

Onward.

by the American Conservation Coalition

2023 ANNUAL REPORT
REFLECTING ON A RECORD YEAR

FEATURING:

- ACC at the RNC debate
- 40,000 members strong
- Fox News to MSNBC: ACC in the media
- And lots more!

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THE NEXT ERA OF ACC IS HERE

"Together, we have seen ACC grow from an idea into a movement, and this year, we solidified our place in the advocacy space."

Six years ago, a small but ambitious group of young leaders led by Benji Backer dared to change the narrative on conservation


and climate change. Bridging the gap between mainstream environmentalism and conservative values would be no easy task -- but we knew it had to be done, and so we set out. Today, we are excited to share what our team and dedicated supporters have achieved in a very special sixth year. Throughout 2023, ACC underwent a leadership transition in which we all assumed new senior leadership roles: Danielle Butcher Franz as CEO, Chris Barnard as president, and Stephen Perkins as COO. Danielle has proudly been a part of ACC since the beginning, and taking the reins from Benji has been a true honor.

Together, we have seen ACC grow from an idea into a movement, and this year we solidified our place in the advocacy space. As you'll read in the following pages, we experienced huge growth in membership, from 12,000 to 40,000 members. This growth is a testament to our passionate Grassroots Team and the resonance of our compelling message, ensuring that our voice is heard far and wide.

In our sixth year, we hosted the second annual ACC Summit in Salt Lake City, with over 300 young leaders and 7 members of Congress in attendance. Our staff attended the first Republican presidential primary debate, where an ACC leader asked the only audience question on climate change in front of nearly 13 million people. Our Grasstops Team advocated for clean, reliable nuclear energy alongside Miss America Grace Stanke, meeting with almost a dozen Members of Congress. Throughout the year, our work was featured nearly 900 times in the media, including outlets such as The Washington Post, Fox News Channel, and POLITICO.

While we won't give away everything in our opening letter, throughout this report, you will find countless wins - both big and small. At ACC, we extend our gratitude for your continued support, which empowers us to do this important work. As the holiday season approaches, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with joy and the promise of a cleaner, more prosperous future.


Danielle Butcher Franz, CEO


Chris Barnard, President


Stephen Perkins, COO



CEO Danielle Butcher Franz (middle) is joined by COO Stephen Perkins (left) and President Chris Barnard (right) at COP28 in Dubai (December 2023).



Benji Backer (middle-right) addresses ACC's leadership transition at the yearly ACC Summit (June 2023).

**IGNITE THE NEXT YEAR OF
CHANGE, DONATE TODAY**



**FUEL THE FIGHT, FUND THE FUTURE
CONSERVE NATURE &
OUR VALUES WITH ACC**



DONATE TO THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION COALITION

To donate online, access our donation page via the QR code or through www.acc.eco/donate.

To donate by mail, please make your check out to The American Conservation Coalition and send it to P.O. BOX 371, APPLETON, WISCONSIN 54912, USA.

To donate via wire transfer, please contact our Development Director, Alex Joyce at Alex@ACC.eco.



80 'small' victories you might not have heard about this year...

As we delve into this year's recap, we ask you to consider the idea of "small wins." At the American Conservation Coalition, we firmly believe that every time you choose to act, regardless of scale, you make a difference. To give you a quick glance at the day-to-day impact, we are proud to present eighty of this year's unsung wins! Whether seemingly modest or flashy, each win reflects the dedication and resilience that define ACC's commitment to making a difference. Join us in celebrating the small things in life!

