MISSION
To empower individuals to achieve environmental and economic sustainability for themselves and their communities.

VALUES
- **Human Potential**
  We believe that when people unleash their potential, they have the ability to grow, change, and make a difference in their communities.

- **Equal Opportunity**
  We believe that economic, environmental and social opportunities should be accessible to everyone.

- **Energy & Resource Conservation**
  We believe in our shared responsibility to practice and promote environmental stewardship.

- **Results Driven**
  We are committed to achieving significant tangible results and measuring our environmental and social impact.

VISION
As an innovator, Rising Sun will increase its impact on individuals, communities and the environment.

*We will focus our efforts in 3 areas:*

- **Pathways**
  By fully integrating its programs, Rising Sun will create multiple entry points so that participants can access resources to support their career and life development over the long term.

- **Environmental Benefits**
  Rising Sun will measurably improve the environment by educating and working with communities to conserve resources, while building demand for green services through partnerships, consumer education, and direct implementation.

- **Triple Bottom Line**
  Rising Sun will expand the scope and scale of its social enterprises in order to employ more participants, make a measurable contribution to resource conservation, and sustain the organization.
Dear Friends of Rising Sun,

2012 was another year of growth and development for Rising Sun. Our programs continued to employ our triple win strategy, putting 143 people to work installing measures that will reduce CO₂ emissions by 12,935 metric tons, and providing services to 3,456 homes.

2012 also reinforced the urgent need for the work we do. Climate change is real; unemployment, especially among our youth, is too high; and our educational system needs major reform to catch up to the 21st century workplace. Rising Sun’s work gained relevance in 2012 as these issues remained at the forefront of our local and global communities.

Over the past five years, Rising Sun has grown from a grassroots organization with a small staff and limited resources to a thriving, professionally-run organization recognized as a leader in our field. Since 2007, we have quadrupled our staff, tripled our revenue, and implemented new policies and systems to effectively manage our growth.

In 2012, we welcomed three new members to our Board of Directors to complete an initiative to expand the Board to support Rising Sun’s growth. We also added new staff with expertise in business development, finance and contract management to support our programming as we expand our services.

The expanded Board participated in a comprehensive strategic planning initiative and refined our Mission, Vision and Values. Rising Sun’s new mission is:

Learning a Living is the theme of this year’s annual report, and it could not be more fitting. In 2012, we were honored to be one of fifteen organizations around the world featured in Learning a Living: Radical Innovation in Education for Work. The book addresses a critical issue occurring around the world: the failure of educational systems to equip students adequately for today’s labor market, and consequently, to become productive members of their communities. Rising Sun’s work was recognized as a model for skill-building, youth employment and environmental sustainability for the 21st century.

We could not effectively address these 21st century problems without our supporters, partners, dedicated staff and committed Board. Thank you for your support, and we look forward to a healthy and productive 2013 as we continue to work diligently in pursuit of our mission.

With warm regards,

Jodi Pincus
President & Executive Director

Caleb Everett
Chairman of the Board
CYES CALIFORNIA YOUTH ENERGY SERVICES

Learning by Doing

Overview

CYES, in operation since 2000, is Rising Sun’s flagship youth employment and energy efficiency retrofit program. CYES provides much-needed opportunities for youth and young adults to gain transferable job skills in a productive setting where they receive coaching and mentoring, while increasing the broader community’s awareness and use of sustainable practices through education and direct installation of energy efficiency hardware.

The CYES program hires youth ages 15-22 and provides those youth with both technical skills and professional development training to serve as Energy Specialists. Energy Specialists deliver Green House Calls to thousands of Bay Area customers each year, installing hardware – CFLs, efficient showerheads and aerators, pipe wrap, clotheslines, powerstrips, and torchieres – in customer homes, while providing an energy and water conservation assessment and education.

ANNUAL energy SAVINGS of...

