



Who we are. Mycelium Youth Network (MYN) is a Bay Area based organization preparing frontline youth for hopeful and imaginative leadership climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience through hands-on ancestral approaches and STEAM that emphasize stewardship and relationship-building.

Our north star is a world where all young people grow up grounded in cultural and ancestral alignment, dreaming beyond this current moment, resilient and adapted to organize, build power, and co-create climate just solutions in loving interdependence with people and the planet.

Background. Youth of today are growing up in a world where they witness minimal (or non-existence) government action being taken to address the realities of climate change. Studies have linked this to the rise of ‘climate anxiety’; a general loss of hope and the decline of socio-emotional wellness in young people. These numerous systemic failures most directly impact frontline youth of color; in addition to ‘climate anxiety’, growing up in a heavily redlined neighborhood is associated with numerous cumulative health impacts- life expectancy rates differ by up to fifteen years across local zip codes. The neighborhoods surrounding one of MYN's core organizing sites (MetWest High School) for example experiences some of the highest concentrations of diesel particulate matter in Oakland. MYN engages youth across neighborhoods that rank above the 90th percentile for environmental hazards, including hazardous waste sites, groundwater contamination, and toxic releases. Economic disparities across race and class are further intensified following extreme climate change events such as wildfires, heatwaves, and earthquakes; highlighting the urgent need to resource and build community-driven climate just solutions.



In the midst of the 2017 Tubbs fires, Lil Milagro Henriquez- an Oakland educator, grassroots movement leader, and mother - deeply resonated with the fears that her students were sharing around climate change. To support her students with direct and immediate access to climate resilience and adaptation training, MYN's Executive Director Lil Milagro founded our organization: what initially began as a skill-sharing meetup during recess has since grown to a nationally renowned, 501c3 established organization that supports frontline youth of color across the Bay Area with climate just education models as a pathway for building connection, resilience, and imagination. Alongside leading the organization, Lil Milagro Henriquez brings her expertise to the Advisory Board for the American Public Health Association's Center for Climate Health and Equity in addition to the National Academy of Medicine's Climate Communities Network.

Our Approach. MYN's theory of change is rooted in Indigeneity, grassroots feminism, cooperation, and the power of building place-based solutions and right reciprocal relationships between adults and young people. Our evaluative structure uses an intergenerational and decolonized worldview to center the knowledge and wisdom of the youth that we organize. Drawing wisdom from the ecological systems that use iteration and collaboration, MYN youth leaders support the adaptation and design of the subsequent year's cohort structure and design, which deepens our approach and rigor over time. Part and parcel of MYN's approach is also to offer young people the space and time to learn and practice ways of being that support them with tapping into the power of rest (resistance) through ancestral and cultural connectivity.

Embedded within all of our programming, MYN offers opportunities for youth to 1.) experience safety and belonging; we co-create spaces of emotional, spiritual, political, and intellectual safety that supports community-building and facilitates experiences of belonging, 2) participate in building counternarratives by challenging cultural hegemony and dominant narratives, and through building alternative cultural narratives; and 3) engage in praxis; creating theory, action, and reflection towards a regenerative cycle to understand their self, worldview, and conditions.

MYN's programming is a framework and model for how adults can co-create portals for young people to tend to their sense of self- to cultivate agency, build capacity, and deepen in self-efficacy as youth grow in their life journey towards building right relationships in support of a just and solidarity world.

Our Programs Throughout the academic year, MYN actively organizes twenty core youth participants on a weekly basis. Our broadest base of youth includes MYN's core youth in addition to our digital organizing reach, youth alumni, coalitions, and movement partnerships. MYN currently operates four core GSS-aligned programs within and across Bay Area public high schools: *Climate Resilient Schools*, *Youth Leadership Council*, *Data Warriors*, and *Gaming for Justice*, and most recently we have launched our pilot *Leadership in Storytelling* cohort. From "Science for Survival" and "Clean Air is a Right" modules to Gaming for Justice, where students imagine just futures through collaborative fantasy role-playing games, we blend ancestral knowledge with STEAM learning to build frontline youth leadership in adaptation, mitigation, and resilience. Across all programs, MYN incorporates socio-emotional tools to address climate anxiety; cultural and ancestral practices and knowledge, participatory and community based research, youth-led data justice, storytelling and narrative building. Recent and upcoming youth projects include building a school water catchment system; creating and playing a live action role play game on a Bay Area shoreline; facilitating a multi-year toxic soil bioremediation at an Oakland high school; mobilizing youth to contribute to the City of Oakland's first-ever Environmental Justice Plan; training youth as storytellers about local natural resources and our relationships to them on places like Oakland's MLK Shoreline.

During heightened moments of social and political awakening, MYN deepens our coordination with partner organizations. Previously this has resulted in the co-creation of a Youth Resilience Village, and a local campaign which included a series of demonstrations, mutual aid, and direct lobbying.



Join the Mycelium Movement today!

Building a climate justice movement means that supporting organizations must be equipped to move in coordinated action towards transformative power. To support young people with navigating and growing into a rapidly changing world, our efforts require the best of our radical imaginations and adaptability.

Unrestricted contributions are the best way to resource our work. Join the Mycelium Movement with a gift today!

For access to MYN's website (website updates in progress!), our social media accounts, upcoming events, recent newsletters, and ways to get involved you can access our linktree by scanning the QR code above or clicking the following link below:

- https://linktr.ee/myceliumyouth?utm_source=linktree_profile_share&tsid=896c2b05-cf54-4009-805c-796ae6073cbf

Mycelium Youth Network is a registered 1% for the Planet organization! Learn more and check out our profile here: <https://directories.onepercentfortheplanet.org/profile/mycelium-youth-network>

For tax purposes, Mycelium Youth Network is registered as a 501c3 organization

- MYN's EIN (tax ID number) is 85-0663137