Congressman John Curtis received the Eco-Right Hero Award at the ACC Summit. ○ ACC Atlanta holds monthly cleanups and hosts educational events, engaging young professionals in education, advocacy, and action. ○ ACC Auburn's first Earth Day cleanup attracted almost 30 attendees, showcasing an impressive turnout for a new branch. ○ ACC leaders contribute to media outreach, including news appearances, articles in major publications, and interviews. ○ Southern Region's growth and recruitment, bolstered by the ambassador program, exceed expectations. ○ ACC's advocacy for clean energy policy at the Texas State Capitol receives positive recognition from elected officials. ○ ACC Atlanta's kickoff event draws a large crowd of around 70 attendees, setting a strong foundation for the branch. ○ Field teams collaborate with digital and communication teams to promote events and achieve shared goals. ○ Luke Strominger of ACC Florida received the Committed to Change award at the ACC Summit. ○ ACC's newly appointed Grassroots Programming Director initiates a text and email series to activate the ambassador program for increased engagement. ○ Work is underway to implement a text solution for event recruitment and attendance improvement. ○ ACC engages with organizations like PEW Charitable Trust, leading to partnerships and donations. ○ ACC expands its network in Salt Lake City, fostering partnerships with local organizations and Republicans. ○ Washington State University's branch leaders, Kate Prophet and Kirten, demonstrate significant growth and leadership. ○ ACC SLC's pizza party strengthens bonds among new leaders, setting the stage for a robust start in the new year. ○ Brian Martinez transitioned from Midwestern Regional Director to Eastern Regional Director. ○ ACC established a new social media award at the ACC Summit due to the emergence of so much great content from Branch accounts. ○ ACC members collaborate for cleanups in Sacramento, Palouse Conservancy's Earth Day, and Yellowstone River access point cleanup. ○ ACC Phoenix's young professional kickoff succeeds with strategic support, leading to a panel's success. ○ ACC cultivates new leaders like Sarah Jensen, turning them into ambassadors and key members of the grassroots team. ○ ACC Boulder recruits an impressive 105 people during a campus involvement fair. ○ Collaborative efforts to introduce ACC at Boise State through a lecture for a class on conservative environmentalism. ○ Lily Moll transitioned from Southern Regional Director to Grassroots Programming Director. ○ Young Professional Programming revamp focuses on building networks and communities beyond college campuses. ○ ACC celebrates team promotions, op-ed publications, TV appearances, and podcast launches. ○ ACC Denver and California members secure leadership positions and recognition, enhancing ACC's influence. ○ Miss America fly-in, Hill meetings, and bipartisan events contribute to ACC's growing presence in Washington, D.C. ○ ACC Purdue's branch leader joins Congressman Baird for a nature walk, aligning with Farm Bill conservation polling. ○ ACC's D.C. activities include bipartisan discussions, nuclear fly-ins, bill endorsements, and direct meetings with lawmakers. ○ ACC's roundtables, fly-ins, and Farm Bill engagement prove successful, fostering productive bipartisan conversations. ○ ACC's DC coordinator leverages insights from events, meetings, and legislative landscape updates. ○ ACC's DC coordinator plays leadership and mentorship roles, connecting with team members interested in DC work. ○ ACC's DC coordinator establishes communication channels, tools, and workflows for effective policy efforts. ○ ACC's DC coordinator engages with partners, attends events, and builds ACC's presence on Capitol Hill. ○ Houston branch leader Lavonte Holt demonstrates significant growth, evolving into an empowering leader. ○ The Nuclear Now event in Austin sees positive member engagement and excitement for future events. ○ ACC's advocacy for clean energy policy at the Texas State Capitol receives positive recognition from elected officials. ○ ACC college station branch leader Gabriel Avritscher's op-ed leads to opportunities with Senator Ted Cruz's Campaign. ○ Digital and Comms collaboration leads to creating workflow documents, enhancing field team efficiency. ○ ACC Texas's social media engagement and petition drive demonstrate successful outreach at UT Arlington. ○ ACC strengthens ties with Texas Young Republicans, planning collaborations at individual chapters and statewide. ○ Fall back-to-school recruitment drive streamlines tools, enhances partnerships, and aids branch growth. ○ ACC Texas almost doubled its membership count in 2023, marking a significant achievement for the organization. ○ ACC Action's Instagram takeover with Miss America led to a significant increase in impressions and new followers. ○ ACC achieved a successful social media campaign for the Farm Bill, surpassing the target number of two million impressions. ○ ACC implements a streamlined process for tracking endorsed legislation, enhancing efficiency and preparedness. ○ Collaboration with Miss America results in a successful fly-in, advocating for critical nuclear legislation. ○ ACC hosts multiple events in D.C., showcasing a growing presence in the nation's capital. ○ Alina Clough of ACC DMV is ACC's Busiest Bee of the year. ○ ACC joins forces with climate allies for bipartisan conversations and attends the Conservative Climate Summit. ○ ACC Dartmouth's solar tour garners quick sign-ups, indicating strong interest and engagement. ○ Lucero Cantu transitions from ACC Digital Director to Creative Director. ○ ACC Dartmouth ensures good alumni engagement by hosting a dinner for the solar tour guide. ○ ACC Dartmouth members publish op-eds in prominent newspapers, contributing to climate engagement discussions. ○ Kate Wexell of ACC Mizzou is ACC's Ambassador of the Year. ○ ACC at Ohio State University put together an award-winning Earth Day event this year. ○ ACC Dartmouth's Director of Policy Events is crucial in proposing and planning events with climate leaders. ○ ACC Dartmouth's solar tour sparks discussions between freshmen interested in energy engineering and alumni. ○ ACC DMV wins best Branch social media presence at the ACC Awards. ○ Hanna Pritchett transitioned from Eastern Regional Director to Grassroots Operations Director. ○ ACC Dartmouth's engagement with alumni results in invitations to join boards and contribute to local initiatives. ○ ACC Denver's clean-up collaboration with CNL Houston removes 32 bags of trash, receiving local media coverage. ○ ACC Dallas partners with the local AF chapter for an Earth Day clean-up, attracting city support. ○ ACC's advocacy for clean energy policy at the Texas State Capitol receives positive recognition from elected officials. ○ Gabriel Avritscher, ACC college station branch leader, writes an op-ed leading to opportunities with Senator Ted Cruz's Campaign. ○ Revisited ACC's online shop model to better align with our brand and goals for the future. More coming soon! ○ ACC Houston's 10th cleanup surpasses 100 bags of waste, showcasing dedication and passion. ○ ACC Texas successfully partners with Texas Nuclear Alliance, attracting attendees from various organizations. ○ Blanca Ibarra, ACC El Paso's branch leader, joins the board of ECO El Paso for her leadership and ACC involvement. ○ ACC's digital and comms collaboration leads to the creation of workflow documents, enhancing field team efficiency. ○ ACC brings on Amy Mastrine as our first-ever Social Media Director. ○ Digital successfully geotargeted the first Republican Presidential Debate with a conservation ad to enhance ACC's sponsorship of the first debate. ○ We launched twelve online petitions to elected officials advocating for effective climate action via The Climate Commitment. ○ Kate Prophet of ACC Washington State University was awarded ACC Member of the Year. ○ We launched offsite adventures with this year's ACC Summit programming. ○ ACC leadership transitioned Danielle Butcher as the new Chief Executive Officer and Chris Barnard as the new President of ACC. ○ The ACC Central Florida Branch successfully hosted its kickoff event on November 30th.

40,000

the number of ACC members we're closing out the year with

LETTER FROM THE VP

REVIVING COMMUNITY STARTS WITH YOU

STEPHEN PERKINS, FORMER ACC VP OF GRASSROOTS STRATEGY, CURRENT CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Reflecting on this year, it's hard not to also think back to where we were two years ago. I had just come in as ACC's Vice President of Grassroots Strategy at a time when the world was changing rapidly. COVID was winding down, campuses were opening back up, and people were unsure about how to re-emerge and engage back into their communities. As a membership organization, we had our work cut out for us. But as we always seem to do, we made the most out of it and trudged forward.

This year stands as a powerful example of our work, and the power we wield as an organization: record membership growth, new branches popping up all over the country, successful events, and talented new hires. As we have professionalized our grassroots operations, results have followed and our movement has grown.

If I had to sum up our 2023 grassroots work in a word, it would be "leadership." Our branches led in their communities, tackling local issues head-on and serving as trusted voices. Our field team led in their respective regions and states, bringing ACC to new communities. And ACC as a whole led, demonstrating our strength as a catalyst for action and change.