1,447,601 kilowatt hours (kWh)
28,666 therms
4,245 gallons of water per minute
At current rates, the energy saved over the lifetime of the installed measures from Rising Sun’s 2012 youth programs will save residents:

- Over $2 million in total energy dollars
- Over 13 million kilowatt hours of electricity and 343,000 natural gas therms
- Over 10,887 metric tons of CO₂ greenhouse gas emissions

Overtime, CYES and Rising Sun’s youth programs have trained more than 900 young people and provided over 19,988 homes with energy- and water-saving hardware. Over a lifetime, these rates will save residents:

- Over $13.7 million in energy dollars
- Over 93.4 million kilowatt hours of electricity and 2.5 million natural gas therms
- The reduction of over 76,900 metric tons of CO₂ greenhouse gas emissions

This is equivalent to one of the following:

- CO₂ emissions from 8,621,076 gallons of gasoline consumed
- Annual greenhouse gas emissions from 16,021 passenger vehicles
- Carbon sequestered annually from 63,033 acres of pine or fir forests

1. Assuming an average of $.12/kWh and $1.00/therm
2. Calculated using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Greenhouse Gas
LIFT LEADERS-IN-FIELD TRAINING

Learning by Doing

Overview
The most committed young adults from CYES return each year to develop their skills, advance their opportunities, and serve their community in new ways. LIFT is designed to provide these standout individuals with higher levels of training, providing former Energy Specialists with positions of increased responsibility and a higher rate of pay during the CYES summer. LIFT teaches crucial managerial skills: how to supervise staff, facilitate trainings, attend to administrative duties, and role-model for peers.

Outputs & Incomes
In its fourth year, the LIFT program experienced significant achievement in participant growth and leadership. Both new and old partnerships merged to support recruitment efforts, provide space for training, and facilitate other LIFT activities. LIFT participants benefitted from a LIFT Coordinator, a new position created to support the LIFT program and focus on leadership development.

The LIFT Coordinator assisted in facilitating a week-long leadership training at the beginning of the summer and weekly, ongoing professional development workshops. In turn, LIFT participants conducted professional development workshops for youth Energy Specialists at their respective work sites, facilitating life skills workshops integrated with environmental education topics. In 2012, ten LIFT participants created and achieved both personal and professional development goals, supported by mentorship and feedback from their site managers, Area Directors and the LIFT Coordinator.

2012 LIFT participants also played a central role in administering a successful new project and partnership with Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), increasing their project planning and administrative competencies by implementing a tracking system for a
Youth Council

Learning by Serving

Overview
Youth Council is a year-long volunteer program designed to empower youth and cultivate leadership through environmental stewardship and community service, while developing professional skills. Youth Council members receive focused training in project planning and fundraising. This training is put into practice as participants plan and implement a local service project, and travel abroad for an international service learning opportunity.

Outputs & Income
In May 2012, Youth Council members successfully designed and implemented a local community service project in East Oakland. In partnership with the City of Oakland, Youth Council members adopted a block in East Oakland at 98th Ave & Bancroft Ave. to implement a median beautification project. Youth Council members reached out to the East Oakland community for project involvement, and recruited high school students to help them earn volunteer hours required for high school graduation. Youth Council members also successfully solicited vendors and secured in-kind donations to provide lunch to all volunteers on the project.

In December 2012, ten Youth Council members embarked on Rising Sun’s second international service learning trip to Xela, Guatemala. This year, Youth Council members built nine fuel-efficient, ventilated stoves for nine Guatemalan families in need, replacing three-stone open fires used for cooking and heating. These open fires have historically caused acute respiratory illness, blindness, and severe burn incidents, particularly among women and children. The new stoves improved safety, health, and quality of life for families.

The trip to Guatemala was a transformative experience for Youth Council members as well, who gained exposure to a different culture and took direct action in global environmental stewardship and humanitarianism. Within the context of each of their own lives, members were able to consider multiple perspectives of their participation, including the nature of service, who they serve, how they currently approach life, and how they intend to live life after.

Youth Council members indicated an overall increase in knowledge of ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS and ADVOCACY through program activities and coaching.

Youth Learner

TESTIMONIAL

"Working for Rising Sun has been an unmatchable experience that has offered me an abundance of knowledge about green energy and workforce development; from how to conserve water and energy, to retrofitting a house and providing great customer service. I am so thankful that I was able to be a part of this amazing opportunity to help my community and get to know so many inspiring people. The entire Rising Sun team has restored my faith that someday the world will be able to work together, so generations to come can have a healthy planet to live on."

Given by LAUREN, a MARIN Energy Specialist
In 2012 Rising Sun GBA Program resulted in...

- 32 Participants Enrolled
- 21 Completed
- 15 Continued Education
- 16 Employed
- 12 Continued Education

Demographics...

