



Photo Credit: Isaiah Thomas



DOWNWINDERS AT RISK

IMPACT REPORT 2025



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy end of the year to you all!

Our word for this year has been resilience.

In the past twelve months, we've seen firsthand how the federal government is working to move our communities backwards. After the Trump Administration stripped a \$500,000 grant that would have increased SharedAirDFW's system coverage into Arlington and Fort Worth, we filed a class action lawsuit along with a coalition of environmental organizations to reverse this catastrophic decision.

This is why I am so proud of the work Downwinders at Risk has done this year.

We do not wait, hide, or back down from threats to environmental justice. Our success this year builds on the passage of ForwardDallas in 2024. Along with the kickoff of a rezoning meeting in West Dallas, we won the successful rezoning of Floral Farms and a commitment to beginning the rezoning process in Joppa. In Fort Worth, we are continuing the fight against multiple industrial rezonings in Echo Heights and the Jennings - St. Louis neighborhoods, strengthening our environmental justice advocacy across the metroplex.

We also launched an extension of our Toxic Twins Campaign fighting for the removal of GAF and TAMKO. We were thrilled to secure the first public statements by District 7 Councilman Bazaluda and District 6 Councilwoman Cadena, who publicly supported the initiation to remove these toxic factories.

At Downwinders, we know that building resilience means investing in our team. We were proud to participate in two competitive professional development programs this year to strengthen our programming and administration: the Social Venture Partners Dana Jewett

Residency Capstone Program and the United Way's Social Innovation Accelerator. Whether you have been a Downwinder for 30 years or a few months, your support has allowed us to remain resilient in the face of every new challenge.

We sincerely thank you for your contributions as we continue the fight for justice!

Signature
Caleb Roberts
Executive Director, Downwinders at Risk



OUR MISSION

Since 1994, DFW has been the epicenter of the fight for corporate and government accountability concerning air pollution. At Downwinders at Risk Education Fund, we are dedicated to building a grassroots constituency and creating new strategies for clean air in North Texas by informing, connecting, and mobilizing citizens to demand stricter regulations.

OUR COMMITMENT

We are deeply committed to working toward environmental justice by ensuring decision-making around pollution becomes a democratic process. Above all, we strive to provide solutions, fund grassroots organizers, and deliver the best scientific insight to communities impacted by the worst pollution.

2025 BY THE NUMBERS



650
000

Through our organizing efforts, we prevented 650,000 cubic yards per year of pollution from preventing the opening of a Fort Worth batch plant in an environmental justice community



We held 65 community meetings across the city to train our partners how to sustain neighborhood engagement and promote social change.

65



With the launch of our volunteer program, "Tapped In," we hosted three recruitment events and trained 20 volunteers to become community leaders

20



This year, we engaged with ~300 community members during public outreach events and educational programming

300



In our efforts to change policies affecting future injustices, we successfully removed over 500 acres of industrial zoning from the Floral Farms community

500



Affirming our commitment to inclusivity, we grew our staff to include bilingual (Spanish) community organizer Esmeralda Zuniga, who has been an invaluable asset to the team



Left to right: Executive Director Caleb Roberts, Organizer Alicia Kendrick, and new team member Esmeralda Zuniga

ORGANIZING: CREATING CAPACITY IN FRONTLINE COMMUNITIES

Our organizing work centers on engaging with those who live or work in frontline neighborhoods, where we employ grassroots tactics like block-walking, community meetings, and relationship-building to provide people with the skills and confidence to drive change.

In Joppa this year, we focused on building neighborhood power. The neighborhood-led initiatives this year were to garner more resident engagement in the environmental justice fight against TAMKO and other industrial sources in the area. During a few previous canvassing sessions throughout the last year Joppa residents noticed an influx of people coming to Joppa and dumping their trash. This sparked the initiative to keep Joppa clean, so in partnership with Justice for Joppa/Justicia para Joppa, and the SERUN Foundation we helped host community trash pick-ups. During our trash-pick-up days we were able to pick up over 4300 lbs of trash and bulk items. Creating a real sense of responsibility to keep Joppa clean.

