



Rachel's Network 2021 Annual Report

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIR

Anyone who has funded or worked for environmental protection or social justice has at one point or another probably been overwhelmed by the scale of it all. When the problems are so multi-faceted and the system so entrenched, where is the best place to put our time and resources?

A recent piece in Stanford Social Innovation Review (SSIR), "The Relational Work of Systems Change," suggests an answer: it's the connections between people and institutions that are capable of changing systems, not the parts in isolation. Building those deep

connections requires us all to change from within, examining our assumptions and blind spots and practicing today the world we want to see tomorrow. As the authors say: "the process is the solution."

As a network that connects women changemakers, we strive to embody this lesson. Our founding intention was to bring funders together to share ideas and friendship. Over twenty years later, we continue this mission. In 2021, we travelled to New Mexico to hear from local environmental leaders, hosted two book clubs (*Braiding Sweetgrass* and

Farming While Black), held educational and conversational webinars on a variety of environmental and philanthropic issues, and combined our resources to fund grantee-partners doing important work (see page 8).

Our signature program, the Catalyst Award (see page 4), is building and strengthening relationships too. Apart from the award's financial support for women environmental leaders of color, we've fostered community among the awardees, and provided a harbor for advice and support.

In addition to the awardees, the program engages our whole community of members, liaisons, advisors, former awardees, and friends. Our members who have participated in the Catalyst Award are funding more BIPOC-led organizations than they did before participating.

Progress can't happen without the inner work described by the SSIR authors. That's why we are dedicating resources to educate ourselves as funders and as an organization about systemic racism and how to combat it. You can read about our commitment to racial justice on our website: rachelsnetwork.org/about.

More is still needed to support the women leaders of our movement. So many across the country are doing vital work for the planet and their communities without adequate support or recognition. In the years ahead, we intend to provide more sustained and holistic support to Catalyst awardees and build deeper opportunities for connection and service among our members.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for joining with the terrific women across our country building a healthier, safer, and more just world.



"The trees act not as individuals, but somehow as a collective. Exactly how they do this, we don't yet know. But what we see is the power of unity. What happens to one happens to us all. We can starve together or feast together."

— Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* (2021 Rachel's Network book club selection)

With warmth and resolve,



Fern Shepard
President



Kef Kasdin
Board Chair

Our Impact: Catalyst Award

The **Rachel's Network Catalyst Award** provides women environmental leaders of color support and recognition for their commitment to a healthy planet.

Since 2019, the Catalyst Award has:

- Granted over \$500,000 dollars to 75 women environmental leaders of color and their organizations;
- Built a mutually supportive community of awardees, reviewers, advisors, members, and staff;
- Provided leadership support to women of color environmental leaders and their organizations; and
- Contributed to the growth of Rachel's Network and the furtherance of our mission.



"It has been incredible to watch this award evolve from its inception to now. These stunning women around the country are putting their entire selves into environmental work and being recognized for the gifts, talents, and impact on their communities and the field at large."

—
Rachel's Network Advisor and
Raben Group Principal, Whitney Tome

2021 Catalyst Awardees



Huda Alkaff
Milwaukee, WI

Huda is an ecologist, environmental educator, and the founder and director of Wisconsin Green Muslims, a grassroots group she started in 2005 to connect faith, environmental justice, and sustainability through education and service.



Dr. Virginia Necochea
Albuquerque, NM

Virginia is the executive director of and the first woman of color to lead the New Mexico Environmental Law Center which protects New Mexico's communities and their fundamental human rights to clean air, land, and water in the fight for environmental justice.



Dr. Na'Taki Osborne Jelks
Atlanta, GA

Na'Taki is an assistant professor in the Environmental and Health Sciences Program at Spelman College in Atlanta, GA, and co-founder of the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, a community-based environmental justice organization that works to grow a healthier and more sustainable West Atlanta.

2021 Catalyst Awardees (cont.)



Daphany Sanchez
Brooklyn, NY

Daphany founded Kinetic Communities in 2017 after seeing the representation gap in the energy sector. Her organization ensures frontline communities and people of color are a priority in a just clean energy transition.



Dr. Nikki Traylor-Knowles
Miami, FL

Nikki is an assistant professor in Marine Biology and Ecology at University of Miami, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences. She is also the founder and director of Black Women in Ecology, Evolution and Marine Science, a nonprofit that helps combat the isolation and abuse in STEM against Black women.



