

CONCEPT PLAN

SPRING 2016 -
FALL 2018

NJPIRG STUDENT CHAPTERS



SPRING
2016

A Shared Mission of
Education, Research,
and Service

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“Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and nonpolitical processes”

— Thomas Ehrlich, Stanford University School of Education

NJPIRG Student Chapters' Mission

"Our strategic plan sets out a strait forward yet important goal: Rutgers aspires to be broadly recognized as among the nation's leading public universities: preeminent in research, excellent in teaching, and committed to community."

Page 5, Rutgers Strategic Plan, February 2014

Executive Committee

Nick Jermer

Chair Board of Directors
Rutgers - New Brunswick
Senior, Business

Jordan Kizmann

Vice Chair Board of Directors
Rutgers - New Brunswick
Senior, Communications

Arielle Mizrahi

Secretary Board of Directors
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Sophomore, Criminal Justice

Kristi Collemacine

Board of Directors
Rutgers - Camden
Senior, English

Randi Stafford

Board of Directors
Rutgers - Camden
Freshman, Political Science

"To confront contemporary issues and problems like health care, poverty, education, and sustainability, universities must certainly provide students with the disciplinary knowledge to understand the depth of these issues; but they must also provide opportunities for students to appreciate their complexity through learning how disciplines and fields overlap...If they are to become involved citizens who truly contribute to society, our students must appreciate how all of this abstract knowledge plays out in the public domain." – Rutgers Strategic Plan, February 2014

New Jersey Public Interest Research Group Student Chapters has over 20,000 dues paying members who collectively fund our state's largest student-run non-profit. Our mission is to represent New Jerseyans on public interest issues and win real results for Rutgers students and the greater community. For over 40 years, our experienced team of student leaders and full time professional staff have provided students at Rutgers a hands-on opportunity to make a difference through research, education, service, and advocacy.

From direct service to the community to advocating for common sense policy solutions, NJPIRG Student Chapters melds the technical knowhow of University research and classroom education with real world advocacy and hands on experience to give students a full range of educational experiences while at Rutgers.

Currently, half the states in the United States, including New Jersey, do not have a civics requirement for high school graduation. This is a situation that former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor describes as "a remarkable withdrawal from the very purpose we had originally for public school." The impact of this on our nation's youth has been devastating. According to the 2011 report *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future* only 24% of graduating high school seniors scored at the proficient or advanced level in civics in 2010, fewer than in 2006 or in 1998. This puts the onus of civic education and engagement on our higher education institutions.

That's where we come in. NJPIRG Students works with the Rutgers community to educate students about their role in the civic community and fill the gap in civic knowledge that many students come to college with.

As the University celebrates its 250th Anniversary with a new strategic plan, NJPIRG Student Chapters is committed to continue our work in engaging the campus community and offering one of the best opportunities Rutgers students have to apply classroom knowledge to the real world. We look forward to another three years in serving the Rutgers community.



Letter from the Executive Committee

Dear Rutgers community,

Thank you for making the last three years remarkable for NJPIRG Student Chapters. This year marks 43 years of service for the organization, and we're glad to have been a part of it. As the elected representatives of the state's largest student-run non-profit, we're proud of the educational service we've provided in our tenure.

We've spent the last three months sharing the results of our work with the Rutgers community – faculty, student government leaders, administrators, staff, student groups, community leaders, and more. We've been taking feedback and getting advice on what the next three years should look like. Our Concept Plan for the next three years is the result of these conversations. Primarily, we look forward to doing our part in implementing the Rutgers Strategic Plan. We have a robust plan to support the educational mission of the university by -

- Continuing our top notch internship program and the direct education of thousands of Rutgers students
- Conducting and supporting independent public interest research in conjunction with students and faculty at Rutgers, thus giving students an opportunity to learn outside of the classroom
- Serving the community by winning concrete victories for the public and through the process give Rutgers students hands on training in non-profit campaigning

A few highlights from the last three years of our work -

- Worked with a national coalition that convinced McDonalds and Subway to practice safe and sustainable sourcing practices by serving meat raised without the overuse of antibiotics
- Made over 5,000 peer-to-peer get out the vote reminders in the 2013 and 2014 elections
- Delivered over 3,000 petitions to 11 New Jersey Congressman, successfully convincing 4 more to co-sponsor a resolution to get big money out of politics by overturning Citizen's United
- **Over 200 Rutgers faculty** and the Rutgers University Senate endorsed our campaign to establish an Open Textbooks Grant Program at Rutgers
- **Delivered nearly 900 class announcements** reaching over **46,000 students** highlighting our program, funding, internship and volunteer opportunities
- Over **400 Rutgers students interned** on one of our campaigns and an addition **1,000** volunteered with us
- Collected over **22,000 petitions** from Rutgers students calling for more solar power, cheaper textbooks, and more

With the 2016 elections coming up, new strategic plans at all three campuses, and new leadership at Rutgers – Camden, and Rutgers – Newark, we know that we have the opportunity to change Rutgers for the better. We're so proud to be part of the Rutgers family and look forward to working with all of you to make it happen.