- Ages 18 to 24
- 59% Male
- 41% Female
- African American: 72%
- Latino: 10%
- Mixed/Other: 9%
- White: 6%
- Asian: 3%

GBA GREEN BRIDGE ACADEMY

Learning Through Application

Overview

The beginning of 2012 marked the second and final semester of the East Bay Green Job Corps young adult program. This 16-week program combined academic courses at Berkeley City College with paid internship experience through Solar Richmond and Rising Sun’s CYES program. Participants took math, English reading and writing, computer skills, ROOTS/eco-literacy, and college and career readiness classes in the mornings. Each afternoon, they worked as CYES Energy Specialists and Solar Richmond solar marketing interns, as well as participating in weekly job readiness and life skills workshops. Participants also worked individually with their Case Manager to address life challenges, set goals, and transition into employment and higher education.

In the fall of 2012, Rising Sun continued its partnership with Berkeley City College to offer the Green Bridge Academy (Green Bridge) program. Similar to East Bay Green Job Corps, this 16-week program targets young adults with significant barriers to education and employment, and combines academic and work experience with life skills development and intensive case management. Green Bridge included 12 weeks of paid work experience with the CYES program, a weekly life skills and career exploration workshop, intensive case management, and preparation to continue in higher education. Participants were also paired with Rising Sun staff mentors, who supported and guided participants through the challenges of being new college students.
GETS GREEN ENERGY TRAINING SERVICES

Learning through Practice

Overview
The GETS program moved into its next phase in 2012. In addition to teaching a VESL and GETS class at Richmond Build, and a GETS class at Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation, GETS offered its first training in-house this year. This 280-hour, 8-week class covered the GETS curriculum, as well as basic construction skills, OSHA 10 and Lead Safe Work Practices certifications, contextualized math, expanded job readiness and professional skills development training, more hands-on training, and opportunities to work in the field with the Rising Sun Energy Services (RS Energy Services) crew. The training was a great success, with 79% graduating and 82% of graduates finding employment.

Rising Sun also expanded its Advanced GETS class in 2012. With support from the Y&H Soda Foundation, six GETS graduates learned advanced building science and auditing, and began working toward their BPI Building Analyst certification. Earning this certification offers opportunities for career advancement and earning higher wages. The GETS program also opened Advanced GETS to contractors from the general community, offered at a low cost thanks to support from the California Employment Training Panel. Rising Sun trained nine fee-for-service customers in 2012, and hopes to train more in the coming year.

In partnership with Ohlone College and the Home Energy Retrofit Occupations (HERO) grant, Rising Sun offered its first Energy Efficiency Sales and Marketing class in 2012. This class was attended by GETS graduates and those currently working in the building performance field. Taught as a four-session seminar, the expert instructors trained participants in public speaking, market analysis, and sales. RS Energy Services staff were among the participants, and are currently applying what they learned to their work in the field.

“Before GETS training, I was blind on what energy efficiency actually was. Now I know how important it is in the global economy and ecology of the world.”

ANONYMOUS
Adult Learner

BASIC GETS 2012 Outputs & Outcomes...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>57 Participated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41 Graduated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Employed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Further Edu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- African American: 39%
- Latino: 34%
- White: 14%
- Asian: 7%
- Mixed/Other: 4%
- Pacific Islander: 2%

89% Male
11% Female

AGE
18-24 28%
25-44 49%
45-54 21%
55-61 3%

INCOME
Poverty Level: 63%
Low Income: 34%
Moderate Income: 1%

6 earned their BPI Building Analyst certification
In 2012, Rising Sun Energy Center hosted two Employer Council meetings. Between the May and November meetings, a total of 55 representatives from over 45 different companies and local organizations came to Rising Sun Energy Center’s downtown Berkeley headquarters to learn about our programming, listen to updates from industry experts, and discuss trends in the home performance industry.

Employer Council members gained valuable and timely information to help them shape their business decisions through presentations from Greenlining’s Vien Truong, who gave updates on how the funds raised by California’s new cap-and-trade auctions are to be spent; and from PACE Now’s Kelley McKay, who shared ideas on how to facilitate the full reinstatement of Property Assessed Clean Energy loan programs throughout the state. The extended networking sessions at the close of each meeting give members a rare opportunity in our digital age to connect face-to-face with a wide array of contractors, community organizers, educators, government and utility representatives. The Employer Council continues to grow and be an important component of the GETS program.