After the Joppa Environmental Health Project results were shared, we learned about the health disparities that exist in the Joppa community. We were tasked with the thought process; how are we helping to solve the problem we shined a light on. So this year we also made a significant effort to invest in the health of Joppa residents. In partnership with Healing Hands we also hosted community health days moving towards our ultimate goal of establishing a brick and mortar clinic in Joppa to combat the health issues created by industrial adjacency.

In West Dallas, we were able to see the effect of all the hard work accomplished over the years by achieving the 5 signature memo. This officially begins the amortization process of GAF, the largest Industrial polluter in West Dallas. The path to attaining this win was met by direct contact with the community inviting them to meetings and events. This allowed us to overflow the room past capacity for the District 6 Dallas Budget Townhall. Along with hosting a District 6 Candidate forum moderated by community leaders.

In Fort Worth, we fought for a comprehensive plan for Echo Heights. Holding community learning sessions to engage the community on land use and zoning practices within Fort Worth. In this process we were able to welcome three new communities to the FWECC family. In the fight against industrial encroachment within Fort Worth neighborhoods, residents were able to see the process of city workings. This along with Nature Walks to show the effects on the bird and animal populations in parks closer to industrial pollution was accomplished this year.



Photo credit: Dallas Morning News Fund the Fund campaign representatives at the District 7 Budget Town Hall where Councilman Bazaldua publicly committed to assessing the cost for amortizing TAMKO.

THE TOXIC TWINS

As low-income communities of color, Joppa and West Dallas host two of the largest polluters in the metro: GAF and TAMKO, which have a long history of harmful sulfur dioxide pollution and decades of public nuisance complaints. We've deemed them the "Toxic Twins."

Due to racist zoning, these harmful asphalt shingle factories have been operating in Black and Brown neighborhoods for over 80 years, and are owned by wealthy white families who continue to profit from the poisoning of Dallas residents.

This year, we advocated for the City Council to commit to funding the removal of both factories through their newly created "non-conforming use fund."

Our coalition consisted of over 40 representatives from over a dozen organizations, attended half a dozen public budgeting meetings, met with 5 council members or their staff, during the campaign.

Because of our efforts, Councilman Bazaldua of Joppa and Councilwoman Cadena of West Dallas agreed to begin the appraisal process to determine costs associated with the closure of the factories.

FLORAL FARMS

Our organizing in Floral Farms began after local resident Marsha Jackson discovered Shingle Mountain—a 100,000-ton mass of roofing shingles dumped near her home. We successfully organized the shutdown and cleanup of the mountain in 2022.

Photo Credit: The Dallas Morning News



This year, the community was finally rezoned and all future industrial development has been preempted. New development in the neighborhood must comply with new zoning that aligns with the community's desire for residential protections and minimum development in the floodplain of the Trinity River Forest.



Shingle Mountain prior to cleanup (Photo Credit: The Dallas Morning News)



Photo Credit: Fort Worth Report
Members of the Fort Worth Environmental Coalition of Communities protesting the expansion of a FedEx trucking facility near the already overburdened Echo Heights community.

ADVOCACY: REPRESENTING NORTH TEXANS' RIGHT TO CLEAN AIR AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

As the leading advocate for clean air in North Texas, we educate officials on local issues, act as plaintiffs in clean air lawsuits, and partner with organizations to implement environmental justice programs.

SUING THE TRUMP EPA

In 2024, we received a \$500,000 grant from the EPA to expand our air monitor efforts through SharedAirDFW, with work meant to begin in January 2025. However, the Trump administration revoked this funding in May. With support from Lawyers for Good Governance and Earthjustice, we have filed a class action lawsuit to reverse this catastrophic decision.

SUING THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION...AGAIN

This fall, Downwinders also joined Earthjustice and a coalition of twelve environmental groups in filing another lawsuit against the Trump administration over its illegal use of presidential exemptions. These exemptions allowed 68 coal-fired power plants to postpone complying with tighter standards for mercury, arsenic, and toxic emissions.

Emissions rising from the dual-fired W.A. Parish Generating Station in Fort Bend County, Texas Credit: RM VM via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0



EDUCATION: LEADING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TRAININGS, COURSES, AND RESEARCH

Access to information about the air we breathe, neighborhood polluters, and how to engage in environmental decision-making is complex by design; the powers that be rarely invite accountability.

In partnership with universities and nonprofit organizations, Downwinders equips communities and policy makers with critical information about the impact of air pollution and how we can take action.

