

Alliance for a Viable Future

2023

IMPACT REPORT

**Weaving together
bioregional climate solutions
and intercultural peacemaking
in the Northeast.**

Alliance for a Viable Future



“

Change flows through relationships, at the speed of trust.

-AVF's Core Values

Our world is facing convergent crises in every sector of society.

While the climate crisis tends to be understood as an environmental problem, in reality it is an expression of the breakdown of human systems, which is causing the volatility of earth systems.

The urgency of this moment is here and now. The climate crisis is not up ahead, at some point in the future. It is upon us. More than solutions, we need to establish real relationships, rooted in trust, that allow us to build viable pathways for our children's future.

This collective impact work calls us into a very different kind of leadership, grounded in deep listening, compassion, respect for indigenous wisdom, and a capacity to let go and embrace the unknown. As a bioregional capacity-building organization, we are building a movement that is rooted in alliance-building to restore our human systems and ecosystems.

This is the future you're helping to create by supporting AVF.

Thank you for finding your place in this Alliance.

Deep bow,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lev Natan". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Lev Natan

Founder & Executive Director



Alliance for a Viable Future

IMPACT TO DATE

13

Major Events

Including cultural, ceremonial, and community events deeply rooted in peacemaking.

2500+

Community Participants

AVF'sh public and invite-only events and programs are growing a regional network of engagement.

\$350K

Funds Raised

Foundations, sponsors, and donors make up the base of a solid fundraising strategy.

15

Tribal Nations Represented

Including the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of the Mohicans, Navajo Nation, and Tuscarora Nation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

30+

Organizational Allies + Partners

Building a vast network of nonprofits, cultural orgs, wellness centers, & businesses.

15+

AVF Team Members

Expertise in Rights of Nature, entrepreneurship, leadership, peacemaking, & communications.

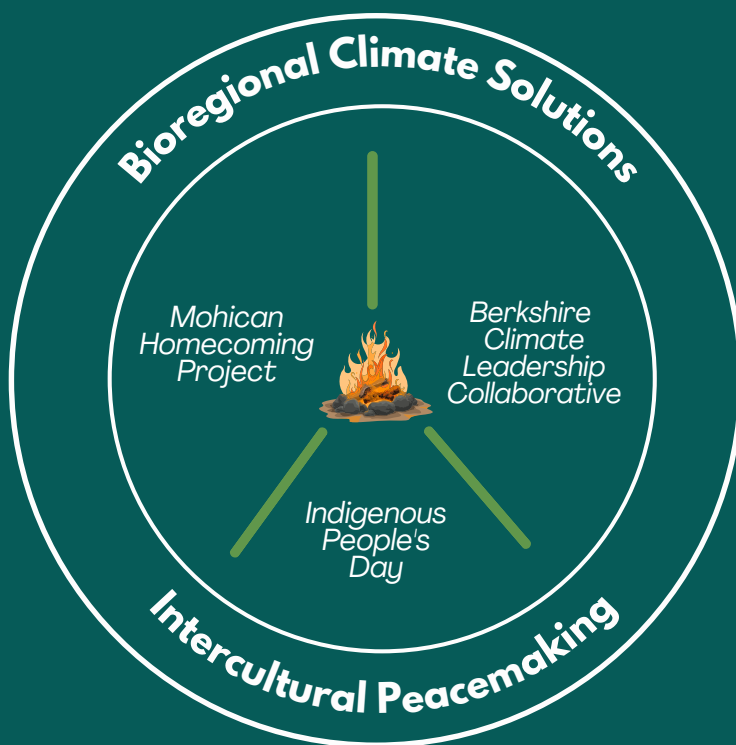


Alliance for a Viable Future

Our mission is to build alliances and develop leadership at the intersection of bioregional climate solutions and intercultural peacemaking.

Bioregional Climate Solutions emerge from a conscious choice to do everything in our power to create a viable future for the generations to come. Through collective impact initiatives, we mobilize our network of allied organizations and communities from me to we; from ego to eco; from siloes to ecosystem literacy and engagement.

Intercultural peacemaking guides us to acknowledge the root causes of our convergent crises: genocide, slavery and the plundering of Mother Earth. Collective healing and systemic-change grow from relationships grounded in shared understanding, values, and trust.