Given by KIYOSHI GODFREY, a BERKELEY GETS Graduate

Kiyoshi Godfrey is a Berkeley native and GETS graduate. Before GETS, he wasn’t too focused on his career, or really thinking too far ahead about where his life was headed. Kiyoshi says that GETS helped him see the connections between his actions and their impact on the world. “GETS really opened my eyes to construction and energy efficiency,” Kiyoshi says. “Before GETS, I would have walked past a running faucet or lights on in an empty room without a second thought. After GETS, I saw how those decisions impact more than just your water and utility bills.”

The most important thing Kiyoshi says he learned in GETS was that you could, and should, be comfortable in a home. “Before the GETS training, I always thought homes were supposed to be cold and drafty,” says Kiyoshi. “Now I know a home can and should be very comfortable and still be efficient.” GETS also introduced Kiyoshi to construction as a career.

Since graduating from GETS, Kiyoshi entered the Laborers Union (Local 304). As an apprentice, Kiyoshi has worked for a paving company and is taking classes at the Laborers training facility. Kiyoshi also worked as an Assistant GETS Instructor at Rising Sun’s Oakland GETS training. “It was great watching students who struggled at the beginning of the training pull it together and be inspired to do well,” he says, “I thought it was great that they wanted to put forth more effort to better themselves and learn as much as they can.”

Thinking about his future, Kiyoshi says, “I see myself in the construction industry. I know about lots of opportunities now that I didn’t know about before. Rising Sun has lots of great resources and great people willing to help you. It’s not every day you get an opportunity like this, and if you’re willing to work, the folks here will help you. But you have to work for it. I am living proof of what GETS can do if you’re willing to work hard!”
RS Energy Services RISING SUN ENERGY SERVICES

Learning by Working

Overview
Rising Sun Energy Services (RS Energy Services) is an energy efficiency and green construction social enterprise that offers on-the-job training and 10 months of transitional employment to graduates of Rising Sun’s GETS training program. Founded in 2010, RS Energy Services provides whole-house energy audits, energy efficiency and green construction services to residents throughout the Bay Area. The RS Energy Services team partners with their customers to look at each house as a whole system, identifying opportunities for energy efficiency improvements and environmentally-safe construction options. The RS Energy Services office staff are on hand to provide expert coaching to customers seeking to take advantage of the various rebate, incentive and financing options available.

Services provided by RS Energy Services include: home energy audits, insulation, air sealing, duct sealing, duct replacement, furnace and water heater upgrades, eco painting and general contracting services. All RS Energy Service crew members receive weekly technical and professional development training, case management and job placement assistance throughout their experience.

2012 was a year of growth and continued evolution for RS Energy Services. During the first 8 months of 2012, RS Energy Services primarily focused on completing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)-funded moderate income programs with the cities of Berkeley and Richmond. This partnership provided moderate income residents of both cities with the opportunity to receive a whole-house energy audit coupled with no-to-low cost energy retrofit options.

At the conclusion of the moderate income program, Rising Sun Energy Center made the decision to deepen the investment in its social enterprise, and hired a Director to lead the growth and expansion efforts. During the final months of 2012, RS Energy Services expanded its scope of services to include water heater replacement, furnace and duct replacement services, environmentally-friendly painting services and general contracting services. To date, RS Energy Services has completed over 130 home energy audits, over 145 retrofits and has provided employment to 16 GETS graduates.

Looking forward to 2013, RS Energy Services has partnered with the Electric Gas Industries Association (EGIA) to begin to offer low-interest financing to its customers, making construction and retrofit services more widely accessible. The expansion of services has also created deeper construction training opportunities for RS Energy Services crew members, increasing their professional skill set and overall employability.

9 Graduates TRAINED & EMPLOYED
68 Homes DEEPLY RETROFITTED
51 Comprehensive ENERGY AUDITS Completed

UNITS OF ELECTRICITY AND GAS SAVED through the installation of residential attic and wall insulation, duct sealing and pipe wrap:

- 9,220 kWh
- 8309 therms
- 143 kW
- 48 metric tons of CO₂ emissions saved

“I enjoy the people I work with and having employment in the energy efficiency field. My experience at Rising Sun has helped mold me into the person that I am today.”

