US ERA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

# ommunity lawyerir

# Building Community Capacity in Environmental Decision-making through Community Lawyering



"Lawyers on tap, not on top." Luke Cole 1962-2009

**Community identified concerns** 

Schools built on contaminated sites

**Govt.** ignores community concerns

Community lacks knowledge about

Few after school programs

for high school youth

the health effects of toxic exposures

No environmental justice organizations

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## Improved clean-up and monitoring

DEM stakeholder group

**Community gains** 

- 1. Environmental justice policy
- 2. School siting legislation
- 3. Amendments to contaminated site clean-up regulations

# School cases Proposals for Stakeholder Group on community involvement and Environmental justice

Congress directs EPA to develop voluntary guidelines for school siting

Litigation

Policy research & analysis

Community lawyering strategies

Not in my school yard Environmental justice for states

### **Opportunities to collaborate**

Environmental justice organization created (Environmental Justice League of Rhode Island)

Increased knowledge of health and environmental issues

Transactional work

Work with youth

**Community education** 

Incorporation/bylaws development
Apply for tax exempt status

toxic exposures and healthy housing

**Brochures on health effects of** 

**Grant writing** 

**Community forums** 

justice conference

Statewide environmental

# Environmental justice organization created as a legal entity

Staff hired with grant funds

C.A.R.E. Alliance

Community environmental college

**Green Teenz** 

### **Community identified concerns**

Community lawyering strategies

**Green Teenz video project** 

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### Strategies in action

**Educate community** 

**Create leadership** 

**Develop communication skills** 

**Community gains**