I speak for all of ACC's Senior Leadership when I say how proud we are of our field team, our branches, and our extended network of grassroots members. I am particularly excited to now be handing the reins of this department over to a capable team of new leaders: incoming Vice President Cameron Gambini, Grassroots Programming Director, Lily Moll, and Grassroots Operations Director Hanna Pritchett. Together, they will continue building on the very special grassroots movement we have the good fortune of serving.



100+ Branches

All of our Branches represent the uniqueness of the US! This year we added:

- Atlanta, GA
- Houston, TX
- Austin, TX
- Central Florida (Orlando)
- Triangle & Charlotte, NC
- Auburn, AL



28,000 New Members

Record growth could not be achieved without an incredible team! This year we welcomed:

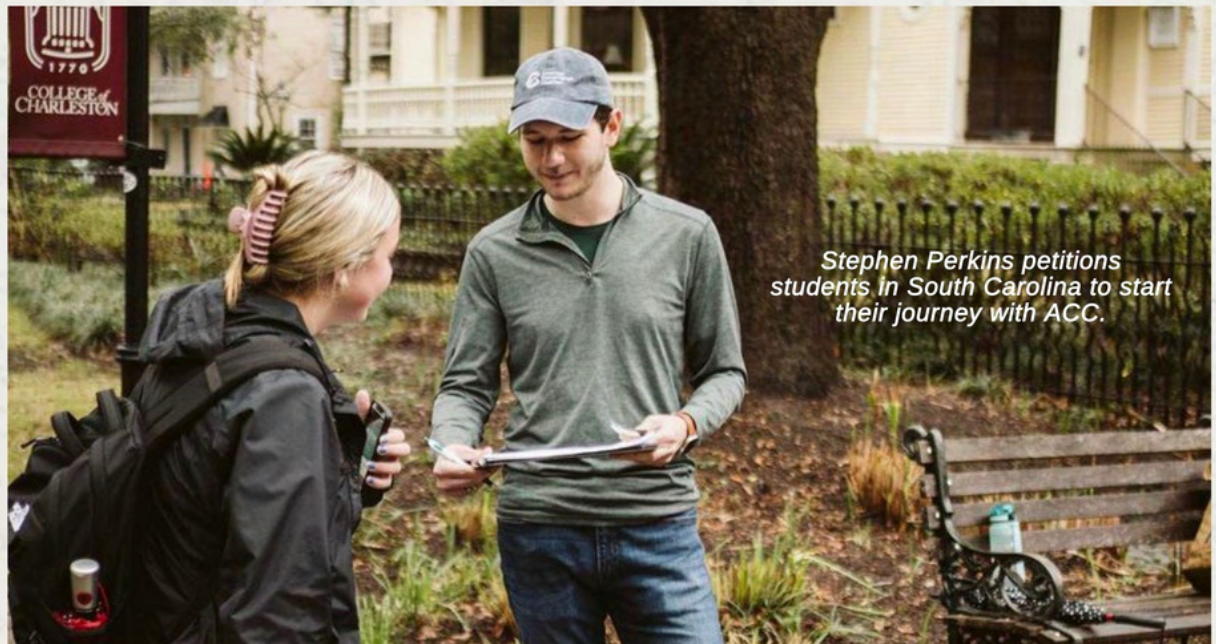
- Cameron Gambini as our VP of Grassroots
- Aidan Shank as our Midwestern Regional Director
- Philip Reichert as our Southern Regional Director
- Danielle Lindsay as our Florida State Director



286 Events Held

A glance at the event roster includes...

- ACC DMV hosting a livestream with The Federalist Society
- ACC Florida holding a camping trip at Everglades National Park
- The ACC Summit bringing over 300 conservationists to Salt Lake City
- Atlanta hosting a record-breaking launch event.



Stephen Perkins petitions students in South Carolina to start their journey with ACC.

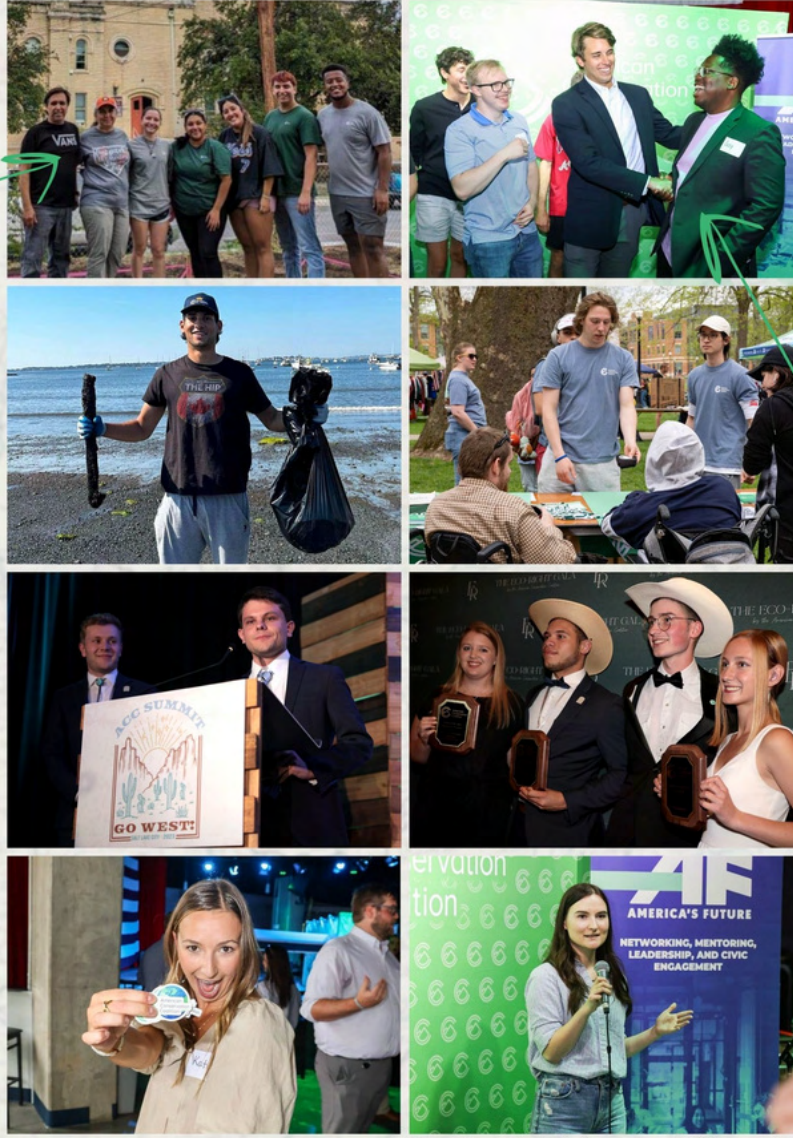
ACC SAN ANTONIO

Sowing Success: Community Gardens, Persistence, and ACC San Antonio's Beautification Revival