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BOARD & TEAM

[Full bios available here](#)



Shawn Stevens
Mohican Nation
Board Member



Cheryl Demmert
Fairbanks, Esq.
Tlingit Nation
Board Member



Kristine Marie Hill
Toscororo Nation
Board Member



Sara Jolena
Wolcott, M.Div
Board Member



Lev Natan
Executive Director,
Board Member
& Founder



Chief Jake Singer
Navaho Nation
Spiritual Advisor



Thomas Linzey
Rights of Nature
Legal Advisor



Grandmother Margaret
Cheyenne Arapaho Nation
Indigenous Peoples' Day
2022 Presenter



The Honorable
Robert Yazzie, Esq.
Navaho Nation
Indigenous Peoples' Day
2022 Presenter



Michael Johnson
Regional Community
Engagement Advisor



Wanonah Spencer
Mohican Ancestral
Healing Fellowship



Michael Foster,
Ed.D., M.P.H.
Evaluation Specialist



Daniel Roth,
Leadership & Strategy
Jumpscale
Consultancy



Diana Chaplin
Communications
Specialist



Emily Costello
Social Media &
Content Creator

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ALLIES & PARTNERS

Mohican Cultural Council
Life Comes From It Foundation
Christopher Reynolds Foundation
Housatonic Heritage Foundation
Massachusetts Cultural Council
Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health
NAACP-Berkshires
Mahaiwe Center for Performing Arts
Sacred Oak Homes
Oketeau Cultural Center
Berkshire Natural Resources Council
Berkshires Food Co-op
Guido's Fresh Marketplace
Temascal Wellness
Decamanus Green
The Pass
Jumpscale Consultancy
Multicultural BRIDGE
Mumbet Freedom Farm
Ripple Tree Leadership
Tam Integration
Indian Line Farm
Housatonic Real Estate
Bee Resonance Project
Greenagers
Unitarian Universalist Meeting of South Berkshire
Berkshire Natural Resources Council
Flying Deer Nature Center
Mass Audubon
Random Harvest
Berkshire Pulse
Railroad Street Youth Project
Back to Heart Center
Williams College Sustainability & Cultural Affairs Centers
Berkshire Pulse
Manos Unidas
Wellspring Commons
Mass MoCA

CORE PROGRAMS

Indigenous People's Day

For the last three years, we have gained significant attention as the official organizers of Indigenous People's Day (IPD) in Berkshire County, MA. Building on this success, our goal is to coordinate IPD events in cities throughout the Northeast.

Berkshire Climate Leadership Collaborative

We are convening representatives from deeply committed community organizations in the Berkshires to build catalytic partnerships and initiate projects for bioregional climate stabilization through a year-long council-based program; a model that will scale into the Northeast Climate Leadership Network.

Mohican Homecoming Project

We are locating facilities in the Berkshires to house our Mohican Ancestral Healing Fellowship and Mohican Birthright Program. These initiatives allow Mohican people to travel from their reservation in Wisconsin to their ancestral homelands - the Berkshires. These facilities will be welcoming, culturally appropriate, and establish intercultural education programs with the community - as the basis for reconciliation and reparations.

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INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

Alliance for a Viable Future began organizing Indigenous People's Day (IPD) programs in the Berkshires of Massachusetts in 2020, with each year gaining increasing visibility and community participation.

In 2023, IPD weekend started on Friday with prayer, storytelling, and performance at the historic Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center as we gathered for the second annual Honoring North America public event.

From tales of history to calls for action, it was an unforgettable evening, specially marked by the performance of world-renowned Native American flutist, R. Carlos Nakai.

On Saturday and Sunday, over forty people came to Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health from all around the country, for an Indigenous Peacemaking Council, including a twenty-person delegation of Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans, and representatives from the Chickasaw, the Comanche, the Diñe, Iñupiaq (i-noo-pee-uhk) – Athabaskan, the Mescalero Apache, the Metis, the Mohegan, the Nipmuc, the Ohlone, the Ramapough Lenape, the Taino, the Tlingit-Tsimshian (shim-shee-uhn), the Tuscarora and Onandage of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Zuni Pueblo.

In addition, non-native allies participated as representatives of local organizations, including Mumbet Freedom Farm, Harmony Homestead, Berkshire Natural Resources Council, Flying Deer Nature Center, Random Harvest Market, and Wellspring Commons.

It was truly a powerful experience as we walked through the process of peacemaking, discussions of racial justice and privilege, and creating unity.

We were also thrilled to share two incredible LANDBACK announcements in our Berkshires-Taconic region:

1. The return of land back to the Mohican people by the Grafton Peace Pagoda in honor of their 30th anniversary.
2. The return of 351 acres, previously known as Fenn Farm on the North side of Monument Mountain, a project that had great support from Berkshire Natural Resources Council.