Vi Pangunnaaq Waghiyi
Anchorage, AK

Vi is a Sivuqaq Yupik Grandmother, Native Village of Savoonga Tribal Citizen. Since 2002, she has worked with Alaska Community Action on Toxics and serves as its environmental health and justice program director.

2021 Catalyst Finalists



Crystal Huang
Oakland, CA

Crystal is co-founder and CEO of People Power Solar Cooperative which is building a movement toward grassroots-led and community-owned solar.



Amee Raval
Oakland, CA

Amee is the policy and research director at Asian Pacific Environmental Network, an environmental justice organization with deep roots in California's Asian immigrant and refugee communities.



Dr. Katia Avilés Vázquez
San Juan, PR

Katia is the director of Instituto para la Agroecología which supports agroecological initiatives in Puerto Rico through services, financing, physical resources, and training.



Atiya Wells
Baltimore, MD

Atiya founded Backyard Basecamp to introduce, educate, and connect families in Baltimore, especially BIPOC, to outdoor spaces.



"This year, I really valued the members and staff and their ability to expose me to new people, new ideas, and new people to fund."

— Member Carolyn Fine Friedman

Our Impact: 2021 Grantee-Partners

Since 2000, our network has collectively granted over \$2.5 million to organizations that grow healthy communities and promote women's leadership. We also provide selective place-based grants to organizations located where our events are held. In 2021, we provided grants totaling \$245,642 to the following organizations*:

Agri-Cultura Network
Alabama A&M University Small Farm Research Center Foundation
Alaska Community Action on Toxics
Asian Pacific Environmental Network
Backyard Basecamp
Black In Marine Science
Black Women in Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Science
Center for Food Safety
Center for Heirs' Property Preservation
Climate Resolve
Emerald Cities Collaboration
Empowering a Green Environment & Economy
F.A.R.M.S.
Flowering Tree Permaculture Institute
GCV Education Fund
Ginew Collective
Instituto para la Agroecología
Local Clean Energy Alliance
LULAC of Iowa
Milkweed Editions
National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy

Native Movement
Northeast Farmers Of Color Land Trust
New Mexico Environmental Law Center
People Over Petro Coalition / Center for Coalfield Justice
People Power Solar Cooperative
Philanos
Quivira Coalition
REACT – Rubbertown Emergency ACTION
Ridges to Riffles Conservation Fund
Soul Fire Farm Land Stewardship Collective
South Ward Environmental Alliance
Southern Environmental Law Center
Stop Line 3 Campaign
Tewa Women United
The EcoWomanist Institute
#ToxicFreeFoodFDA/Environmental Working Group
United Tribes of Bristol Bay
Universal Access Project
Urban Tilth
West Atlanta Watershed Alliance
White Earth Land Recovery Project
Wisconsin Green Muslims

*Total doesn't include individual member giving.



Photo: Giniw Collective

2021 Co-Funding Highlights:



Supporting the Frontline Communities Fighting Line 3 in Minnesota

Enbridge runs a tangled network of oil and gas pipelines across Canada and the central US including the 6B in Michigan that resulted in one of the largest inland oil spills in US history. Native organizers in Minnesota led on-the-ground resistance to urge President Biden to revoke permits and halt construction of Enbridge's Line 3, provide legal support to water protectors, and communicate the threat posed by the pipeline. Rachel's Network provided a grant through the Equation Campaign to support the coalition.



Photo: Urban Tilth

Supporting a Community Food Hub in Richmond, CA

Six years ago, Urban Tilth took a neglected three-acre plot of land in North Richmond and turned it into a flourishing community farm. They recently purchased the land they've been leasing and are expanding programming and infrastructure. Rachel's Network provided a grant to Urban Tilth to help make this vision a reality.

Learn more at rachelsnetwork.org/impact

Who We Are

Named in honor of Rachel Carson, we are a community of women funders committed to a safer, healthier, and more just world for all.

Our members serve on the boards of major environmental organizations, and fund solutions in a variety of areas, ranging from sustainable agriculture and health, to conservation and climate change.

Rachel's Network...

Introduces members to lifelong friends and colleagues who share a commitment to sustainable change, women's leadership, and environmental protection.

Meets in person and virtually for conferences, excursions, webinars, and other events that bring together forward-thinking funders and experts in environmental issues and philanthropy.

Helps connect nonprofits with members interested in board service.

Helps members become stronger funders and advocates through exposure to a wealth of curated information and connections to grassroots activists.

Serves as a fiscal sponsor for worthy nonprofits launched by our members.