COMMUNITY

We had an action-packed year of community engagement in 2025!

- We hosted six community events across the metro and participated in three partnership events, directly engaging over 200 participants
- We participated in Oak Cliff Earth Day, garnering 14 new volunteer sign ups
- We secured 18 new donors as part of our annual donor campaign
- We also collected and removed a whopping 1,340 lbs of trash during the Joppa Earth month cleanup
- To grow our volunteer opportunities, we launched our Tapped In volunteer recruitment program this summer, where we recruited over a dozen new volunteers





Organizer Alicia Kendrick facilitating a youth activity at Patagonia in Deep Ellum as part of their Earth Month grantee-palooza event.

Participants at the Fort Worth nature walk in partnership with DuBay Labs.



(Left to right) Executive Director Caleb Roberts, Marsha Jackson with Southern Sector Rising, Emanuel Davis with Justice for Joppa speak at the UCC National Earth Summit, where they addressed hundreds of congregants nationwide about environmental racism and how we fight back in North Texas.



Members of Downwinders, Justice for Joppa, and other volunteers participate in the cleanup effort in Joppa.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

Texas A&M University Law Clinic EJ Report: We provided a significant amount of background research and data on pollution exposure in Fort Worth to the Texas A&M Environmental & Natural Resources Systems Clinic, who conducted substantial historical and legal research across Fort Worth to produce their report entitled, Environmental Justice Guidance for Fort Worth Environmental Coalition of Communities.

Texas A&M University Health Studies publication: In 2020, we partnered with researchers at Texas A&M University to launch a three-year public health study on air pollution and community health in Joppa and West Dallas. This year, the three year summary of the research was officially published! You can read the [full text here](#).

Tapped In Volunteer Recruitment event
in summer 2025



Members of the UTD engineer team and DAR staff work to remove a Joppa monitor for repairs

GUEST LECTURERS AT SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

Board members Cindy Hua and Evelyn Mayo were invited to present lectures at SMU's Global Sustainable Development course. The class of 30+ undergraduates learned about how climate change and EJ are connected and how they can join efforts currently underway in DFW.

REPAIRING SHARED AIR DFW WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS DALLAS

Thanks to your generosity, our North Texas Giving Day funds will go toward repairing our SharedAirDFW air quality monitors! UT Dallas engineering students who design and build the monitors joined DAR team members on the streets of Joppa and West Dallas to determine appropriate repairs. The next step will be to replace central nodes in Joppa, West Dallas, and Paul Quinn to get the SharedAir Network back online.



Cindy Hua presenting on climate change and environmental justice at SMU.



Cindy Hua and Collin Yarbrough represented DAR as Board Members at the SVP program event

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

This year, DAR was selected for several competitive opportunities to improve our Board governance and expand our reach:

- We were selected as a recipient of the Social Venture Partners Dana Jewett Residency Capstone Project, where we built our first Customer Relationship Management (CRM) model to manage and optimize interactions with our invaluable partners
- We joined the highly competitive United Way of Metro Dallas's Social Innovation Accelerator Cohort, receiving a \$25,000 grant to scale our impact
- Our team also engaged with regional and national networks at
- Climate Week NYC and the Texas Energy Justice, Equity & Democracy Coalition convening in Wimberly, where we gained new connections and sharpened our approach for long-term impact.
- In Baltimore, we were selected to join the national ZEST Coalition to identify gaps in Dallas's zoning regulations.

400+ individual donors in our network

\$220,000.00 in funds secured through grants and donations



Left to right: Collin Yarbrough, Caleb Roberts, Cindy Hua, Vero Alvarez, Alicia Kendrick, Laura Quintero, Misti O'Quinn, Esme Zuniga (Board Members not pictured: Evelyn Mayo, Kayla Butler, Leah Butler, Satavia Hopkins)

Photo Credit: Ashley Gongora

DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our work is funded in part by individual contributors who live, work, and breathe in North Texas. We could not do this work without your support and are always grateful to earn your trust each year. For a full list of 2025 contributors, visit our website.

A huge thank you to the following foundations and grant makers for supporting our work. Thanks to your generosity, we have been able to fight hard for clean air and environmental justice in North Texas.



Metropolitan Dallas