Since its founding event, building a greenhouse in January 2022, we've always known our ACC San Antonio Branch members had a green thumb, and this year, they continued that theme. Texas State Director Zack Abnet shared his excitement about San Antonio's revitalization efforts. He shared that the city of San Antonio and nonprofit developer Prosper West collaborated with our Branch to uplift an area historically lacking essential services. Their group initiative involved transforming two houses into a community food truck park and green space, marking the beginning of cleanup efforts. Inspired by ACC San Antonio's past success in garden installations, Prosper West invited them to replicate their achievements, covering all costs and providing support!

Our members took the task very seriously. Valeria Garza and Monet Tibian, leaders of the Branch, assessed the area and chose a succulent garden with plants native to San Antonio. The majority of the project spanned from September to November. "The last day of the project with the main installation of the garden, we had to re-till the area since it had dried up from lack of water. This was critical, and we had a tiller on site, but it would not start since the power on site was off due to the house being off. We thought we would have to re-till by simple tools – very hard work – until a member went out back and found a power source that worked. It took us 5 hours, but we finished the garden that day," recounts Abnet.

This project stands out as the Branch's most extensive endeavor, highlighting the dedication of volunteers and the resilience needed to navigate unexpected obstacles, ultimately contributing to a cleaner, safer San Antonio.



Brian Martinez, Eastern Regional Director

ACC OHIO STATE

"One in sixty-six OSU students are an ACC Member."

The Ohio State Branch of ACC traces its roots back to April 2021, when the carbon capture club on campus caught the attention of ACC leadership. The club, led by Brendan Fowler, was swiftly integrated into ACC, and within six months of ACC's initial presence, the membership roster grew to an impressive 700 students. Notably, ACC Ohio State has become a prominent force on campus, with approximately one in every 66 Ohio State

University students being a proud ACC member! According to Eastern Regional Director Brian Martinez, this remarkable growth can be attributed to the unique blend of timing, location, and a palpable enthusiasm for sustainability, especially in a city like Columbus, which has evolved into a hub akin to "Silicon Valley."

The ACC Ohio State branch has not only witnessed rapid expansion but has also left a lasting impact on campus culture. With the Sustainability Director as their advisor, the group has effectively replaced the once-dominant Sunrise Movement group and garnered support from key university figures, including the university president. The branch's influence extends beyond the campus borders, with Brendan playing a pivotal role in connecting with other ACC branches across the country. Their commitment to sustainability is showcased through various initiatives, events, and collaborations, including hosting a significant Earth Day event with plans to double attendance in the coming year. Brendan, a senior, has been instrumental in steering the branch's growth and fostering collaboration, ensuring a sustainable legacy as he prepares to graduate in the near future.



Lily Moll, Grassroots Programming Director

ACC ATLANTA

Young Professionals Aligning their Passions and Igniting Change

In the bustling city of Atlanta, a group of passionate individuals came together to establish the ACC Atlanta Branch. The decision to launch this branch was fueled by the city's pro-environment and pro-climate stance, creating an ideal setting for like-minded individuals to unite in their commitment to conservation and sustainable energy practices.

The ACC Atlanta Branch achieved two significant organization records this year, underscoring their commitment and impact. They successfully launched the first board, a move credited with significantly enhancing their outreach and networking capabilities. Additionally, their kick-off event shattered previous attendance records, attracting 70 participants and setting a new standard for engagement within the organization!

The success of the ACC Atlanta Branch was attributed to its alignment with the state's priorities and model for engagement. The branch didn't just discuss ideas; they activated around them. An example of this was a September event focused on water conservation and quality. Attendees listened to a local nonprofit speaker, gaining insights into the challenges, and then spent the weekend cleaning up a stream to witness the water quality issues firsthand. Southern Regional Director, now Grassroots Programming Director, Lily Moll attributed the branch's success to aligning ACC work with Georgia's priorities, empowering leaders to activate around the issues they care about. This proactive approach, coupled with a diverse mix of professionals from various industries, positioned the ACC Atlanta Branch as a dynamic force in environmental stewardship.



Zack Abnet, Texas State Director





Sierra Dreams to Senate Speeches

ACC and
the Rise of
Sarah Jensen

Conversation, words, and visuals by Lucero Cantu

Freedom in the Sierra Nevadas

Silicon Valley often denotes imagery of Mark Zuckerberg off in the metaverse or the endless quest to invent the next online shopping app. Still, for eight-year-old Sarah Jensen, it was the gateway to her most cherished place on Earth. "We were 45 minutes from the coast and four hours from the Sierra Nevada," Sarah tells me over Zoom one Friday afternoon, "and so, all the family trips, excursions, everything we did was to the Sierra Nevada." These were not just trips; they were, in Sarah's narrative, the epitome of childhood's purest joys, a yearly rhythm of escapades to the mountains and the ocean, where she, as a child, could explore in "the calmest, most fun, most freeing" state.



In a formative moment between adolescence and high school, after a regularly scheduled camping trip to the Sierra Nevada, Sarah recalls questioning her family's choice of mostly nature-focused family vacations; "...like, why? We didn't go to Hawaii; we just spent time here." During the drive home, after pondering Sarah's question, her dad shared a previously unspoken fear. Considering the serious environmental challenges ahead, he wanted her to enjoy these places as much as possible before they might change. The journey from childhood to adulthood is filled with many reality-shattering moments. For Sarah, on that familiar journey home, as the evening mountains faded in the background, she grappled with the newly introduced prospect of a changing planet.

