

Michelle Martinez

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EDUCATION | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND PLANNING | UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN | 2008
BA ENGLISH LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE, ANTHROPOLOGY MINOR | UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN | 2003
CERTIFICATION IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION | MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY JSRI | 2017
DEAL FELLOWSHIP | WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY DAMON J KEITH CENTER FOR CIVIL RIGHTS | 2017
TISHMAN VISITING SCHOLAR | THE NEW SCHOOL | 2022
MOVEMENT LEADERSHIP FELLOW | CUNY SCHOOL AND LABOR AND URBAN STUDIES | 2022

KEY SKILLS

MOVEMENT BUILDING

- Seeding and designing collaborative processes and campaigns using principles for equitable intergroup collaboration; excels in strategic planning, project management and design, and vision and mission alignment; accountable governance and accountability tools for grassroots leadership, and equitable event planning.

COMMUNICATION

- Exact and clear narrative for climate justice with excellent design of communications, verbal and written, visual, public speaking, multi-media including online communications, media and narrative formation; published and quoted in online and print media.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Ascribes to a transformative leadership model, to which those around you are equal participants in the design and implementation of collaborative planning towards social change utilizing different forms of knowledge, research, experiential and political power.

EXPERIENCE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & STATEWIDE COORDINATOR | MICHIGAN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COALITION | JULY 2017-FEB 2022

ONLINE AT: MICHIGANEJ.ORG

- Grew MEJC organization to be a leader on state and federal policy, fundraised \$1m and conducted program design for 11 employees, established 5 community-research partnerships, designed collective governance models for social change
- Launched climate justice campaigns/actions: [Work for Me DTE](#) (2017), [March for the Green New Deal](#) (2019), Michigan Alliance for Justice in Climate (2020) which led Michigan congressional efforts for the Build Back Better agenda in Michigan, receiving Congressional recognition for this work
- Established local, state and national partnerships for critical alignment and success including Climate Justice Alliance, Equitable and Just National Climate Platform, and Midwest EJ Network

- Curated Michigan Environmental Justice Statewide Summit, in which 250+ participants convened to discuss race and the environment in Michigan 2014, 2018, 2020 and 2021 Climate Justice leaders statewide retreats
- Implemented 5 years of multi-ethnic/ multi-racial community education on environmental racism training over 5 dozen BIPOC leaders on environmental justice in SW Detroit and Dearborn
- Orator at multiple hearings, public comments at state and federal hearings including FERC, MPSC, Congress, EPA and EGLE
- Delivered public speeches at countless conferences, university, social organizations, civic organizations including National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences, University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Northern Michigan University, Wayne State University, University of Detroit-Mercy, and more
- Smashed media narratives that center white conservationism, pushing Black, Indigenous people of color as messengers and leaders, rejecting victimhood to leaders with clear visions, and demands in legacy press, animated, video production, social media and radio.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | THIRD HORIZON CONSULTING | NOVEMBER 2015- 2017

- Facilitated strategic planning, equity assessments with social justice and environmental organizations to assist in organizational sustainability, justice and equity
- Engage in public speaking events, academic talks and community dialogues on race, environment, and more
- Participate in collaborative and creative designs in community outreach, media and issue research to support media

SELECTED CLIENTS: Global Action Incineration Alternatives; Power Up- Pass on Gas; National Wildlife Federation Great Lakes Chapter; MI Capuchin Ministries; We the People of Detroit Community Research Collective; Trabajadores Hispanos Unidos de Detroit/ United Hispanic Workers of Detroit.

NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF URBAN PROGRAMS | CENTER FOR WHOLE COMMUNITIES | MARCH 2015-OCTOBER 2015

- Directed national programming for non-profit environmental groups seeking assistance in organizational development for equitable outcomes in environmental programming including the National Parks Service and The Nature Conservancy
- Designed programming, budget forecasting, managed online and in-person staff communications
- Spearheaded the implementation of organizational dialogue, tours, planning and evaluation
- Managed program logistics for company retreats, meetings, agendas and curriculum.

POLICY ASSOCIATE | CONSORTIUM OF HISPANIC AGENCIES | MAY 2012-MARCH 2014

- Designed and implemented multi-stakeholder 3-year strategic planning process for a new Latino-led policy think tank in Southwest Detroit
- Developed and authored policy reports for 6 Latino-led non-profit agencies in SW Detroit; utilized popular education techniques to translate complex policy agendas into simple, translatable materials
- Spearheaded voter engagement and outreach plan for 2013 Get Out the Vote, and voter education collaborative We are District 6
- Planned and launched the 2012 Latino Agenda at University of Michigan-Dearborn, 250 person event
- Participated in Latino Leadership Institute on non-profit management.