JESSIE CABRERA
Energy Services Crew
Learning by Continual Improvement

In 2012, the management of Rising Sun underwent significant growth and advancement. In addition to the Board aligning salaries and benefits for all staff to national standards at the end of the first quarter, key staffing decisions had a major impact by year’s end.

Our staff changed and grew in 2012. We hired a new Operations Manager, Marketing and Outreach Manager and Director of Youth Programs. Our Accountant came on full-time. We also created several new positions: Rising Sun Energy Services Director, with a mandate to grow our social enterprise by increasing the scope of services offered; and a Director of Special Projects to spearhead expansion efforts.

Bedinger and Company (C.P.A) completed its audit of Rising Sun Energy Center with no reservations, providing a clean bill of fiscal health for the second year running, as did the City of Oakland, after completing a contract-related audit of pass-through funding for the federally-funded East Bay Green Job Corps.

The full Board of Directors and selected staff participated in a two-phase Strategic Planning Process in late summer and early fall, with the goal of rewriting Rising Sun’s Mission and Vision Statements, both of which were completed and approved by year’s end (see page 2). This strategic planning process was complemented by a two-day retreat, attended by all staff in Napa in October, where staff considered, discussed, planned and brain-stormed expansion projects for the next five years.

We are very proud of the high level of participation and engagement of our staff, administration and Board. Their dedication, experience and creativity contribute to the success of the organization.
THANK YOU for helping Rising Sun fulfill it’s mission.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
- Alameda County Water District
- California Employment Training Panel
- City of Antioch
- City of Berkeley
- City of Emeryville
- City of Fremont
- City of Livermore
- City of Oakland
- City of Pleasanton
- City of Richmond
- City of San Leandro
- City of Union City
- East Bay Municipal Utility District
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
- Marin Municipal Water District
- North Marin Water District
- PG&E East Bay Energy Watch
- PG&E Marin Energy Watch Partnership

FOUNDATIONS
- Constellation Energy
- Dean Witter Foundation
- East Bay Community Foundation
- Grainger Foundation
- Greater Tacoma Community Foundation
- Full Circle Fund
- Miranda Lux Foundation
- Open Society Foundation Green & Healthy Homes Initiative Oakland
- S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation
- San Francisco Foundation
- Thompson Family Foundation
- Union Bank Foundation
- Wells Fargo Foundation
- Y & H Sada Foundation

PARTNERSHIPS
- Alameda County Green Business Program
- Berkeley City College
- Oakland Workforce Investment Board
- Ohlone College
- Richmond Workforce Investment Board
- RichmondBUILD
- Solar Richmond
- Spanish Speaking Citizens’ Foundation
- The English Center

CORPORATIONS & BUSINESSES
- Whole Foods
- Walmart
- Trader Joe’s
- Target
- Schooners
- Safeway
- Panera Bread
- Mimi’s Cafe
- New Light Energy Design, Inc.
- Noah’s
- Nob Hill
- Panera Bread
- Phil’s Sliders
- Safeway
- Schooners
- Target
- Trader Joe’s
- Walmart
- Whole Foods

Additional Contributors.


DEFINITION

Learning by Giving

Rising Sun relies on a diverse array of revenue streams to fund our organization. In 2012, Rising Sun’s major source of revenue was provided through our ongoing collaboration with the East Bay Energy Watch and Marin Energy Watch partnerships funded by California utility customers and administered by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

Rising Sun also received significant funding from municipalities and water districts to implement our services. Additionally, Rising Sun received generous support from several foundations, government agencies, community partners, corporations, and local businesses. Whether it was equipment and tools for RS Energy Services, a grant to run an Advanced GETS cohort, garden burgers for the CYES graduation, or funds to hire and train local youth to deliver a Green House Call, this support was critical to sustain, expand, and deepen Rising Sun’s services.

Our individual donor base continues to grow, with many supporters participating in our fundraising for Guatemala. This year, ten Youth Council members participated in a transformative international service project where they learned how climate change and environmental justice transcends borders.

We would like to especially acknowledge the significant contribution of legal services provided through the firms of:

Morrison & Foerster LLP
We entered 2012 with a goal to develop a deeper connection to the importance of learning while enjoying the privilege of living. Continuous learning enabled us to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced in the communities we serve, strengthen our programs, and reconsider the method by which we teach and learn.

