a strategic partnership to work collaboratively to win stronger environmental protections across the Commonwealth. CVPA is organized as a 501(c) (4) organization with an affiliated Political Action Committee, founded on the belief that good environmental laws can only come from good environmental lawmakers. CVPA participates directly in elections, lobbies legislators on behalf of pro-environmental legislation, and brings a different set of tools to the project of protecting Pennsylvania’s environment.

By combining PennFuture’s policy leadership and legal resources with CVPA’s advocacy and political expertise, both organizations are even better positioned to secure clean air, water, and land for every Pennsylvanian. We are pooling our resources and expanding our programs to meet the ever increasing anti-environmental forces head on. Both entities play a key role in environmental protection, and working together strengthens both organizations, and the movement as a whole.

Under the new alliance, PennFuture has launched a Department of Civic Engagement to further its goals of citizen outreach, education, and engagement. Under this program, PennFuture works to increase the number of citizens playing an active role in our democracy and in environmental protections, and provide them with the tools and the knowledge to stand up for a cleaner future. We believe that an engaged and active population offers the only long-term protection for the environment.

PennFuture will continue this work through programs ranging from voter participation and registration mailings, to voter education on key environmental issues, to outreach efforts aimed at moving engaged citizens up the ladder of civic engagement. This work focuses on engaging members of the New American Majority – unmarried women, people of color, and young people, who are traditionally underrepresented in the civic process.

State Rep. Leanne Krueger-Braneky, D-Delaware and Conservation Voters of PA Executive Director Josh McNeil

“We believe that an engaged and active population offers the only long-term protection for the environment.”

CONSERVATION VOTERS OF PA
FINANCIALS

Revenues

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Total Revenues: $3,734,675.00

Expenses

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Total Expenses: $2,657,085.00

Start of Year Net Assets: $2,497,827.00

End of Year Net Assets: $3,595,417.00

Program Expenses

- Program
- Operations
- Fundraising

Sources of Income

- Philanthropic Support
- Earned Income
- Investment Income
- Other
ON THE GROUND, IN THE STATE HOUSE, AND IN THE COURTROOM, PENNFUTURE IS FIGHTING FOR YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS.

PennFuture staff members and volunteers participated in events throughout the year, including the March for Science in Philadelphia, the Climate March in Washington, D.C., an environmental march in Harrisburg, Pa., and more.
PennFuture again hosted the Women in Conservation Awards, and also convened its first community meetings for Clean Energy Pittsburgh, a pilot program that will expand to Clean Energy PA in 2018.
Air Quality
- PennFuture took legal action against U.S. Steel’s Clairton Coke Works, one of the largest polluters in Pennsylvania for violations under the Clean Air Act.

Climate and Energy
- PennFuture continues its advocacy work for energy efficiency by participating in PUC proceedings under Act 129. PennFuture advocated for expanding the Total Resource Cost (TRC) test to include savings from decreased usage of water and fossil fuels. The TRC is the test by which energy efficiency plans submitted by electric distribution companies are evaluated. In its Act 129 TRC test order, the PUC quoted PennFuture’s comments in justifying its decision to expand the scope of the TRC test to include savings related to water conservation and reduced reliance on fossil fuels. Prior to this point, the PUC interpreted the governing statute as not allowing consideration of such non-energy savings.
- PennFuture led a coalition of environmental groups and solar industry stakeholders in opposing changes to the net metering rules under the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards (AEPS) act. The Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) largely adopted our comments on the initial proposal, which resulted in the PUC adopting several of our proposed changes through its Advanced Notice of Final Rulemaking.
- On behalf of a coalition of nonprofits, PennFuture drafted and submitted a series of written comments on Phase III Act 129 Plans submitted by electric distribution companies. We continued to be active in the Phase II and Phase III stakeholder processes.
- With the unusual action taken by the US Supreme Court to stay implementation of the federal Clean Power Plan, efforts to roll back carbon emissions to fight climate change will be solely dependent on state-level advocacy. PennFuture is working with a coalition of advocates in Harrisburg to support the continued development of a state Clean Power Plan, and pushing back against fierce opposition to developing such a plan.
- The sixth annual Pittsburgh Solar Tour in October 2016 featured 28 homes and businesses that were visited by 120 “solar tourists” and included new features such as bike routes and sustainable businesses.
- As part of its statewide alternative energy advocacy, PennFuture released the report, Clean Energy Wins: A Policy Roadmap for Pennsylvania in 2014. The report offers a series of policy recommendations around energy efficiency, wind energy, and solar energy, with a particular focus on the benefits Pennsylvania could see in job creation and economic growth. PennFuture has continued to use the report as a basis for launching specific policy initiatives with the Governor and legislature.