Sincerely,

NJPIRG Student Chapters
2015—2016
Executive Committee

EDUCATION

Rutgers University Mission Statement:

As the sole comprehensive public research university in the state's system of higher education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, has the threefold mission of

- **providing for the instructional needs of New Jersey's citizens** through its undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education programs;
- **conducting the cutting-edge research** that contributes to the medical, environmental, social, and cultural well-being of the state, as well as aiding the economy and the state's businesses and industries; and
- **performing public service** in support of the needs of the citizens of the state and its local, county, and state governments.

“Given its location and the diversity of its student body, Rutgers is uniquely equipped to integrate disciplinary research and teaching with its real-world application in our local communities, helping students experience how ideas are tested in practice and how the work of the university has immediate, tangible, and far-reaching applicability.” — on educating involved citizens and effective leaders for a dynamic world. Page 8, Rutgers Strategic Plan, February 2014

Healthcare

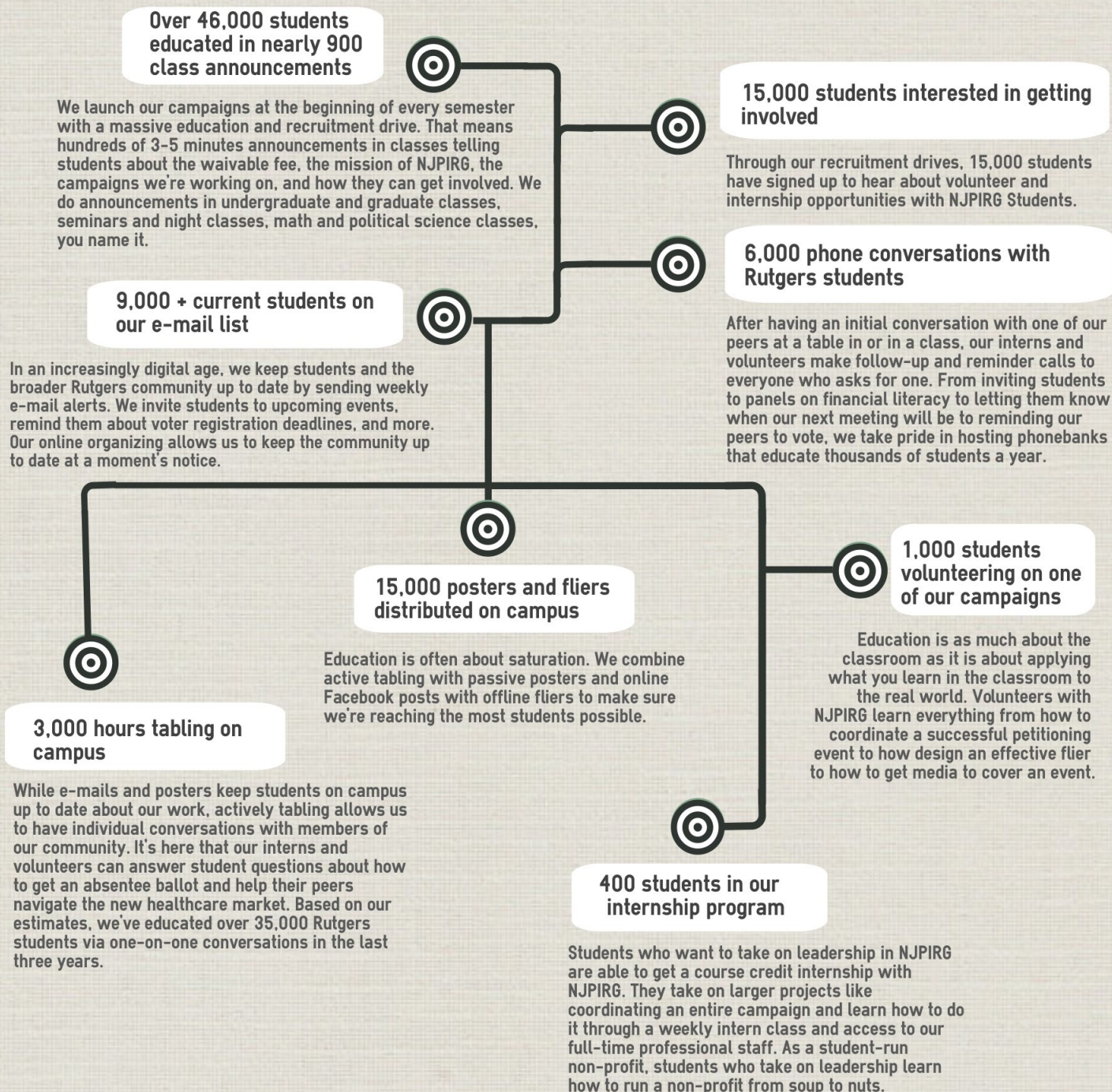
In 2010, young people as an age group were among the most likely to be uninsured – almost 34% of 18 to 29 year olds didn't have health insurance. After the passage of national healthcare reform in 2010, NJPIRG Students did a massive education drive with our national coalition notifying students that they could stay on their parent's health insurance until the age of 26. Nationally, a record 1.8 million young people got coverage in the following two years.

