

EMPOWERING AN EQUITABLE ENERGY TRANSITION IN ALACHUA COUNTY FL

The community-led EMPOWER Coalition brings together community organizations, local non-profits, city and county government, educational institutions and private sector since 2022. We work together with three underserved neighborhoods to bring them resources to reduce the high energy burdens in their homes, stabilize their neighborhoods against gentrification, and bring them economic training and employment opportunities in the green workforce.

- The EMPOWER Coalition partners with 3 disadvantaged, underserved and overburdened communities: Springhill and Sugarhill, Greater Duval, and the Southwest Advocacy Group (SWAG) neighborhoods
- These residents face high energy burdens, relatively high frequency of utility disconnects due to non-payment of bills, increasingly unaffordable housing due to high energy costs, and lack of participation in the benefits of solar energy expansion, among others.
- Climate challenges include increasingly extreme heat, threats of flooding, and more severe storms (hurricanes and tornados), especially for elderly, disabled and chronically ill adults as well as single mothers and children.
- The NAACP ECJC leads the EMPOWER Coalitions community engagement efforts, building on successful community engagement programs through the organization of six ECJC community forums since 2018
- The EMPOWER Coalition's project connects institutional solar leases with energy-burdened communities by creating lease agreements for solar installations to contribute to a sustained Community Fund earmarked for energy conservation and efficiency improvements to reduce energy burdens and expand opportunities for green jobs

Partners: NAACP Environmental & Climate Justice Committee; Cultural Arts Coalition (CAC); Rebuilding Together North Central Florida (RTNCF) and the Community Weatherization Coalition (CWC); Alachua County Board of County Commissioners; Santa Fe College; Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area (GCRA)



Dr. Paul Broadie, Santa Fe College President
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