Finally, our weekend was completed by a Ceremonial Walk down Main Street in Great Barrington, MA, where we gathered in unity to honor Indigenous people across the world.

The afternoon began with leaders, community members, and elders speaking on the true history of America, raising awareness around the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women of the U.S., and issuing a call to action for the health of our planet.

From there, we walked in unity and solidarity through town, ending at the Housatonic River where prayers and offerings were given towards the healing of its polluted waters.





LISTEN TO OUR COMMUNITY

Participants in AVF's 2023 Indigenous People's Day Weekend

What you have organized is hard to put into words as it's so outside the standard format of what English would define as a "gathering" or "being in community." It was real vulnerability, trust, and shared kindred energy. It's showing how we can celebrate and understand differences while seeing ourselves as kith and kin. It was a melding pot modeling an honoring and respect and celebration of many peoples' cultures, ways and worldviews. And practice of doing the critical and invaluable work of creating place, within community and with community, for the return home of the Mohicans.

-Keetu Winter, Executive Director of Wellspring Commons



I was more than happy to meet so many new people from all around Turtle Island and hearing about the collective efforts we are all making to make a change on the great Turtle (Earth). For me, the greatest gift was for me to be able to welcome our sister tribe back home in a good way - Stockbridge-Munsee - with traditional items and to be able to sing songs with them. This is all still unraveling in my mind, about what happened. But we have all connected now and look forward to what the future holds.

-Andre Strongbearheart Gaines, Nipmuc Tribe Cultural Educator



It is always amazing that we get to meet people outside our own communities and learn that great deal of knowledge that they carry from their people and how we are able to network and share with one another and use our ideas and things that are working and things that are not working to gain more and strengthen the work we do. I am very fortunate to develop those new relationships... These gatherings let us see how the movement continues to move across the states, internationally and globally. I am thankful to Lev and everyone who helped put this together.

-Christy Chapman, Esq., BSN, JD (Zuni Pueblo)
Sovereignty 360 Program Consultant and Advisor



In the Alliance for Viable Future circles I was seeing old stuff in myself that I heard spoken through others, the confusion and also the ahas.... Our questions, wounding, confusion, healing, and then recalibration in the circles through slowly growing trust with each other, allowing vulnerability, and, in a way testing each other for proper care, bearing witness to each other and finding strong support is invaluable. I see this and my heart rejoices.

-Sherri Cook, (Metis/Cree from York Factory and the Red River Settlement, in Manitoba, Canada)
Indigenous Ally and Supporter

You can play a vital role by joining our Tap Root Circle.

Learn more at the end of this report.

MOHICAN HOMECOMING PROJECT

This project emerged organically from the Indigenous Peoples' Day 2022 weekend. Wanonah Kosbab, who attended the weekend, was deeply inspired by the experience of returning to her ancestral homelands, in the context of IPD weekend and the theme of indigenous approaches to climate regeneration.

AVF designed the Mohican Fellowship for Wanonah, from April to October 2023, to support her in healing ancestral trauma associated with her people's displacement from the Berkshires two-hundred years ago. Furthermore, AVF is creating opportunities for her to build her leadership skills to bring back to her community to build a cultural nonprofit AVF-sister organization for Mohican cultural revitalization, financially to revitalize the Mohican community.

Moving forward, the Mohican Homecoming Project intends to strengthen relationships between the Mohican reservation in Wisconsin and the Berkshires community through:



1. The Birthright Journey - a two-week journey for Mohican people to travel to their ancestral homelands and sacred sites in the Berkshires. They will stay in a dedicated facility that is welcoming and culturally appropriate.

2. The Fellowship - currently for Wanonah and Gracie, will be expanded to include more Mohican people who feel called to deepen their experience of ancestral healing and step into greater leadership in their community for cultural revitalization and resilience as a people.

3. Berkshire Community Education - facilitated intercultural dialogues between visiting Mohican people and folks currently residing in the Berkshires - to provide the opportunity for truth, reconciliation, healing and reparations.

WHAT OUR COMMUNITY IS SAYING



There is so much against us, the odds are that we fail or be mediocre at best. But what we bring is good and could change the world. People are starting to listen, they want to heal and be part of something. We have their attention and it's going to start growing quickly... what our families are doing is incredibly unique and unheard of... It's the hard stuff that no one wants to do for fear of being uncomfortable. But we bring hope for a new kind of world for our kids."

