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Call to Action  
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## UC The Change We Need? Be The Change

The impacts of manmade [climate change](#) are unevenly felt across the world. Some areas are experiencing droughts or heavy rainfall, like here in California, while terrifying natural disasters are hitting other parts of the world at higher intensities and for longer periods of time. Climate change exacerbates social inequality and injustice in vulnerable regions of the world, and since many global leaders have chosen not to do enough in order to protect these people, you need to step in and make the change we so desperately need.

Dealing with the destruction from these storms has become a way of life for many people, and it shouldn't be. It is unacceptable that vulnerable communities, ones that had almost nothing to do with manmade climate change, have to face the consequences of the global north's fossil fuel addiction. It is unfair that while richer countries never have to worry about their houses being destroyed by unpredictable storms, individuals in poor countries invariably live in fear that any day, their entire livelihoods and communities could be swept away and completely ruined.

As emerging student leaders, you should no longer allow corporations and governments determine whose lives are worth saving and whose aren't. You need to transcend socioeconomic borders and backgrounds and come together as one to fight for your rights and for the rights of the people who have been ignored for so long. By joining the climate justice movement, you will be connected with inspirational, incredible, extraordinary, and beautiful people from all over the world who all unite under one common interest: for justice to be served.

The main goals of the climate justice movement:

1. Fight for the transformation of energy systems from dirty fossil fuels to clean energy from renewable sources
2. Fight for governments and corporations to take the needs of vulnerable communities into account, and to take action by donating money to these areas. It is the responsibility of the global north to pay a climate debt to the global south
3. Fight for the empowerment of all people, no matter their religion, race, or socioeconomic background
4. Fight for the safety of people from the disastrous effects of natural disasters  
Fight for food security for the vulnerable communities

The time is now. The climate justice movement is gaining momentum, as was demonstrated at the last few United Nations Conference of the Parties (COPs). Their influence is at an all time high, and we need to keep pushing it higher and higher. The more attention the movement gets from social media, the higher up on the negotiators radar the issues that are important to the movement get. In [2014](#) hundreds of thousands of people gathered together for the People's Climate March for climate justice. They held up posters and banners that were used to invoke a sense of urgency for governments and corporations to take climate change seriously, and to view it as not only an environmental problem, but as a social justice problem. There are many smaller marches or gatherings that are happening across the world, the only thing you need to do is find one near you. You need to take a stand against these big, affluent corporations and tell them enough is enough. The massive social transformation that is required for the movement

to be successful requires mass mobilization of people from every community, from every background, and from everywhere. This social transformation needs people like you.

But how should you go about doing this? There are numerous ways to become involved and spread awareness. There are hundreds of organizations that are involved in climate justice and many are tailored to one specific area or issue. Some are focused on [food security](#), some are focused on [indigenous rights](#), and others are focused on the rights of [women](#). Others are bigger and have a wide range of topics and issues they are targeting, including organizations such as [Friends of the Earth International](#), [Earth in Brackets](#), and [Greenpeace](#). On top of this, there is a large increase in organizations that are looking for younger individuals to be a part of the climate change movement, as these issues of injustice will be affecting their lives the most and for a longer amount of time. They are the young, the newly educated, and the most passionate, and groups such as the [Canadian Youth Delegation](#), the [Arab Youth Climate Movement](#), and the [Interfaith Youth for Climate Justice](#) really focus on getting the voice of the global youth out. Many of these organizations have smaller subgroups in many regions around the world, with many in the United States. Whether you join a huge international organization or a smaller one, your efforts will make a difference.

There are talks and groups that address the climate justice issue across the UC system, like at [UCSC](#), [UCSB](#), and [UCLA](#) to name a few. If you haven't yet, check up on your specific campus and find out if there is a group or series of talks that are taking place. And if you don't find anything, that is a perfect opportunity for you to go out and create a student club or event.

But maybe that is not for you. Maybe you are more of the creative type, one that likes to create art and express yourself and your emotions through visual pathways. That's great! Just

because you don't want to go march around and make verbal demands for social justice doesn't mean you can't be a part of the movement. There are many organizations that focus on climate justice art, such as [CultureStrike](#), where you can create pieces of powerful art that show the world the injustices climate change creates.

Another option, for those of you who are more interested in the politics, legislation and the UN climate conference processes, you can join political groups who are focused on passing legislation in favor of vulnerable communities to climate change. You can join the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service, a group who is focused on creating [policy](#) for climate justice or you can also join [OneAmerica](#), who focuses on environmental justice as and ways to reduce our carbon emissions.

But your involvement doesn't stop here. You can constantly keep yourself updated on what is going on around the world in terms of climate change and social injustice, as well as keep yourself updated on the efforts climate justice groups around the world are taking part in. Whatever you do, don't subject yourself to clicktivism, a form of passive activism where you like posts on FaceBook or sign petitions online. Your activism requires more than just being active on the internet. Although it is a nice addition to the other forms of activism you engage in, it should not be your main form of involvement.

Talk to your roommates, talk to your friends, talk to your parents about these issues. There is a big chance they have never heard of climate justice before, let alone know what it entails. Take the time and enlighten them. Provide safe spaces for discussion. Write news articles on the local efforts of your fellow classmates. Write blog posts of how you feel and what you think should be done.

Whatever you do, don't be idle. What do you have to lose? As college students in California, you have access to a lot of resources individuals don't have in other parts of the world. Use these materials to your advantage. Shed light onto the issue of climate justice, an issue that vulnerable communities have been trying to raise awareness to for years with little success. It is your turn to make justice and social well being irresistible, basic human rights that should never be questioned or disregarded. As young college students at fairly liberal colleges in California, it is your responsibility as communicators and intellectuals to meet your audience where they are and bring their stories into the limelight.

The differences between you and the negotiators at the COPs, between you and your classmates, between you and those in vulnerable communities don't matter. We cannot fear conflict or disagreement; we need to embrace it and see it as an opportunity for cooperation, innovation and solutions for resilience. This is your time. Make the most of it.