Leading up to the October 2013 open enrollment period, NJPIRG Students did another big push to make sure young people knew their options in the new healthcare market. Students worked with NJPIRG student chapter's staff to write and release a comprehensive guide to navigating health insurance in New Jersey called “So you need health insurance, now what?” At Rutgers – New Brunswick, freshman Sivan Rose kicked off our guide release at press conference with Congressman Frank Pallone and Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula. She then worked with a team of volunteers to educate over thousands of students on campus through tables, class announcements, and e-mail about their options. Statewide, NJPIRG Student Chapters got the guide to over 10,000 students at Rutgers. Since then, another 3.9 million young people have received health insurance coverage.



Left: Rutgers—New Brunswick Freshman Sivan Rose speaking at a press conference with Congressman Frank Pallone and Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula. Middle—Coverage of our campaign in NJ Spotlight. Right: Camden Campus Organizer Alena Simon and Camden Chapter Chair Omar Samaniago release our healthcare guide with Assemblyman Fuentes.

Key Numbers: Spring 2013 - Fall 2015



New Voters Project

The most basic measure of the health of a democracy is its level of voter participation in national elections. Young people especially are an important demographic to engage since those that vote in consecutive elections at a young age are significantly more likely to continue voting throughout their entire lifetime.

NJPIRG Student Chapters and the Student PIRGs have been engaged in registering and turning out voters since 1984. Since the New Voters Project was founded, we have helped over 1.9 million students register to vote across the country. In the last three presidential elections, our work across the country has increased voter turnout anywhere from 11% to 60% in student heavy precincts where we've had a presence.

NJPIRG Student Chapter's New Voters Project is based on the latest research of what works in getting young people to vote. Over the years the Student PIRGs have partnered with higher education institutions like Princeton University and the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts to study what works, especially in light of developing technology. Armed with the best research, NJPIRG Students has led the Rutgers Vote Coalition to make elections visible and accessible for Rutgers students.

New Jersey's off year elections make us a unique state because we have elections practically every year. NJPIRG Students has been a big part of making sure that, even in the off-years, students have the opportunity to participate in the democratic process.



Left: Students Exercising their Right to Vote. Middle: Snickers the vote goat makes an appearance on Election Day. Right: Students at a voter registration table on the deadline.

The Path to Civic Engagement

Fall 2013 and Fall 2014

1

Helped nearly 4,000 students register to vote



Registration is often the largest hurdle in the act of voting. Young people who are registered to vote turn out at close to the same rate as older voters

2

Over 8,400 peer-to-peer get out the vote contacts



Peer-to-peer get out the vote efforts are the most effective in increasing turnout once student voters are registered.

Face-to-face conversations, class announcements, phone calls, and text messages have all been shown to increase turnout

3

275 class announcements educating students, 360 hours of tabling leading up to the election, nearly 1,000 posters put up around campus