-Wanonah Kosbab, 1st Mohican Ancestral Healing Fellow

"It's really important for us to listen to and honor what the Mohican people have to say about this land and how they want to see it cared for; and to build a relationship so we can be of service."

-Jenny Hansell, President / Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC)



"...the Mohican people have their homeland back. That is a beautiful sign. Mother Earth is happy too. I am very grateful to cry in front of you and tell you as a grandmother my own concerns."

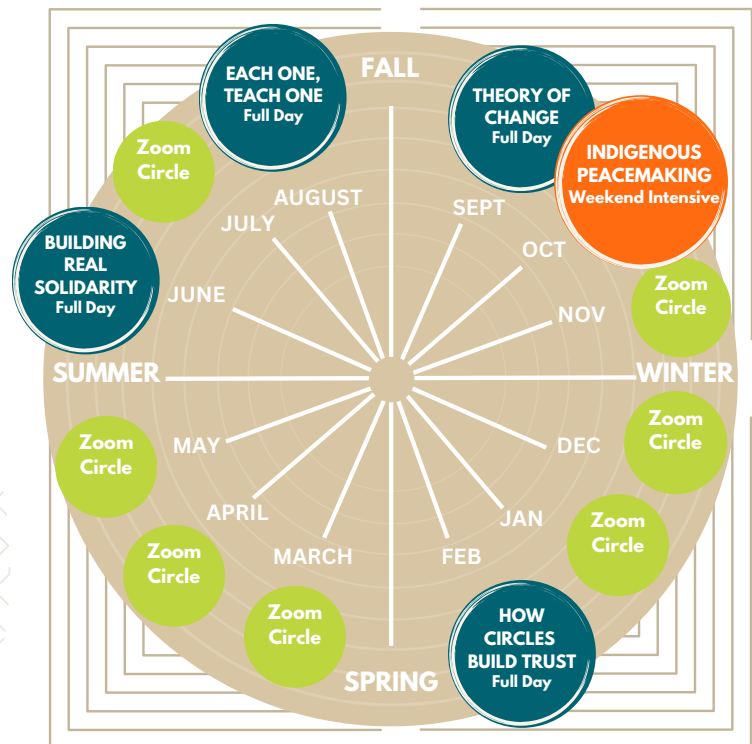
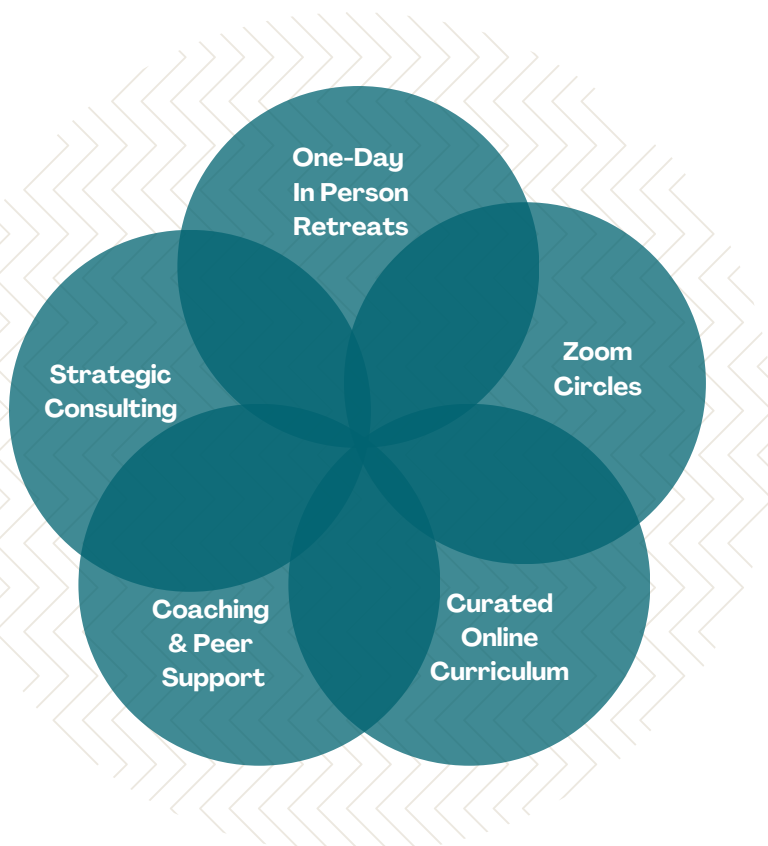
-Margaret Behan, International Council of 13 Indigenous Grandmothers

BERKSHIRE CLIMATE LEADERSHIP COLLABORATIVE

Outreach efforts began in 2023 to businesses and organizations for this facilitated council-based leadership-in-action journey. Structured meetings begin in January of 2024 with 12+ organizational representatives coming together to establish bioregional climate solutions among trusted colleagues.

