



## BACKBONE CAMPAIGN

### BACKGROUND

The Backbone Campaign ([www.backbonecampaign.org](http://www.backbonecampaign.org)), based on Vashon Island, Washington was founded in 2004 by a group of community members working to create positive change and to engage communities in citizenship around effective local campaigns and artful community organizing. In 2008, the Backbone Campaign became a nonprofit public charity through a friendly takeover of an Oregon nonprofit and has been operating in accordance with State and Federal regulations as a 501(c)(3) public charity since then.

The Backbone Campaign works nationally, providing training and creative support to progressive activists and organizations around the country. In 2008 Backbone became increasingly engaged in local organizing through support for community efforts to protect neighboring Maury Island from a transnational mining company.

### **Local Sustainability Projects**

After playing a key role in the preservation of the Maury Island land and shoreline, Backbone turned its sights to other local sustainability issues.

In 2009, Backbone Campaign assisted in obtaining a Water Works grant for Vashon Island School District which secured \$73,700 for curriculum, lab equipment, and student apprenticeships for water conservation, public education, and the promotion of stewardship and citizen science.

In 2010, Backbone Campaign partnered with Sustainable Vashon and Puget Sound Energy to create a Green Power Challenge. Two hundred additional customers signed up for green power, resulting in a 2011 PSE grant of \$15,000 to support the organization of a Vashon Community Solar initiative led by the Backbone Campaign.

In 2011, Backbone Campaign facilitated a grant request to fund the installation of two electric vehicle charging stations on Vashon School District campuses and an expanded solar array at Vashon High School. Vashon was one of seven schools in the region to receive a grant totaling \$14,000 from Puget Sound Energy's Renewable Education program. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 46 contributed \$6,000 to the installation of the charging stations.

In 2009 through 2010, Backbone Campaign instigated and facilitated the CUVashon credit union organizing project which resulted in a negotiated partnership between the Vashon community and Puget Sound Cooperative Credit Union. In its first year the PSCCU Vashon branch has signed up over 1,700 community members, taken in approximately \$20 million in deposits, and made over \$8 million in local loans. Three Vashon community members, including Bill Moyer, serve as PSCCU board members.

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## STAFF

### **Executive Director: Bill Moyer**

BA Emphasis on music performance and composition, Evergreen State College 1995

Bill Moyer co-founded the Backbone Campaign in 2004 in collaboration with a number of Vashon artists and other community activists. Bill's study of political science, philosophy, and music provided unique preparation for an arts-based organization working to support peace, social justice, and sustainability. He worked as a professional musician, music educator, and sound designer (1994–2005) and has been Backbone Campaign's executive director since 2004. The Artful Activism of Backbone, as well as the innovative organizing models developed by the Backbone Campaign under Bill's direction, provide a resource to community-based organizations and organizers locally and around the country. As Executive Director, Bill sets the direction for the development of the Backbone Campaign, proposes budget and spending priorities, and serves as the principal fundraiser. He is also in charge of strategic program creation and design and is the principal spokesperson and liaison to allies, media, and public officials.

### **Managing Director: Yve Suskind**

BA Environmental Studies and Planning, Sonoma State University 1988

MS Natural Resources and Environment, University of Michigan 1994

PhD Urban, Technological and Environmental Planning, University of Michigan 2001

Yve Suskind's professional and volunteer background spans a wide range of work involving environmental planning, youth empowerment and activism, grant and proposal writing, and group facilitation. She has been the Managing Director of the Backbone Campaign since 2010. Yve is an Associate at Wahlstrom & Associates, Berkeley, CA (2008–present), was the Principal of Praxis Associates LLC (1988–2008), was the founding director and serves on the board of Vashon Island Youth Council (1999–present), was the founder and teacher for StudentLink, Vashon Island School District (2000–2007), and was on the board of Development of Island Teens (1996–2011). As Managing Director, Yve is responsible for long-term planning, project management, and fundraising, as well as board, volunteer, and organizational development. She also is responsible for cash flow and budget reporting.

# BACKBONE CAMPAIGN

## BOARD

In 2011 Backbone Campaign executive staff and board members began working with organizational leadership consultant John Runyan of leadership everywhere.com. A year of discussions and assessment of our unique organization resulted in a redesign of the way Backbone Campaign board and staff collaborate, and how the many facets of the organization will utilize volunteers more effectively. In March of 2012 we completed the redesign and undertook a board recruitment process that has resulted in a board with the experience and networks of relationships we believe are crucial to our continued growth and enhanced effectiveness.