"And so that was, I think, one moment that pushed me into environmentalism and wanting to protect it so that my [future] kids could then enjoy all the fun things that I got to," Sarah later recounts as Policy Associate for the American Conservation Coalition.



The COVID Reset

The pandemic, despite its challenges, became a catalyst for unexpected opportunities. Having recently moved to Colorado from California, Sarah felt a unique form of isolation by experiencing COVID-19 lockdowns in a new place. On one of these lonely days, she was scrolling on "the former" Twitter.com when she stumbled upon an op-ed on conservative environmentalism by ACC founder Benji Backer. As a right-leaning environmentalist, she was shocked to find a place that felt like a home. "I was like, no way! Is that real!?" she shares excitedly, "And just started following along, and then, as ACC does, they pull you in and empower you."

ACC's uncommon approach of soliciting support and actively empowering its members was a breath of fresh air for Sarah. However, the stark contrast to her previous experiences with other environmental groups naturally caused skepticism for her. "I remember when I was first asked to write an op-ed, I ignored it because I thought it was spam," she recalls laughing. We both laughed. It is a funny thought, though born from a not-so-funny state of the environmental movement. "I was definitely living in a bubble of 'everybody cares about the environment, this isn't a controversial issue,' and so whenever I did try to engage with other environmental organizations, nothing happened. They were just like, 'Can you give us money?'" When Sarah realized that engagement for ACC is about active participation rather than financial transactions, her new journey began.

Initially set on becoming a physical therapist after finishing her undergrad, the pandemic-induced pause led her to reassess her plans. Moving to Colorado with aspirations of pursuing physical therapy in Denver, she found solace and inspiration in the outdoors during the lockdown. A quiet, persistent inner voice, previously drowned out by the noise of daily life pre-pandemic, nudged her toward a greener path— "...in that time, we spent a lot of time outside in Colorado, and I just came back to that love for nature and, that little voice in my head got louder and decided to go back and get my Masters in Environmental Policy."

With her newfound connection with ACC, Sarah initiated a local branch, forming bonds within the Colorado environmental community. The isolation of peak COVID, a recent move, and limited social ties made her career pivot more poignant. Yet, ACC's community proved a welcome antidote to this isolation, providing ideological alignment, empowerment, and inspiration. "It was really inspiring to meet other people who are so passionate about this issue. A lot of people were really craving it [ACC], so that was also just really inspiring," Sarah shares.

New Possibilities

In the buzzing corridors of COP26, Sarah's perspective of what is possible with ACC blossomed alongside the global conservative environmental movement. What felt like suddenly, she found herself amidst political leaders from across the world, all converging to discuss climate change. Her voice resonated with awe and disbelief, describing it as "living history" at the first-ever Global Conservative Climate Summit. "I remember at the end of COP26 just being like, 'this is real,' what ACC is doing is real, and it's so important." She felt more energized than ever by this experience and returned to Colorado, ready to fortify her local community and amplify its impact.

Less than four months later, on February 16th, 2022, Sarah did just that when she testified on behalf of ACC to the Colorado Senate in favor of legislation unleashing nuclear power in the state. Despite the bill's outcome falling short of ACC's goals, Sarah gained something arguably just as valuable. "I remember really feeling like I found my voice in that moment," she shares. The experience, as she explains, was not just about legislative results but about voicing Colorado's concerns and feeling empowered to stand for what she believed in.

Two truths: 1) Sarah Jensen is a special person willing to use every tool at her disposal to make a difference. 2) Moments like this are why pivotal moments in her journey of self-discovery and empowerment could not have happened without ACC.



One Year Later

It is now March 2023, and after growing ACC's presence in Colorado as an Ambassador and earning her Master's Degree in Environmental Policy from the University of Colorado Boulder, Sarah has officially transitioned from an admirer of ACC on social media to a critical player within the organization. Her excitement is apparent, "I'm still in shock," she acknowledges as we discuss her evolution from a reader of ACC op-eds to a full-time policy associate. Sarah's journey, she reflected, wouldn't have taken this pivot without ACC's empowering approach. "I probably truly might be a physical therapist, and I probably wouldn't be a part of these conversations," she said.

We pivoted the conversation to a discussion about ACC's trajectory. Sarah predicts that "In 10 years we're mainstream, like, we're the norm," she envisioned, expressing a wish for ACC to be the staple model for conservation and environmentalism in the United States. This sounds like a tall order, but after spending a few months working closely with ACC staff, her takeaway is, "These people can do anything."

While we sat down to talk about Sarah, there was no shortage of gratitude for what ACC's financial supporters have done for her. "Oh my God, thank you doesn't even cover it," she admitted. The significance of building a movement and effecting change hinges on the support of donors, allowing young people to transform environmental passion into action. She emphasized that the non-profit served as a home for individuals who cared about the environment but hadn't found their place until encountering ACC.

In a closing reflection on her journey, Sarah acknowledged ACC's role in shaping her future self. "In so many ways," she expressed, "giving me a voice, really empowering me to do something about this issue." When we empower one, they have the strength to go out and empower many. This cyclical nature of empowerment became evident as Sarah contemplated how the strength she found within ACC has extended to empower others, embodying the ACC's spirit by embracing empowerment, evolution, and the power of one person to make a lasting impact.

884

The amount of media hits mentioning the American Conservation Coalition in 2023

OVERVIEW

Ink, Airwaves, & Impact: ACC's Year In Media

Our movement – staff, members, and allies – published 180 ACC-affiliated op-eds this year. Notable highlights included the publication of 13 Earth Day op-eds nationwide, a significant presence in the Washington Times with a featured piece by our full senior leadership, and exciting collaborations with the likes of members of Congress, Miss America Grace Stanke, and partner organizations like the Bipartisan Policy Center and Ducks Unlimited. These diverse op-ed placements underscored the breadth of our movement's influence and commitment to environmental discourse.