Our goal is to (1) learn indigenous principles to adapt in the face of uncertainty, (2) build strategic partnerships across diverse stakeholder groups, and (3) lead innovative climate projects. This cohort-model will scale to include hundreds of organizational members throughout the Berkshires, and thousands throughout the Northeast.

Core Components



Program Overview

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TEN YEAR VISION

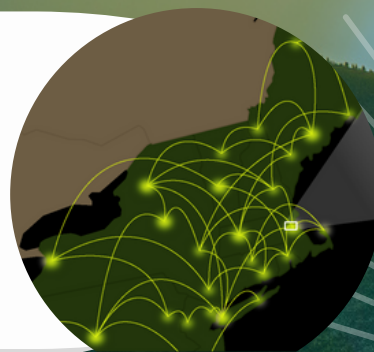
2023 TO 2033

Build a Network of Indigenous Peoples' Day Events

throughout the Northeast with "official organizers" taking leadership in 25+ cities - these organizations will receive \$25K Matching Grants to sponsor their community's IPD events.



Develop a latticework of Bioregional Climate Leadership Collaboratives, with 7000+ participants, representing 2500+ mission-aligned businesses and organizations.



Establish infrastructure and programming for Mohican Homecoming, which will allow for ancestral healing, land acknowledgement, truth & reconciliation, and reparations coming from the Berkshires host community; also being replicated with other Northeast communities & tribes.



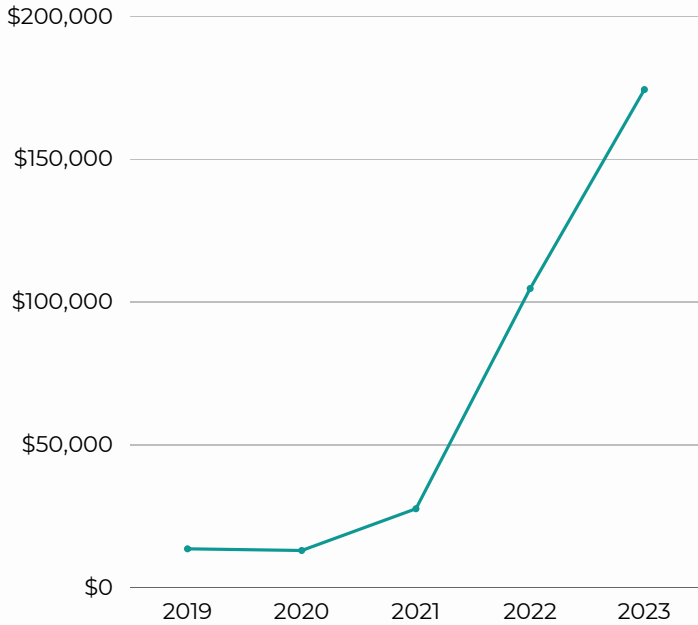
Build a dedicated nature-based retreat center for immersive healing & leadership experiences for participants in AVF's core programs. Land in Sandisfield, MA is already purchased and development is currently underway.



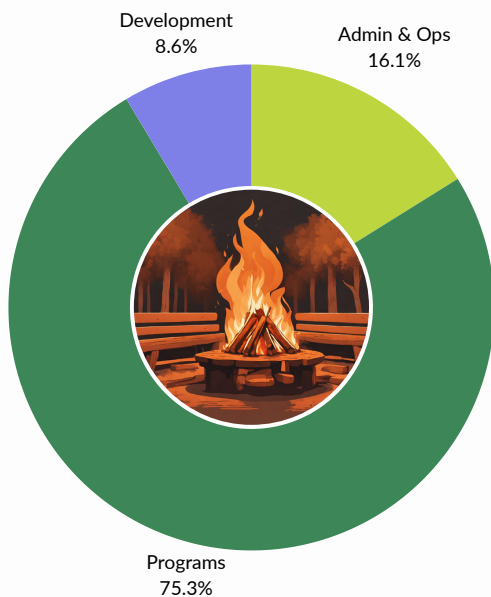
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FINANCIALS