Having information about how, when and where to vote increases turnout

4

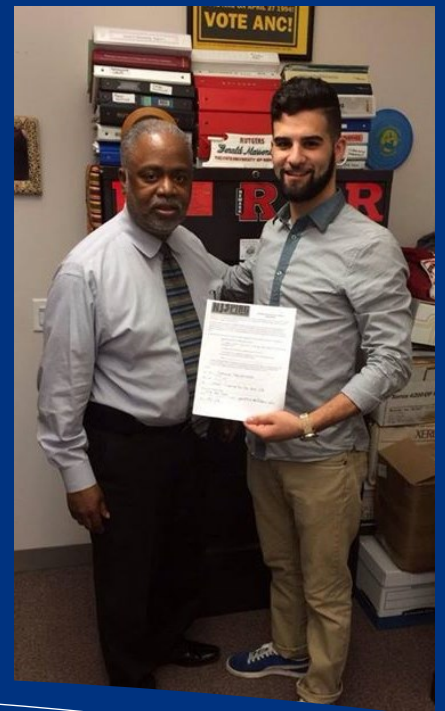
Over 1,000 students volunteering or interning on one of our campaigns, over 10,000 one-on-one conversations had with Rutgers students at one of our tables in 3 years



Finally, civic education opportunities ranging from discussion of current events to engagement in campaigns related to current events has been shown to increase the likelihood of voting.

Right: Rutgers—Newark Chapter Chair Alec Ratyosyan meeting with Associate Chancellor Massenburg about the New Voters Project

Rutgers – Newark Junior Alec Ratyosyan knew that getting out the vote on campus would require a community effort. With the help of NJPIRG Student Chapter's staff, Alec coordinated efforts at Newark to sign-on over 30 student group leaders, faculty, and administrators onto our vote coalition. Alec worked with community leaders to run everything from voter registration tables to giant get out the vote phonebanks.



Avoid the Debt Trap

College students are a prime target for financial institutions who sometimes use confusing, invasive, and sometimes even misleading practices to recruit students to buy their products and make them money through fees and other charges. Since students often are new to making big financial decisions, they are particularly vulnerable to these practices.

A 2008 Student PIRGs study, for instance, found that 25 percent of students surveyed paid late fees and 15 percent paid “over the limit” fees on their credit and debit cards. Furthermore, bank overdraft fees cost students one billion dollars each year. More students drop out of college due to financial pressures than due to academic issues, and 67 percent state that money matters accounted for a lot or some of their daily stress. This strain does not disappear after graduation. Prospective employers for positions with financial responsibilities frequently check applicants’ credit reports, placing students who graduate with high debt and low credit scores at a disadvantage. Furthermore, a student’s credit history can also impact their ability to rent an apartment, or qualify and get good rates for auto or home loans and insurance.

In 2010 NJPIRG Students worked with a national coalition to help pass the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act which established the Consumer Financial Protection Agency (CFPB), the first federal agency with the job of protecting consumers. Since then, enforcement and supervisory actions by CFPB have directly returned \$2.6 Billion into consumer accounts, including over \$1.8 billion from unfair credit card company practices alone. It has also eliminated \$7.5 billion in unfair mortgage, student loan interest, penalties, and other unfair fees and debts.

NJPIRG Students continued this work on campus via our Avoid the Debt Trap campaign. We worked to provide students with the tools to avoid misleading and predatory practices by financial institutions and to give students the

Like many of our campaigns, NJPIRG Student Chapter’s Avoid the Debt Trap campaign combines practical research with professional advocacy and on the ground education. NJPIRG Students is part of a national coalition of Student PIRGs that pitch in to fund professional advocates in Washington D.C. Over the last three years, U.S.PIRG’s federal advocate on consumer issues has made The Hill’s Top Grassroots lobbyist list every year.



“Mierzwinski has proven his mettle while fighting for health and safety protections in trade deals and the strict implementation of the Dodd-Frank law. The group’s consumer program director advises lawmakers on a wide range of consumer issues that deal with identity theft, credit cards, privacy and financial services.”



Ed Mierzwinski, U.S.PIRG.
The Hill: Top Grassroots Lobbyist.

2013

2014

2015



knowledge to be smart financial consumers. We partnered with FoolProof Foundation to release a guide called *Avoid the Debt Trap: How to Avoid Rip-Offs, Manage Your Debt, and Make Financial Decisions for Your Future* and worked with faculty and the Financial Aid Office to get the guide to students. Our team of interns and volunteers also outreached to SGA's and student group leaders and provided over 20 in person workshops to student groups.

Finally, we hosted a Student Financial Education Workshop with the CFPB at the Rutgers University Business School. Students heard tips from panelists including Rohit Chopra, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Assistant Director and Student Loan Ombudsman and Rutgers Vice President of Enrollment Management Courtney McAnuff.