REGIONAL ORGANIZER | SIERRA CLUB | SEPTEMBER 2009-MAY 2012

- Organized leaders from SE Michigan to advocate for GHG emissions reductions, and cost-saving technologies in regional SE Michigan, including ARRA community benefits agreement
- Educational lobbying with key decision-makers in the public and private sector at the state, local, and federal level to discuss clean energy solutions
- Developed media strategy and online networks advancing environmental justice messages in online and print media
- Advocated for local policies to advance economic development in clean energy solutions in Detroit, particularly SW Detroit.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Best Mom in the World 1981-2099, She is the best, She is Nice, by Zahra L. Martinez-Salmouni, Age 7, 2021
Congressional Record, In Recognition of Michelle Martinez, by Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, Dec 14, 2021
State of Michigan, Special Tribute to Michelle Martinez, by State Senator Stephanie Chang, Dec 15, 2021
Advocate of the Year, Clean Water Action (2021)
Community Leadership Award, Green Taskforce, City of Detroit (2021)
Michigan Coalition for Human Rights Youth Activist Award, MCHR (2020)
Top 25 Latinx of Michigan, Hispanic/ Latino Commission of Michigan (2019)
Sustainable Community Champion Award, EcoWorks (2019)
Detroit Equity Action Lab Fellowship, Wayne State University Law School (2017)
Dia de la Mujer Madrina Award, Michigan State University (2011)
Maurice Sugar Voice for Justice Award, Sugar Law Center Detroit, MI (2011)
Environmental Justice Community Recognition Award, Original Citizens of SW Detroit (2011)
Marshall Weinberg Fellowship Award, SNRE-University of Michigan (2008)
Great Lakes Fellowship, Cooperative Institute for Limnology and Ecosystems Research (2007)
Rackham Graduate Studies Summer Travel Grant (2007)

PUBLICATIONS

Martinez, Michelle. "Honoring Earth: Healing the Carceral Mind and Climate Crisis with Joyful Interconnectedness." *The Sandbox Revolution: Raising Kids for a Just World*, edited by Lydia Wylie-Kellermann, Broadleaf Books, 2021.

Martinez, Michelle. "Environmental Justice and Detroit's Long Shadow." *Gonna Trouble the Water*, edited by Miguel De La Torre, PILGRIM PRESS, 2021.

Martinez, Michelle. "Opinion: Thank You Congresswoman for Your NO Vote." *Planet Detroit*, 8 Nov. 2021, <https://planetdetroit.org/2021/11/opinion-thank-you-congresswoman-for-your-no-vote/>.

Martinez, Michelle. "Opinion: It's Time to Get to Work on Climate." *Planet Detroit*, 12 Aug. 2021, <https://planetdetroit.org/2021/08/opinion-its-time-to-take-get-to-work-on-climate/>.

Martinez, Michelle. "We Need to Put Together a Plan That Honors People in This Place, on This Land." *A People's Atlas of Detroit*, edited by Linda Campbell et al., Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 2020.

Martinez, Michelle. "Dispatch from SW Detroit: Seven Generations Seeking Good Home, Good Faith, Strong Will, Hard Working AKA Get Your Own Damn Holiday and Stopping Dressing up like a Fucking Mexican." *The Detroit Neighborhood Guidebook*, edited by Aaron Foley, Belt Publishing, Cleveland, OH, 2017.

Martinez, Michelle, et al. "Fishing on the Detroit River: Historical Pollution, Environmental Racism and the Scientific State." *Liberation Science: Putting Science to Work for Social and Environmental Justice*, edited by Steven Howard Emerman et al., Lulu Press, San Bernardino, CA, 2015.

ACTIVITIES

PLANET DETROIT | BOARD MEMBER [2021-PRESENT]

WE THE PEOPLE-MI | BOARD MEMBER [2020-PRESENT]

MICHIGAN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COALITION | BOARD MEMBER [2022-Present]

SIERRA CLUB EJ ACTION GROUP | MEMBER [2018-2019]

SWIMMING IN THE DETROIT RIVER STORY COLLECTIVE | FOUNDER/MEMBER [2016-2018]

MIRA RADICAL ART COLLECTIVE | FOUNDER/MEMBER [2011-2018]

BEWARE OF THE DANDELIONS COHORT | MEMBER [2016]

NORTHEND WOODWARD COMMUNITY GARDEN | BOARD MEMBER [2008-2010]

CENTRO OBRERO WORKERS CENTER DETROIT | VOLUNTEER [2008-2013]

FRIENDS OF THE DETROIT RIVER | BOARD MEMBER [2008-2009]

IN THE NEWS

PROFILE: [PLANET DETROIT \(2020\)](#)

VIDEO PRODUCTION:

["The Awakening"](#). Produced by Michelle Martinez and Rei Fielder, drawn by Pablo Castro

["Detroit Community Leaders on Climate Change."](#) Now This News. Produced by Michelle Martinez, Antonio Cosme, Directed by Paige Woods.

QUOTED IN SELECTED ARTICLES

[Intersecting Crisis of Climate Change, Great Lakes Now](#)

[The Blackest City in the United States is Facing an Environmental Justice Nightmare. The Guardian](#)
[DTE and Consumers Energy are Broken and Dangerous. Is it time for publicly owned utilities? Metro Times](#)
[Environmental Groups' Greatest Obstacle May Not Be Republican Opposition. Politico](#)
[Sanders, Tlaib, Dingell push for infrastructure improvements, environmental justice in Metro Detroit. The Detroit News](#)
[How many 500-year floods must Detroit endure in a decade. Grist](#)
[Researchers hand Michigan Officials a tool to remedy environmental injustice. Will they use it? Environmental Health News](#)
[COVID Plus Decades of Pollution Are a Nasty Combo for Detroit. Bloomberg News.](#)
[Why Detroit Could be the Engine for the Green New Deal. YES!](#)

HEADSHOT