Fundraising Revenue 2019-2023



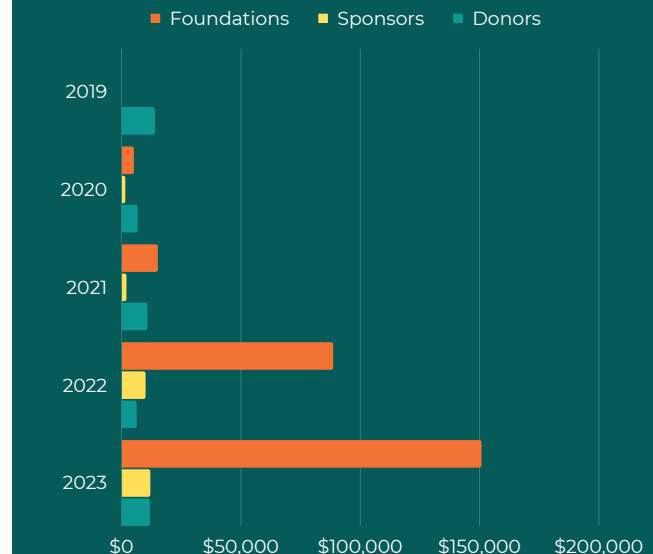
Operating Expenses



We have raised \$350K to-date.

We began fundraising in 2019 with the Good Work Institute as our fiscal sponsor.

Our annual operating budget has grown to \$500,000. We continue to build relationships with values & mission-aligned foundations, sponsors and donors.



BECOME A TAP ROOT

Join a circle of allies who are deeply committed to building a viable future in our region



Alliance for a Viable Future is at a critical crossroads.

We are equipped with the organizational foundation and network of relationships to scale our programs in 2024. To do this, we need to double our annual budget. With your partnership we can make this a reality.

\$500K

\$500K is AVF's 2024 Budget goal to: (1) scale our core programs, (2) onboard full-time staff, and (3) sustainably manage the operational needs of our growing organization.

How you can play a vital role:

- #1) **Join Our Tap Root Circle** - members serve as advisors and commit to mobilize \$50k-\$100k annually
- #2) **Give a Major Gift** - make a 2 to 20K+ year-end tax-exempt donation to AVF in 2023; and commit to match your gift in 2024.

www.AllianceForAViableFuture.org/donate

CORE PROGRAMS

1 Indigenous People's Day

We organize Indigenous People's Day in the Berkshires, in partnership with community leaders from the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans, indigenous leaders from around the country, and nearly a thousand community members annually.

2 Berkshire Climate Leadership Collaborative

In 2023, we launched a 12-month cohort program to convene representatives from businesses & organizations in the Berkshires to build catalytic partnerships and initiate projects for bioregional climate stabilization.

3 Mohican Homecoming Project

This pioneering initiative is a leading-edge model for ancestral healing, community leadership, reconciliation and reparations that empowers the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of the Mohicans to revive their cultural roots in their original homelands.



JOIN OUR TAP ROOT CIRCLE

- Take your place in our unique advisory circle to support the next phase of organizational development and community impact.
- Commit to mobilize \$50 to 100K+ in the next twelve months (2023-24).
- Get support from our fundraising team to engage your network, by participating in our annual retreat & quarterly zoom meetings

WHAT WE NEED, BY WHEN: Our goal is to raise 100K by the end of 2023, and the remaining 400K by June 1st, 2024. This will allow us to hire staff and mobilize programs immediately.

Alliance for a Viable Future

Thank You



it's 3:23 in the morning

and I'm awake
because my great great grandchildren won't let me sleep
[they] ask me in dreams
what did you do while the planet was plundered?
what did you do once you knew?

-Love Letter to the Milky Way by Drew Dellinger

HOW TO TAKE ACTION

*Thank you for your commitment
to build a viable future.*

Together, we have the capacity
to do what needs to be done.

Getting involved is the key.

CLICK HERE TO DONATE NOW

AllianceForAViableFuture.org/donate

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
OUR TAP ROOT CIRCLE,
CALL OR EMAIL:**

Lev Natan
Founder & Executive Director
(845) 389-3622
lev@allianceforaviablefuture.org

There is a river flowing now very fast.

Know the river has its destination.
The elders say, let go of the shore,
see who is in there with you, and celebrate.

The time of the lone wolf is over...

We are the ones we've been waiting for.

-Hopi Elders' Prophecy, June 8, 2000