The Board of Directors establishes and reviews Backbone Campaign policies, oversees programs and activities, supervises the executive director, authorizes expenditures and oversees financial affairs and internal controls. The Board also ensures that the corporation properly employs the necessary corporate formalities to make decisions, that it prepares and submits all required state and federal reports, and that it operates in compliance with state and federal laws. Board members are expected to diligently prepare for, and actively participate in, the meetings of the Board of Directors and any Board committees as needed, in order to carry out these responsibilities.

**Stan Sorscher** Board President, elected to board June 2010

BS Physics, University of Michigan 1972

PhD Physics, University of California, Berkeley 1980

Stan is Labor Representative at SPEEA, a union representing aerospace engineers, scientists, pilots and technical workers. He has worked for 20 years as a physicist at Boeing in engineering and manufacturing research and development using optics, acoustics, ultrasound, and X-ray imaging. Stan served on the faculty at the University of Utah Physics Department in Salt Lake City UT (1979–1980). Governor Gregoire appointed him to the Governor's Aerospace Council in 2009, the Export Finance Assistance Center of Washington in 2010, and the Washington State Economic Development Commission in 2011.

**Kyle Tanner** Board Secretary, elected to board March 2012

Bachelor of Special Studies, Cornell College 1998

Newberry Fellow, University of Chicago 1998

MBA University of Wisconsin Madison 2000

Kyle is a professional organizer and consultant residing in the South Puget Sound. He is the owner of Honest Organizing, which he founded in 2010. Prior to that he owned True Blue Innovation (2008–10); was a public policy/organizing consultant for SEIU 1199NW (2008); was the executive director of Citizens Alliance of Central Washington (2005–2008); and held director or coordinator roles for SEIU 49 (2004–2005), Washington Citizen Action (2004), Premera Watch Coalition (2002–2004), and Washington Conservation Voters (2000–2002). His work has spanned electoral politics, organized labor, environmental and healthcare advocacy. He believes in fair play, immutable human dignity and agitational organizing.

**Sandra VanderVen** Elected to board June 2012

BA, emphasis in Biology and teaching certificate, Evergreen State College 1995

Teaching Certification, Saint Martin's College 1997

Regional Organizing Academy and National Leadership Training , MoveOn 2010

Sandra has been a Senior Organizer at Fuse Washington since 2011, where she works to put the power back into the hands of the people. After college, she spent ten years teaching middle school science (2000–2010). There she saw how economic injustice makes life harder for kids in struggling families. She resolved to find solutions and began organizing with MoveOn.org, where she has volunteered since 2010.

**Kristen Beifus** Elected to board June 2012

BA Anthropology, Minor Geology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1994

MA Anthropology of Development, University of London, 2000

Kristen is the Executive Director of the Washington Fair Trade Coalition (2009–present), made up of 61 labor, social justice, faith, family farm, student and environmental organizations and small businesses throughout Washington state calling for a more equitable global trading system. She has worked to promote fair trade commodities and policy both in the US and abroad. Kristen also coordinates the SweatFree Washington Campaign (2008–present) and is on the national board of SweatFree Communities. She has worked with Global Goods Partners, New York (2007–2009); Borderline Women's Collective, Thailand (2004–present); Women's Education for Advancement and Empowerment (WEAVE), Thailand (2000–2005); as well as many other non-profit organizations.

**Denise Henrikson** Elected to board June 2012

MA Human Development, Pacific Oaks College Northwest 2000

BFA Crafts (Textiles, Ceramics, Metals), Virginia Commonwealth University 1986

Denise is a seasoned grass-roots instigator, pulling together effective teams for community arts celebrations, event organizing, and street theater for such organizations as We the People Power Festival (2012), Arts-A-Glow (2012), Swap-o-rama-rama (2007–2008), ReUseResources (2006–2008), and the Fremont Arts Council (2007). She also has had a professional life as a Policy Analyst for Social Policy Research, Associates (2008–2011), a Federal Project Officer (2000–2006), Business and Community Liaison with Job Corps (1999–2000), and a Resource Room Teacher at the Muckleshoot Tribal School (1998–1999). Denise believes in the power of art to impact social change and is excited to apply her skills towards supporting the work of the Backbone Campaign.