Photo left to right: Rutgers Vice President of Enrollment Management Courtney McAnuff, NJPIRG Student Chapters Board Chair Nick Jermer, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Student Loan Ombudsman Rohit Chopra

Internship Program



NJPIRG Student Chapters offers an internship program overseen by professional staff that gives students the opportunity to apply knowledge learned in the classroom to leadership roles in local and national campaigns. Through this program, hundreds of students have taken on projects as interns or in independent studies. Interns work with NJPIRG staff to craft their own projects and can also receive 1 to 6 credits for their work. Projects range from spearheading efforts to engage small businesses in closing corporate tax loopholes, to hosting fundraisers for hurricane relief, to lobbying local elected officials on reducing single use plastic bags and running massive voter registration drives.

These opportunities allow students to apply what they're learning in classes to the real world. Education majors have taught thousands of students their options in the new healthcare market, engineering students have done in depth energy assessments in homes and government buildings, English and marketing majors have crafted our media materials, and fine arts students have managed our fliers, posters, and online presence.

Weekly internship classes supplement the work interns do in the field through skills trainings, guest speakers and reading discussions. Students benefit from a wide range of topics like how to recruit and train other student leaders, building effective coalitions, working with the media, and how to do a lobby meeting.

Intern Profile: Moira Cahill

Moira started as an NJPIRG intern in the Fall of 2013 working on our New Voters Project. As a Political Science major, Moira was looking for a way to apply what she was learning in the classroom to the real world. As a volunteer with the New Voters Project, she helped organize tables and recruit and train other volunteers to help students register to vote.

After the election, Moira took on leadership as the coordinator for the Don't Frack the Delaware campaign in Camden. Three million New Jerseyans get their drinking water from the Delaware Water Basin and Moira wanted to make sure that the fracking moratorium that students before her helped to put in place, stayed in place. Through the internship program, Moira learned how to manage and train a team of students to lobby, work with the media, and collect thousands of petitions. By the end of her second semester, Moira was elected to the Board of Directors and stepped up as a statewide leader by coordinating the campaign at all three Rutgers campuses throughout her second year with NJPIRG Students.



Center: Moira at a Delaware River Basin Commission hearing with student activists from across the state.

"I learned in my experience with NJPIRG that affecting visible change on real world issues is truly achievable. Learning the fundamentals of grassroots organizing has helped me rethink the conventional methods of affecting change; a newly gained perspective allows me to think more critically on real world issues." - Moira Cahill

“Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, has the ... mission of performing public service in support of the needs of the citizens of the state and its local, county, and state governments.” - Rutgers University Mission Statement

For the last three years, NJPIRG Students has funded a citizen outreach project to distribute educational literature in the communities surrounding Rutgers and throughout New Jersey. Since 2013, this project has passed out 183,000 pieces of literature to the doors of New Jerseyans. Each year, our Board of Directors decides what consumer resources to include on these fliers.