Turning to print media, our outreach efforts yielded a total of 601 mentions nationwide. Our media engagement around the first 2024 presidential debate in August was particularly noteworthy, resulting in more than 400 mentions alone. The Deseret News and Provo Daily Herald also prominently featured our 2023 Summit, solidifying our movement's presence in influential print outlets and emphasizing the importance of our initiatives.

In broadcast media, our engagements reached a total of 51, spanning platforms such as Fox Business, Fox & Friends Saturday, Morning Joe, NBC Miami, and other local TV stations. These highlights reflect our media engagements' diverse and extensive nature, bringing our movement to a broader audience. Complementing these efforts, our leaders participated in 53 speaking engagements, further cementing our commitment to driving positive change through impactful discourse.

MEDIA BREAKDOWN

- 180 op-eds
- 601 print hits
- 51 broadcast hits
- 53 speaking engagements



Sherwood and Diaz discussed the importance of an alternative climate vision and conservative leadership on the issue to combat the preexisting narrative. The conservative approach, of course, emphasizes innovation and the United States leading the world in developing key emissions-reducing technologies.

"In the midterms, we saw historic youth turnout, and they broke for Democrats by about 30 points," observed ACC President Chris Barnard during his interview with reporter Morgan Radford. "... if [Republicans] want to stay electorally relevant, they have to do something about this issue."

Importantly, according to Gallup, 70% of young Republicans worry about the environment, a number anecdotally demonstrated by Sherwood, Diaz, and Barnard throughout the course of this story. In her wrap-up of the story, Radford emphasizes the difference in policy vision between the conservative environmental movement and the mainstream environmental movement. She suggests that conservative environmentalists could have an impact far beyond the 2024 election.

BROADCAST

Young Republicans are pushing their party on climate change

ACC FEATURED ON MSNBC'S MORNING JOE

Adapted from MSNBC (10/14/23)

Following the first presidential primary debate, ACC President Chris Barnard and two ACC members, Alex Diaz and Ava Sherwood, joined MSNBC's Morning Joe to assert that young conservatives prioritize the issue of climate change.

"The discourse surrounding the climate and energy all together has really been by the Left," said ACC Slippery Rock Branch Leader Ava Sherwood. "... And their whole discourse is full of alarmism."

Alex Diaz asked the only audience question at the first debate and reflected on the experience during his interview. "I think it started an important debate in the Republican Party as well as in this campaign specifically in that young people do care about this issue."

PUBLIC ADDRESSES

ACC Competes in the Big Apple

New York, New York – ACC achieved a remarkable honor as one of the top three finalists in the Atlas Smart Bets competition. This prestigious, invite-only program acknowledges organizations that excel in leveraging philanthropic investments, providing ACC with unique opportunities such as special grant funding, priority engagement in high-level Atlas Network trainings, increased visibility among donors and partners, and more.



OP-ED

It's Time for America to Unleash Next-Generation Nuclear Energy

REPRESENTATIVE BYRON DONALDS AND PRESIDENT CHRIS BARNARD

Adapted from RealClear Energy (03/23/23)

The year 2022 marked the onset of a global nuclear energy revival, evident in the historic investments by Japan and South Korea and the milestone achievement in the United States—its first reactor in thirty years reaching criticality, signifying autonomous power generation. Despite the Biden administration allocating \$1.2 billion to sustain aging nuclear plants, the true remedy lies in fostering a regulatory environment conducive to advancing next-generation nuclear technology efficiently.

Current federal regulations impede the realization of America's full nuclear potential, hampered by the inefficient Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), mired in archaic missions and convoluted red tape. Meanwhile, European countries like France, Poland, and Finland collaborate to champion nuclear energy, highlighting the limitations constraining the U.S.'s geopolitical leadership. Urgently, the nation must prioritize nuclear energy as a reliable, abundant, and clean source beyond rhetoric, necessitating meaningful congressional action.

Despite longstanding fears and confusion surrounding nuclear energy, shifting public opinion supports its expansion, particularly among young Republicans. Proximity to conventional nuclear plants correlates with favorable views. Leveraging the unique benefits of nuclear energy can secure American energy independence, reduce emissions, and position the nation as a global leader. However, bureaucracy and NIMBYism obstruct progress, with misconceptions about safety and cost persisting.

The future of U.S. nuclear energy lies in next-generation technologies like small modular reactors (SMRs) and microreactors—compact, cost-effective, and reliable. The recent NRC certification of NuScale's SMR design is promising, but streamlining the regulatory process is essential to unlock the potential of various advanced nuclear projects. Federal support is crucial for reducing NRC fees on innovative nuclear businesses, ensuring timely deployment of safe and clean baseload energy.

Addressing challenges at the NRC, easing regulatory burdens on small businesses in the advanced nuclear sector, deploying microreactors for disaster response, and expressing broad federal support have been championed in the 118th Congress. Nuclear energy is indispensable for achieving ambitious climate goals, and the U.S. must lead in next-generation nuclear technology to secure international prominence and a sustainable future.



EL PASO NEWS

Earth Day celebration kicks off with fruit tree planting event

BROADCAST

Earth Day celebration kicks off with fruit tree planting event

KTSM EL PASO AND THE ACC EL PASO BRANCH

Adapted from KTSM El Paso (04/15/23)

The American Conservation Coalition (ACC) El Paso, led by Texas State Director Zack Abnet, recently organized a fruit tree planting event at Planty for the People to mark Earth Day. This grassroots nonprofit focuses on building a conservative environmental movement, fostering bipartisan sustainability efforts on college campuses and in communities. The event, aligned with Earth Day's "making Earth Day local" theme, aimed to dispel the misconception that individual actions lack environmental impact, with ACC members contributing to their community and promoting environmental responsibility.

Earth Day has evolved into a global platform for collective environmental action. ACC's involvement reflects a commitment to diverse and inclusive environmental stewardship, recognizing the shared responsibility for conservation. The choice of a fruit tree planting event holds ecological significance, providing benefits such as fresh produce, improved air quality, and wildlife habitat at Planty for the People, emphasizing the connection between environmental initiatives and community spaces.

