

Youth Organizing Fellowship



Fellowship Description

Michigan - and our entire country - is at a critical turning point. We will either choose more fossil fuels and monopolies, or move decisively towards clean energy, climate action, and deeper democracy, transparency, and justice on local and regional levels. A key component to strengthening the climate justice movement is activating the voices of young people residing in investor-owned utility (IOU) service territories. IOUs, and especially DTE Energy, are driving the state towards big new gas plants to replace coal, gambling communities' wealth and risking our collective future. Through this collaboration between Soulardarity and Powershift Network, young Michigan organizers have an opportunity to challenge this trend and advocate for a future of clean energy, efficiency, and community wealth. This fellowship is an opportunity for **community college and 2-year college students in DTE Energy service territory** to build leadership development skills, gain community organizing experience, and deepen knowledge about local and regional energy systems. Through the program, fellows will receive training and 1:1 support as they develop into **movement leaders** and bolster the engagement of impacted communities in Southeast Michigan.

About Soulardarity:

Soulardarity was formed after DTE Energy repossessed over 1000 streetlights from Highland Park, MI to install community-owned solar street lights, a sustainable solution to the lighting problem. We are now a democratic membership non-profit with 150 members building energy democracy through education, organizing, and community-owned clean energy. Since our formation in 2012, Soulardarity has installed 7 solar street lights in Highland Park, deployed almost \$30,000 of home solar products through our PowerUP bulk purchasing program, conducted home weatherization training and other energy education programs, and advocated with the City of Highland Park and Michigan Public Service Commission for fair rates, community-owned clean energy, and inclusive processes. Fellow will work closely with Soulardarity on local organizing and community energy research in Highland Park, culminating in the Convening For Local Power which will bring local energy organizers from around the country together in March 2019.

Fellow Eligibility

This fellowship is for passionate young individuals who:

- Attend a 2-year or community college in DTE service territory
- Have a passion for and commitment to Highland Park and/or our neighboring communities
- Can commit to 4-8 hours of paid work a week
- Care deeply about democratic organizing and advocating for climate, racial, and economic justice
- Love building relationships with community members

Prior organizing experience is not required, but applicants should have an interest in learning about energy systems and democratic organizing. This is an opportunity to empower other young people and community

members in Detroit to join the movement for clean energy and environmental justice. **We strongly encourage Highland Park, Detroit, and Hamtramck residents to apply!**

Power Shift Network is an equal opportunity employer with a commitment to engaging the skills and leadership of people of color, low-income persons, LGBTQIA+ people and people with disabilities. People from these and other historically marginalized backgrounds and communities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Responsibilities of the Fellows

Fellows will participate in campaign and research work focused locally in Highland Park and on the Michigan Public Service Commission to advance the goals of energy democracy in the face of extreme adversity from DTE Energy.

- Outreach to Highland Park and neighboring community residents about energy issues
- Tabling on campus about local energy initiatives
- Doing outreach work on campus and in community for the Local Power Summit- building youth interest/attendance to this convening in March
- Attending monthly webinar trainings to build organizing skills with Power Shift Network
- Hosting community engagement events for other young people and community members (for example political education workshops on energy democracy in community or on campus)
- Writing one blog post about their organizing work with Soulardarity
- Recording a podcast/video about organizing experience
- Using social media and communication platforms to amplify the Local Power Summit to the broader Power Shift Network community

Compensation

Fellows will receive a stipend of \$1,000 for about 4 months of organizing work. In addition, fellows will:

- Learn and practice community organizing skills
- Gain a practical understanding of energy democracy
- Build stronger relationships in their communities and across regions with other fellows focusing on similar campaigns
- Create positive change in their communities
- Access Power Shift Network Resources
- Have a published blog post, video, or podcast on PSN Website

Timeline

Interested applicants must fill out this [form](#) and submit it to the local host in their area by **November 2nd, 2018**. If you're unable to fill out the form, call 802-881-9866 and we can walk through the questions through a phone call. After a brief interview process with representatives from Soulardarity and PSN, we will begin an orientation where you will have the chance to provide input in developing a work plan that fits your skill-sets and needs.