HEALTH INSURANCE ALERT

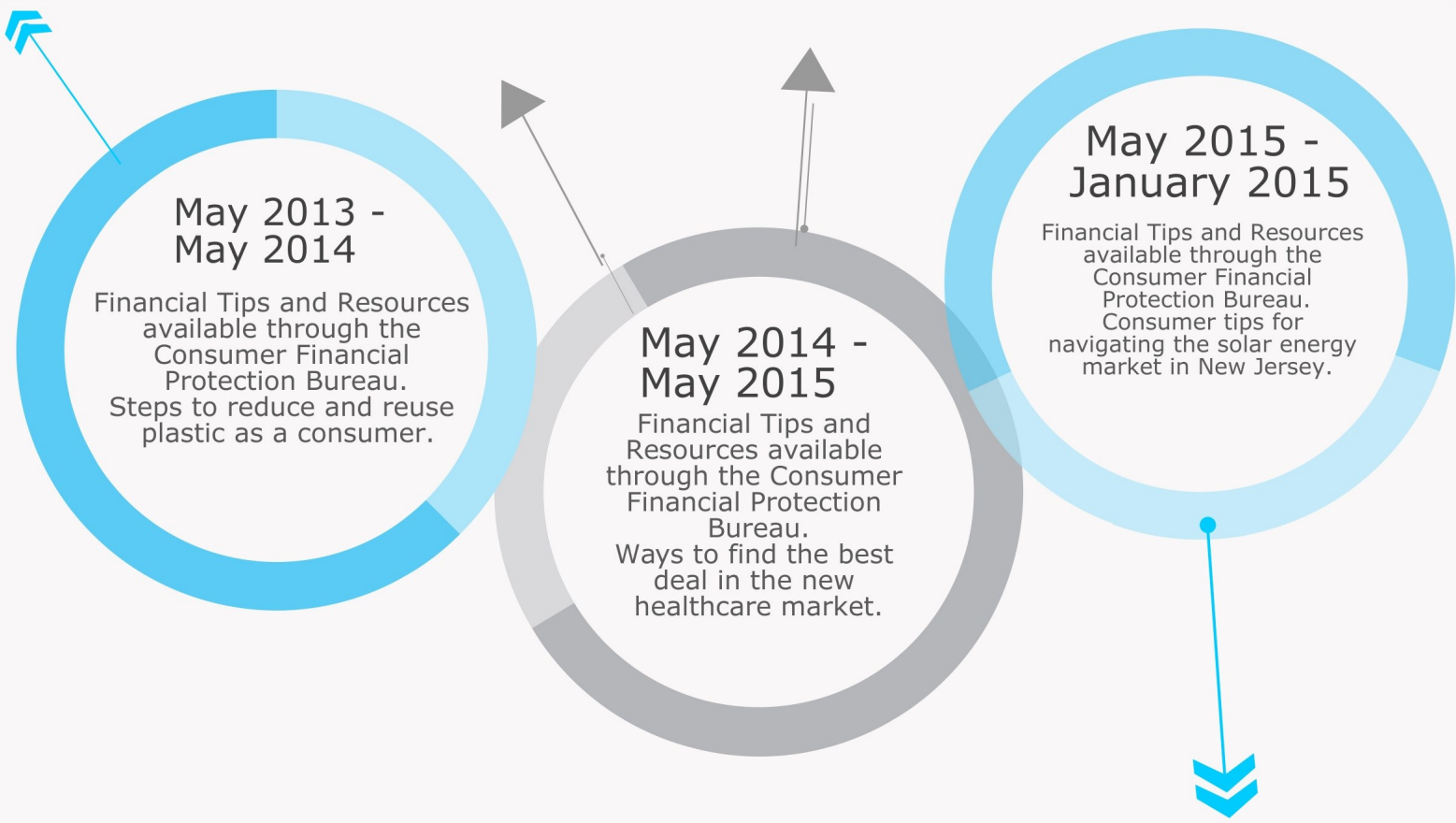
How To Find The Best Deal

Newly uninsured and looking for coverage? Deciding if your current plan still gives you the best value? Consumers have new options and protections. Know the facts.

- 1 Check out options at the Health Insurance Marketplace, the marketplace for New Jersey consumers and small businesses. Sign up during the upcoming open enrollment period, or right away if you've recently lost coverage, or in other special cases.
- 2 Find out about financial help. You may qualify for financial help to reduce monthly costs, and could be eligible for free or low-cost coverage.
- 3 Get help comparing options and signing up. Take advantage of expert help in-person, online or by phone at no cost to you.
- 4 Compare plans. Key considerations include the monthly premium, potential out-of-pocket costs, provider network and independent quality ratings.
- 5 Don't take no for an answer. Insurance companies can no longer deny you coverage due to a pre-existing condition.
- 6 Switch plans if you want to. Every year at open enrollment you have the option to do nothing and stick with your current plan, or switch to a new one.

Visit www.njpirgstudents.org for more information.

NJPIRG | STUDENT CHAPTERS



RESEARCH

Rutgers University Mission Statement:

As the sole comprehensive public research university in the state's system of higher education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, has the threefold mission of

- **providing for the instructional needs of New Jersey's citizens** through its undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education programs;
- **conducting the cutting-edge research** that contributes to the medical, environmental, social, and cultural well-being of the state, as well as aiding the economy and the state's businesses and industries; and
- **performing public service** in support of the needs of the citizens of the state and its local, county, and state governments.

NJPIRG Student Chapters furthers the University mission of research through working with faculty to produce new research, looking at existing bodies of knowledge and expounding on them, and producing independent research reports. The result is accessible guides and reports that further the educational mission of the university. From establishing the best ways to solve a problem to exposing wrongdoers or educating the public about new laws, all of these reports endeavor to create or communicate practical solutions to problems facing the state.

Transportation

These days, more and more of us are moving off the roads. We're driving less on average than we have in years past — driving peaked in America in 2007. Since then, the Millennial Generation has led the way, with more people walking, biking and taking transit. In fact, in 2014 more people used public transportation than they had since 1956! Meanwhile, new technologies and other options, such as bike-sharing, are making it easier for people to rely less on cars.