"Rachel's Network has deepened my approach to funding and, in fact, made me enjoy it more. Without the JEDI work and the two books we read together, I doubt that the organizations I funded this year would ever have crossed my radar screen."

– Member Ann Hunter-Welborn

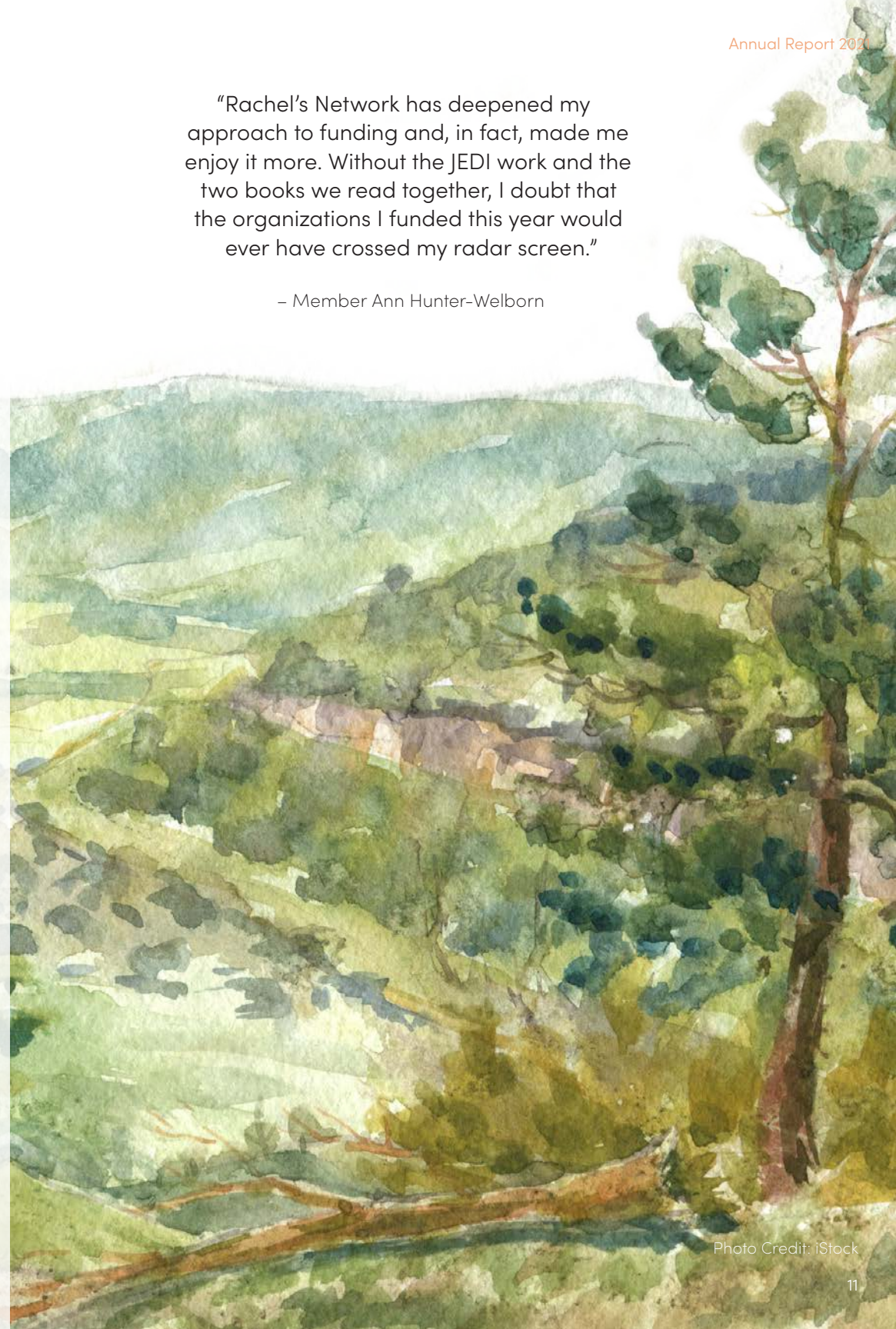


Photo Credit: iStock

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Martha Davis
Barbara Gonzalez-McIntosh
Lisa Holmes
Ann Hunter-Welborn
Kef Kasdin, Board Chair
Anna Lawson
Alice Liddell
Fa Liddell, Secretary
Elena Marszalek
Janet Miller
Kim Milligan
Jan Montgomery
Rosamond Pope-Meyer
Molly Ross, Vice Chair