Gas Development
- PennFuture is representing families that opposed the location of a shale gas well pad in the middle of their residential neighborhood in Fairfield Township, Lycoming County. The township granted the company a conditional use permit, but on appeal the Court of Common Pleas overturned the issuance of the permit in part on the basis of the Supreme Court’s decision in Robinson Township. The company and Township appealed that decision to Commonwealth Court, which issued a badly reasoned decision that shale gas well developments were “similar to and compatible with” “public service facilities” in a residential zoned district. The opinion, by a conservative panel of the Commonwealth Court, was plainly result oriented and threatens to reopen shale gas development across all zoned districts – a result that threatens to undermine the Supreme Court’s decision in Robinson Township. PennFuture sought allocuter with the PA Supreme Court. The case was argued in the
PennFuture successfully represented families in Mt. Pleasant Township, Washington County who opposed the location of shale gas well pads next to their K-12 school complex. PennFuture opposed the pads on the basis that the township’s ordinance was unconstitutional under Robinson Township, and that locating the pads so close to the school would pose an unacceptable risk of harm to the children. The company withdrew the permits after several days of hearings. PennFuture has been meeting with the citizens groups and sought information about the township’s ordinance under the PA Right to Know Law. PennFuture filed a substantive challenge to declare the entire ordinance invalid.

Clean Water

PennFuture sued the City of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority over how it was administering its green infrastructure ordinance. PennFuture agreed to a settlement that, moving forward, clarifies and assures that publicly funded construction projects will be required to implement green infrastructure plans that prevent the offsite discharge of any stormwater to area streams and rivers.

PennFuture sued the Borough of Confluence to stop it from continuing to discharge untreated sewage into a part of the Youghiogheny River near Ohiopyle State Park used by thousands of Pennsylvanians for a variety of recreational opportunities. PennFuture reached a settlement that requires the Borough to engineer and install a completely new collection and conveyance system that will eliminate the raw sewage discharges – only forty years after passage of the Clean Water Act.

PennFuture sued the PADEP over administration of its municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) program. PennFuture agreed to a settlement that affects a statewide change in how the state permits municipal stormwater discharges to impaired waters. Among other things, the agreement improves public notice and comment opportunities, and improves protocols intended to assure that limitations in the permit comply with wasteload allocations in streams that are impaired and subject to total maximum daily load plans.

PennFuture reached a settlement in the organization’s coal mine “bonding program” litigation, which was filed in 1999. That case contested the financial reclamation guarantees required by Pennsylvania for failing to satisfy the federal standard of ensuring complete reclamation of each regulated mine, including perpetual treatment of post-mining discharges of polluted mine drainage to Pennsylvania’s streams.

Advocated for millions in federal funding to improve and protect water quality in the multi-state Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Engaging Citizens

In November 2016, more than 250 citizens attended our Post-Election Forum for a discussion about what the outcome of the national and state elections could have on the future of Pennsylvania’s environment.

In early 2017, PennFuture launched its statewide Advocates for Conservation and the Environment (ACE) program, training volunteers to educate legislators about the full range of environmental and conservation issues that we work on in Pennsylvania. To-date, 180 people in 25 districts have volunteered to take part in ACE and 17 meetings have been held with legislators which included more than 50 volunteers.
THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Thank you to our Leadership Level Supporters and Foundations ($1,000 and greater annual support listed by name) and all of the greater than 1,000 other individuals, businesses and organizations providing philanthropic support to PennFuture without whom we could not do our work.

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Ann Foster
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