In 2013 and 2014, we released two new reports documenting this shift in transportation use and the things universities and communities can do to meet new demand. Our 2013 report *Moving Off the Road: A State-by-State Analysis of the National Decline in Driving* found that though New Jerseyans drove 2.1% less on average since 2005, the drop was very modest compared to the 6.9% drop nationally. Our 2014 report, *A New Course: How Innovated University Programs Are Reducing Driving on Campus and Creating New Models for Transportation Policy* found that millennials reduced their annual driving by 23%, and highlighted the work that Rutgers University is doing to meet increased demand for transportation options.



Left: Rutgers Senior Transportation Planner Dorothy Kieu Le, Piscataway Mayor Brian C. Wahler, and NJPIRG Students intern Jake Schuhardt releasing A New Course at the Rutgers Business School

Right: Rutgers – Newark Chapter Vice Chair, Loren Whitaker releasing Moving Off the Road



Affordable Textbooks

NJPIRG Student Chapters was the first group to expose the rising cost of textbooks as a portion of higher education costs in the early 2000s. Since then, we've released numerous reports documenting both the problem and potential solutions. From helping to establish the textbook rental program here at Rutgers to educating students about their options when it comes to textbooks to passing federal legislation, our research has helped to curb the rising cost of textbooks here at Rutgers.

In the last three years we did two national surveys and released reports snapshotting the impact of high textbook prices for students. In 2014, NJPIRG Students was part of a national research effort which surveyed students at 150 colleges and universities. *Fixing the Broken Textbook Market: How Students Respond to High Costs and Demand Alternatives* found that over *half* of students surveyed had high textbook costs dictate how many/which classes they took each term. Our Fall 2015 follow-up survey found that *almost 1 in 5* Rutgers students did not purchase a required book for class because of cost.

Our research has found that grant programs incentivizing the creation and adoption of Open course materials is highly effective. In Washington, the state and the University of Washington—Seattle teamed up to invest \$1.8 million in OER and have seen a \$5.5 million return for students at UW. At the University of Massachusetts – Amherst, their \$40,000 investment in grants for faculty over 4 years resulted in over \$1.4 million in savings for students at UMass—Amherst.

Documenting Effective OER Solutions

Affordable Textbooks For Washington Students: An Updated Cost Analysis of the Open Course Library

In response to growing concerns about the high cost of textbooks, the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges launched the Open Course Library (OCL), a project to outfit 81 of the state's largest-enrolled courses with high-quality, low-cost educational materials. Funded jointly by the Washington State Legislature and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the project sought to offer faculty and students a more affordable alternative to expensive textbooks.

Upon the release of the first phase of Open Course Library courses in October 2011, the Student PIRGs conducted an analysis of the student savings: *Affordable Textbooks for Washington's Students: A Cost Analysis of the Open Course Library*. The Student PIRGs updated this analysis in April 2013 when the State Board announced the completion of all 81 courses.

The major findings are that the Open Course Library has saved students \$5.5 million since its inception, including \$2.8 million this academic year alone. Students who take OCL courses save \$96 on average per course over using an expensive, traditional textbook. The total student savings are more than triple the original \$1.8 million investment in the project. As more governments consider investing in open educational resources, this evidence will help demonstrate the potential impact on textbook costs.

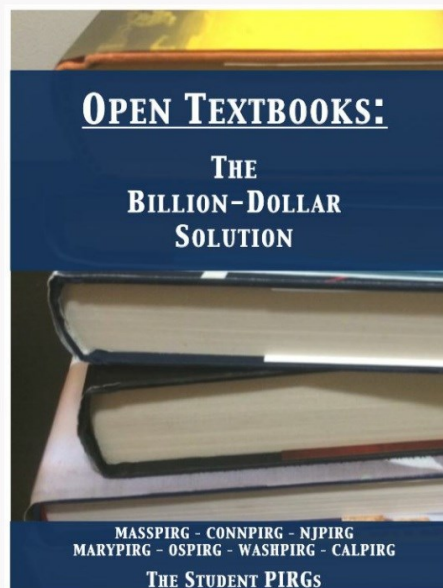
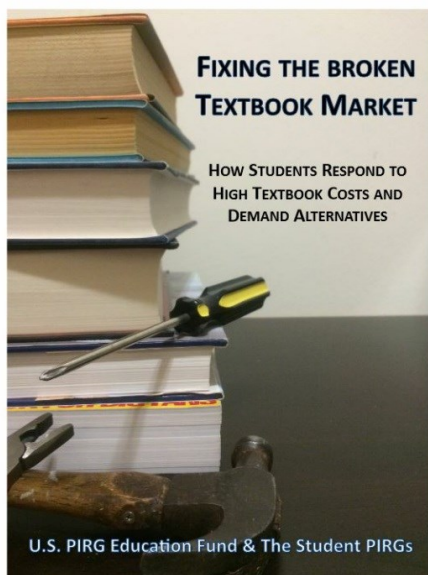
Introduction