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350.org
Keya Chatterjee, Executive Director
US Climate Action Network
Jamie Rappaport Clark, President &
CEO Defenders of Wildlife
Abigail Dillen, President, Earthjustice
Katie Frohardt, Executive Director
Wild Earth Allies
Seema Jalan, Executive Director
Universal Access Project

Staff

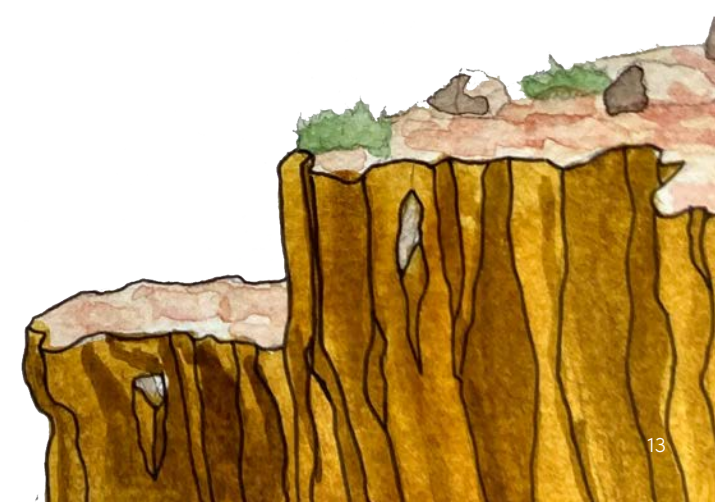
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Ariana Carella, Network Engagement
Director
Erica Flock, Communications and
Advocacy Director
Casey Hansen, Membership and
Development Director
Hannan Sheikh, Membership and
Grants Manager

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Annie Leonard, Executive Director
Greenpeace USA
Stephanie Meeks, President & CEO
Student Conservation Association
Theresa Pierno, President & CEO
National Parks Conservation
Association
Kathleen Rogers, President,
EARTHDAY.ORG
Nicole Silk, President, River Network

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and Explorer-in-Residence; National
Geographic Society
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Greening Youth Foundation
Hazel Henderson, Founder,
Ethical Markets Media, LLC
L. Hunter Lovins, Founder &
President, Natural Capitalism
Solutions
Julia Olson, Esq., Executive
Director & Chief Legal Counsel,
Our Children's Trust

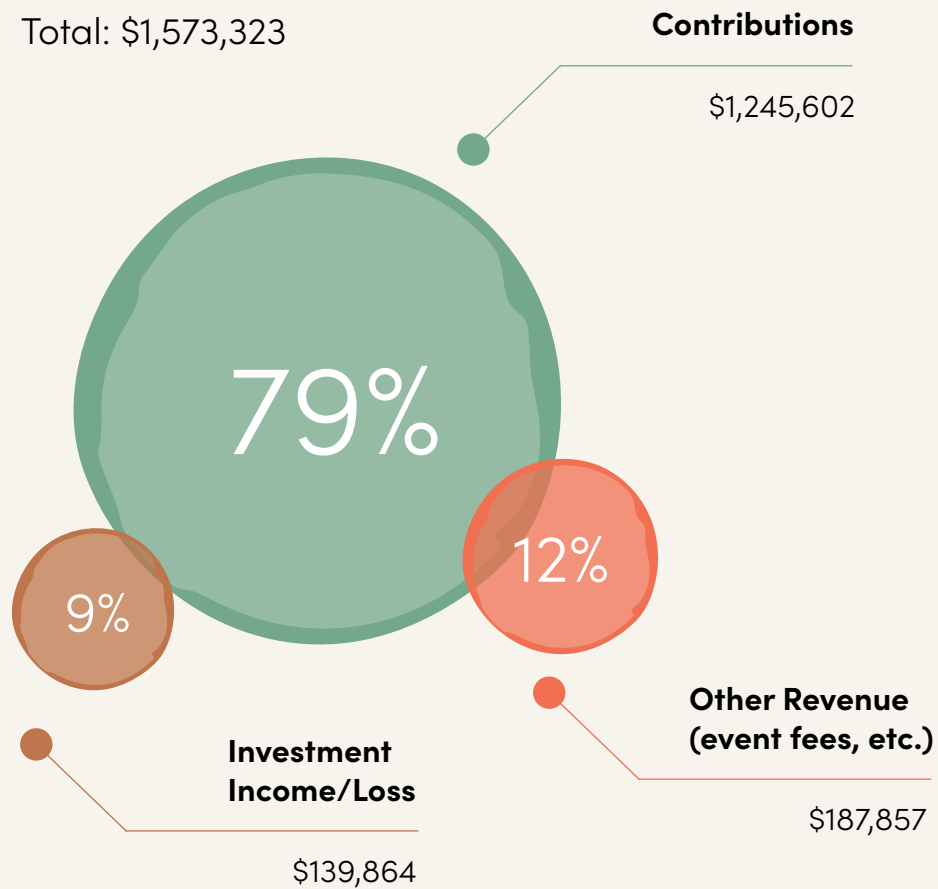
Janelle Orsi, Esq., Executive Director
& Co-Founder, Sustainable
Economies Law Center
Nora Pouillon, Author, Chef and
Founder, Restaurant Nora
Carolyn Raffensberger, Executive
Director, Science and Environmental
Health Network
Vicki Spruill, President & CEO,
New England Aquarium
Whitney Tome, Principal,
Raben Group
Debbie Walsh, Director,
Center for American Women
and Politics, Rutgers University
Alice Waters, Author; Chef and
Owner, Chez Panisse Restaurant
Terry Tempest Williams, Author,
Naturalist, and Conservationist