It is our belief that empowering individuals to achieve environmental and economic sustainability for themselves and their communities is part of the solution. Learning the depth of your potential, having the means to pursue your goals, and gaining the capacity to act on that knowledge comes through learning a living.

Rising Sun Staff:

- Eric Brizee, Treasurer, Operations Manager
- Thupten Yarphel, Accountant
- Rebecca Milliken, Development Coordinator
- Heather Hochrein, Director of Special Projects
- Julia Hatton, Director of Youth Programs
- Natesha Tabor, Program Manager, CYES
- Travers McNeice, Program Manager, CYES
- Christina Chan, Marketing and Outreach Manager, CYES
- Adrian Sachsari, Community Outreach Manager, CYES
- Janet Flint, Operations Coordinator, CYES
- Elena Foshay, Director of Adult Programs
- George Kopf, Training and Employment Manager, GETS
- Melvin Parham, Case Manager, GETS
- Ryan Boyle, Director of Rising Sun Energy Services
- Stephen Clarke, General Contractor, Rising Sun Energy Services
- Doron Rot, BPI Building Analyst & Envelope Professional, Rising Sun Energy Services
- Crew, Rising Sun Energy Services

Rising Sun deeply appreciates the opportunity to earn a living doing what we love; the opportunity to be students, educators and contributors is not something we take for granted.
Michael Balster is an environmental attorney with Paul Hastings LLP in San Francisco, where he counsels public and private entities on compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations. His work includes analyzing the impacts of climate change and renewable energy regulations and evaluating risks associated with environmental hazards and land use entitlements. Paul graduated from Princeton University, cum laude, with a B.A. from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, specializing in urban planning and policy.

Oliver is a Principal at SClenergy, a commercial building energy efficiency software and financing company. His responsibilities include developing key customer and partner relationships, as well as strategic planning, finance and team building. Prior to joining SClenergy, Oliver worked at New Enterprise Associates, the largest global venture capital firm, where he invested in disruptive clean tech and IT companies. He has also worked in the Equities department at Morgan Stanley, where he covered wireline and mobile technology companies.

Raquel is a Professor of Urban Studies and Planning at San Francisco State University. A nationally-recognized expert on green jobs and green job training, Raquel created Roots of Success, an empowering environmental education curriculum that supports education and workforce development programs to increase environmental literacy, build core academic skills, and prepare youth and adults for jobs in the green economy. Other recent publications include: The Greening of Corrections: Creating a Sustainable System through Facilities, Programs, and Partnerships (co-author); Green Collar Jobs: An Analysis of the Capacity of Green Business to Provide High Quality Jobs for Men and Women with Barriers to Employment; Equitable Green Development and Green Jobs in Richmond, CA (co-author); and Alternative Urban Futures: Planning for Sustainable Development in Cities throughout the World. In addition to serving on the Board of Rising Sun, Raquel also serves on the boards of the Ecology Center and Clean City.
YOUTH LEARNER
“I have worked for Rising Sun for two years. Within those two years, I not only learned professionalism, but that my job can have a positive impact on our society. Since working with Rising Sun, I try to conserve as much energy and water as possible, even in my personal life. I had a great experience with Rising Sun Energy Center and am very grateful that I was able to work with them for two awesome summers.”

– Rai Fung, San Leandro LIFT

YOUTH LEARNER
“Being on Youth Council this past year has really opened up my view of the world. The trip to Guatemala gave me perspective on how people living with less resources work hard to support themselves. Seeing the hardships of the families, I learned that I should appreciate important things and luxuries in my life and not take them for granted.”

– Ashwaree Kumar

ADULT LEARNER
“Hi, my name is Emmanuel Mejia, and I was a participant in the Green Bridge Academy. Coming from Oakland, I had a negative outlook on life. This was a school-oriented program - any school can be boring and hard at times, but with the help of Green Bridge and its staff, I was able to succeed and move into my next phase in life. After the trip I took with Youth Council to Guatemala, I have a different and more positive outlook. I have learned to appreciate life and my new friends for who they are. I don’t take new opportunities for granted, as they may never come my way again. Rising Sun helped me discover my role in life as a mentor, leader, and humanitarian. Now there’s a light at the end of the road where there was none before, and it’s all thanks to Rising Sun. My next step will be the GETS program so I can learn more in-depth about energy efficiency.”

– Emmanuel Mejia