ACC's participation demonstrates a commitment to environmental engagement, echoing a broader shift in individual environmental awareness. By dispelling the notion that environmentalism is exclusive to a particular political ideology, ACC promotes a more inclusive approach to environmental challenges, showcasing the potential impact of local initiatives in creating a sustainable future.

LETTER FROM THE VP

Discourse Shapes Reality: leading comms for the conservative environmental movement

KARLY MATTHEWS, ACC VP OF COMMUNICATIONS

It was an exciting year for the ACC Communications Team. With internal promotions and external hires, we grew to a team of five creative and innovative individuals ready to promote ACC's work in the press and on social media.

The Communications Team serves as a bridge between ACC's grassroots and grassroots work. We amplify staff and member voices in local and national media outlets and social media channels to show the power and momentum behind the conservative environmental movement. Our team also amplifies the work ACC does in Washington, D.C. and on Capitol Hill to show our grassroots members that our voices truly do matter and by using our voices, we're effecting real change.

One of my favorite parts of my job is helping grassroots members use their voices for positive change in their communities. This was especially evident this Earth Day, when we published 13 staff and member op-eds showing how environmentalism is inherently local and personal. Our members and staff were published in a variety of local and regional outlets, including The Dallas Morning News, The Columbus Dispatch, The Colorado Springs Gazette, and The Tennessean. Each op-ed was a unique story about how environmentalism is meaningful to our members on the ground, as well as our national staff. Reading each one of them reinvigorated my passion for ACC's mission, and seeing every piece published was my most rewarding moment of the year.

Of course, ACC also had our largest media week of our organizational history this August. At the first presidential debate, the only audience question was not only about climate change but asked by ACC Member Alex Diaz. The question resulted in staff interviews that were published more than 400 times in outlets all over the country. This demonstrated a real culmination of ACC's work for the past six years to reengage conservatives on the issue of the environment, but candidates' responses also showed how much work still must be done. The good news: we're not slowing down.

Looking toward next year, we have a big job to do: make the conservative environmental movement heard in the 2024 presidential election. By elevating our grassroots members' voices nationwide and taking our message to diverse audiences, we will show the importance of conservative leadership on climate and energy issues. Between what we hear on the ground and incredibly compelling polling numbers, we know that climate will be a force at the ballot box.

As the head of the Communications Team, I am looking forward to making 2024 another transformative year for not only ACC but the conservative environmental movement at large. Amplifying the work that the rest of our organization is so passionately doing is extremely rewarding. It's why I started my career here and have been with ACC for more than five years. I cannot thank you enough for supporting our mission so that we are privileged to do this work.



Karly Matthews joins Fox News with fellow GenZ voters to share the importance of climate action for young people at the polls.



Karly Matthews kicks off the annual ACC Awards show in Salt Lake City, Utah honoring ACC members for their impact nationwide.



Karly Matthews (back row, third to the left) honored as a MaverickPAC Future40 winner on June 25th in Washington, D.C. at the MAVCON23 Conference.

19,728,555

A CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATE OF THE IMPRESSIONS ACC'S SOCIAL INFLUENCE SPHERE ORGANICALLY EARNED IN 2023

 @ACC_National
  @DanielleBFranz
  @ChrisBarnarddl
  @Stephen_Perkins
  @BenjiBacker

The Climate Commitment

5,585,206 global 2023 social media impressions

The Climate Commitment was referenced across social media over 5.5 million times this year! Conservative climate solutions are resonating with notable influencers, like Isabel Brown, who are taking to social to share their excitement about the actionable plan.

*as of 12/07/23

NEW DIRECTORS EMERGE

Amy Mastrine Joins ACC, Lucero Cantu Shifts Roles

This fall, ACC welcomed Amy Mastrine as our full-time social media director. We are proud to have grown our social media initiatives to the point where we can bring in a skilled individual to manage our accounts full-time. Amy brings 10 years of digital marketing experience for right-leaning 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. With this shift, ACC has dissolved the role of "Digital Director" and transitioned Lucero Cantu to Creative Director. With five years of experience growing ACC's online presence, Lucero is now pivoting her skillset to maintain and grow ACC's brand beyond the screen. Expect more intentional ways of connecting with our members, visually exciting ways of experiencing ACC, and bolder usage of our voice! Amy and Lucero are just two of the directors in our now six-person comms shop.

2023 TREND REPORT

ACC Comms Shares the Top Trend Moments of the Year

- Climate 'hoax' language is out! Vivek Ramaswamy learned this the hard way on August 23rd, 2023 when the live Navigator Research poll showed his favorability with voters plummeting across the board the moment he used the language. Most drastically, his favorability with the women dropped by 50%.
- Nuclear power emerges as the standout performer among ACC's policy content priorities. Whether the content is a funny meme, exciting industry update, or policy explainer, nuclear energy continues to be our audience's favorite topic. This year was a big one for nuclear energy, and ACC looks forward to continuing to do our part to elevate it in the public discourse.
- Influential conservative figures are joining the movement! This year, we saw engagement from former Speaker John Boehner, Miss America, Isabel Brown, Johnny Joey Jones, Steve Hilton, Chef Andrew Gruel, and so many more leading voices.

#2023HASHTAGCAMPAIGNS



#ACCOutside

Our grassroots and comms teams collaborated to encourage members to get outside and foster ACC's principles in the process. Throughout the summer, the #ACCOutside campaign gained 1,058,566 impressions and pushed people to explore their local farmer's market, thrift unused items, and more!



#CommitToConserve

While Congress debates the Farm Bill, ACC is igniting young people around the power of farmers to conserve our planet! In support of farmers and ranchers, our #CommitToConserve campaign earned 370,378 impressions in just three months. In total, our farming content reached 1.6 million impressions across all platforms.



#NuclearEra

We launched a two-day campaign blitz calling to light the importance of nuclear energy action during our Washington, D.C. event with Miss America and nuclear engineer Grace Stanke. In two days, the #NuclearEra campaign garnered over 1.5 million impressions across social media.