2021 Financials

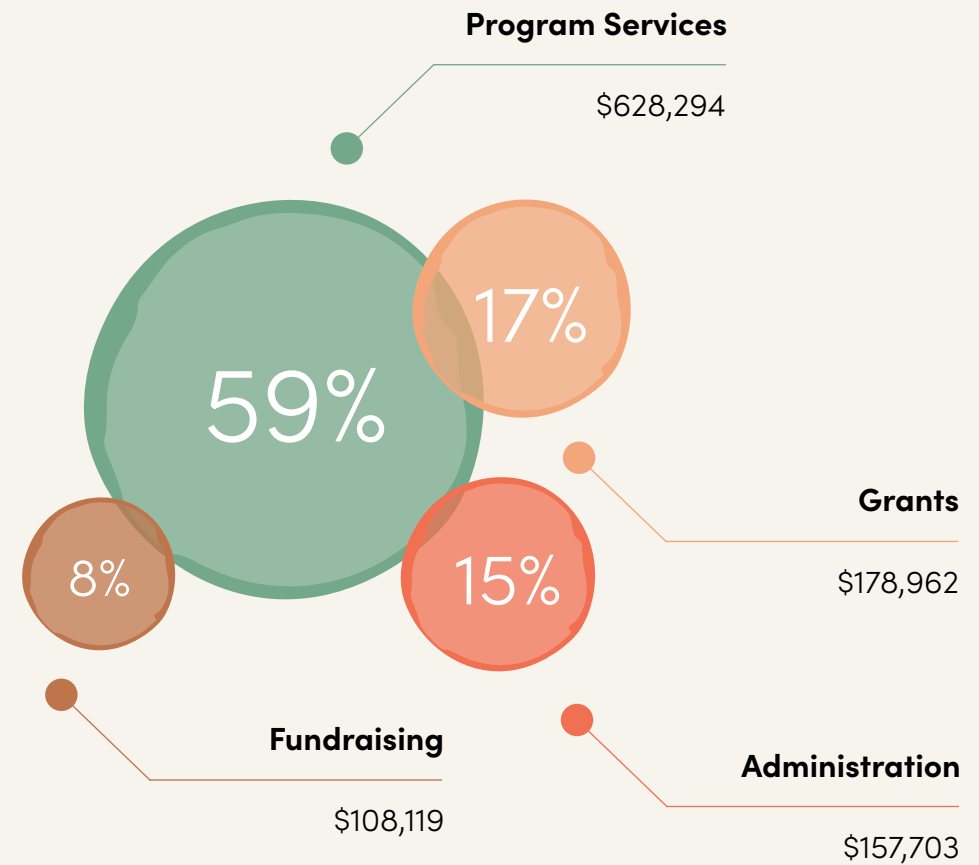
Revenue

Total: \$1,573,323



Expense

Total: \$1,073,078



Change in Net Assets

\$500,245



Rachel's Network

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Our Mission

Rachel's Network is a community of women at the intersection of environmental advocacy, philanthropy, and leadership. Our mission is to promote women as impassioned leaders and agents of change dedicated to the stewardship of the earth.

Our Vision

Catalyzing our collective power, Rachel's Network influences social, political, and economic systems to advance a healthy, thriving world.