ACC RALLIES 26,000 ALLIES FOR FARMERS IN FOUR KEY STATES

In September, ACC successfully mobilized support for farmers - the original climate heroes - across strategic regions. Through a targeted digital and creative campaign, more than 26,000 individuals in Indiana, Arkansas, North Dakota, and South Dakota joined our cause. Thousands of conservatives showed their support for increased conservation funding, actively sending petitions to Congress to stand up for American farmers.

Alongside the success of our grassroots Call To Action in those four key states, ACC's influence also reached the heart of decision-making in Washington, D.C. Our US Capitol geofence garnered 991,214 impressions. Furthermore, our engagement with political influencers in the area proved highly effective, with 1,147,133 impressions, emphasizing the resonance of our message among key stakeholders.

This success reinforces ACC's commitment to empowering local farmers and ranchers. Through strategic investments in cutting-edge technologies, ACC remains dedicated to ensuring that American farmers can continue their vital role in feeding the nation while actively protecting our environment. We were thrilled about the success of this campaign and look forward to building on it in the future!



Washington Examiner

Published on September 15, 2023 at 6:00 AM

“Farmers understand firsthand the importance of stewarding the land to protect soil health, water quality, and habitats. Their knowledge not only results in better environmental outcomes but can increase yields, resilience to natural disasters, and farm income. As such, these farm bill conservation programs are extremely popular among farmers. In fact, a recent survey from the National Wildlife Federation found that 74% of farmers support increasing funding for voluntary conservation programs. As Congress works to update the farm bill in the coming months, it should extend and improve the programs under the conservation title in support of America’s farmers. Don’t just listen to us. America’s farmers are saying it loud and clear. They want to be at the vanguard of resource conservation, and these farm bill programs can help make that possible.”

ACC President Chris Barnard & Lesley Jantarasami, Managing Director of the Bipartisan Policy Center’s Energy Program

SPONSORING THE GOP AFTERPARTY



Climate Action Is On The Agenda

ACC Member Alexander Diaz addresses presidential candidates at the first GOP debate

"How would you, as both President of the United States and leader of the Republican Party, calm [young people's] fears that the Republican Party doesn't care about climate change?"

SIX YEARS IN THE MAKING

ACC served as title sponsor of the official after-party at the first GOP debate in Milwaukee. This was the first Republican debate since ACC's founding in 2017 and ACC leader, Alexander Diaz, was selected to ask the only audience question 27 minutes into the event. This was a watershed moment for both ACC and the Eco-Right, as candidates on stage were encouraged to go on the record on climate in front of over 13 million Americans watching at home.

HITTING THE SOUNDWAVES

ACC leadership conducted fifteen unique interviews around our involvement in the first presidential debate. This includes publications like CNN, NBC, Politico, The Washington Post, NPR, and more. Our President, Chris Barnard, conducted an interview with the Associated Press that was syndicated 350 times to publications around the world, to locations as varied as Johnston City, Tennessee, Elmira, New York, and Tokyo, Japan.

1,300+

Attendees at the RNC afterparty, including candidates and Members of Congress

400

media hits highlighting ACC the day after the debate

13+ Million

Viewers tuned in to watch the debate





ACC LEADS CLIMATE DIALOGUE WITH CONGRESSIONAL FIGURES

We organized a Congressional Climate Bootcamp in collaboration with the Orrin Hatch Foundation, featuring Chairwoman McMorris Rodgers (WA-05 - Energy & Commerce), Chairman Lucas (OK-03 - Science), and Representative Curtis (UT-03). The event included a panel discussion following a polling presentation by ACC staff.



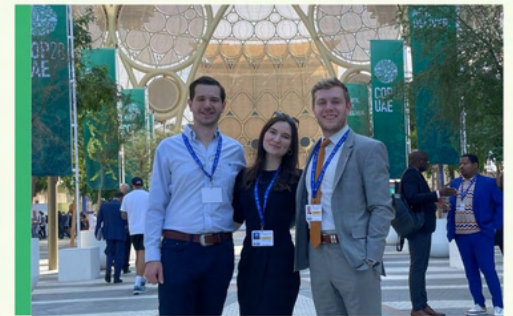
DELEGATION OF 7 MEMBERS & 30 STAFFERS AT THE ACC SUMMIT

A notable delegation from the Western Caucus, consisting of 7 Members of Congress including Reps. Curtis (UT-03), Moore (UT-01), Owens (UT-04), Stauber (MN-08), Baird (IN-04), LaMalfa (CA-01), and Bentz (OR-02), along with over 30 staffers, joined us at the ACC Summit. This brought together key representatives and young leaders to discuss people-first climate solutions.



ACC HOSTS LUNCH & LEARNS FOR WESTERN CAUCUS STAFF

ACC conducted two lunch-and-learn style briefings for the Congressional Western Caucus, on both the House and Senate sides, to educate on how conservatives can lead on energy & environmental issues. We were joined by over 60 staffers to discuss key topics, such as an all-the-above energy approach, the importance of natural climate solutions, and messaging that resonates with conservative audiences.



ACC JOINS CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AT COP28

ACC's senior leadership team recently attended COP28, part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Dubai, actively representing tens of thousands of members on the international stage in discussions focused on environmental sustainability. ACC's yearly attendance is in commitment to building the conservative environmental movement in the United States and beyond its borders.

...SO, ON THE DOWN LOW

BIPARTISAN, BICAMERAL BEHIND-THE-SCENES CONVENINGS

Over the course of the year, permitting reform emerged as an incredible opportunity for bipartisan climate action. The ACC team saw a need to bring together Congressional offices on both sides of the aisle on a topic that is critical to cutting emissions and supporting American energy deployment. To help encourage productive collaboration, we convened a Member-level, off-the-record dinner on permitting reform with 10 Members of Congress and our partners at Climate Changemakers, a left-of-center climate advocacy group. We followed this up with two additional staff-level roundtables that brought together Congressional staff for productive bipartisan, bicameral discussions. Fifteen different offices and caucuses were represented throughout the three events. Both at the Member and staff levels, individuals who would not have otherwise had the opportunity to engage with one another left the events with new relationships. We look forward to continuing our work within the permitting and transmission conversation during the second half of the 118th Congress.