The cost of college textbooks has become a significant barrier to higher education. The Student PIRGs found that prices have risen more than four times the rate of inflation for the past two decades,¹ and according to the College Board, the average student should budget \$1,200 for course materials during the 2012-2013 school year.² The burden is especially severe at community colleges, where textbooks often rival the cost of tuition. A 2005 GAO study found that textbook costs on average were comparable to 72% of tuition at 2-year public colleges.³

Recent evidence has shown a link between growing college costs and course completion. A survey conducted by the Student PIRGs earlier this year found that 7 in 10 respondents said they had not purchased one or more required

text due to cost, even though 78% believed it could hurt their academic performance.⁴ A 2009 report by Public Agenda found that 60% of college dropouts said that textbook costs had affected them financially.⁵

If students can't afford to stay in college, they cannot attain the degrees and credentials they need to enter the workforce. At a time when many Americans are returning to college to increase their employment prospects, reducing barriers such as cost and improving quality of instruction should be a top priority at the local, state and federal levels.



In 2010, our report *A Cover to Cover Solution* found that Open Education Resource (OER) textbooks, free online access books published under an open copyright, could save students up to 80% on their course materials each year. This study informed our work moving forward and focused our campaign on establishing OER resources and educating faculty about OER options. Here at Rutgers, we conducted a survey of over 200 faculty and found that over 90% would want the option of applying for an OER grant to fund the switch to open course materials.

Armed with this information, NJPIRG Students got over 230 endorsements from faculty and department heads, secured three resolutions in support of the program from SGA's and Governing Councils, and worked with the University Senate's Student Affairs Committee to craft and pass a formal endorsement from the Rutgers University Senate.

THE GLEANER
SERVING THE RUTGERS-CAMDEN COMMUNITY FOR OVER 10 YEARS
October 16, 2013

philly.com
BLOGS PHILADELPHIA NEW JERSEY POLITICS EDUCATION OPINION OBITUARIES NATION/WORLD WEATHER

Collections • NJ Transit

Report says younger generation prefers transit to cars

From left: Samantha Buchner, Anya Khan, and Alena Simon at Rutgers-Camden. "It's basically just saying that transportation investment should be used to accommodate us millennials," Buchner said. (RON TARTVER / Staff Photographer)

The Daily Targum

NJPIRG hopes to bring Affordable College Textbook Act to Rutgers

By **Alexandra DeMatos** | 10/19/15
11:11pm

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nj.com
True Jersey.

Rutgers-Camden students pushing for free, open source textbooks

Rutgers-Camden senior Moira Cahill tapes a note to a poster board, recording the amount one of her fellow students spent on textbooks this semester. Cahill is a member of the campus chapter of NJPIRG, which was advocating an open source alternative for textbooks in the school's student center, Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2015. (Staff photo by Jason Laday / South Jersey Times)

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This story is part of **PRESS ON YOUR SIDE**
Fake payday loan scams target you
Bum air conditioners anger Bradley Beach woman

'Toxic toys' warning list released by NJPIRG

David P. Willis, @dpwillis732 1:37 p.m. EST December 1, 2014

We work with the media to make sure that our research reports have the broadest educational impact possible.

SERVICE

“Rutgers University’s mission is to “[perform] public service in support of the needs of the citizens of the state and its local, county, and state governments.”

Our service events provide a dual educational opportunity for the Rutgers community. Students who lead them learn how to recruit and train their peers to run effective real world campaigns. Students who participate learn the solutions to the problems they learn about in their classes, and are trained on the first steps towards those solutions like how to make an effective pitch call over the phone or how to do a lobby meeting. The service work that all of these students do ultimately educates the broader campus community about the world around them and how they can make a difference.

Students have served as poll watchers on Election Day, working to make sure that first time voters know their rights. They have advocated for local and national policies that serve the average New Jerseyan. They have worked to ensure that the basic needs of our community members are met through food drives. When it comes to some of the biggest needs facing our community, NJPIRG Students have stepped up to serve thousands in the local community by providing resources, education, volunteer hours, and technical know-how.

Helping Students Fight Poverty



We'll need systemic change on a large scale to solve the problem of poverty, but in the short term students here at Rutgers are taking action to serve the communities' immediate needs. Up to 40% of the communities surrounding the three Rutgers campuses live under the poverty line. NJPIRG Students has a long history of tackling the issues of poverty in the Newark, Camden, and New Brunswick communities. Each year, student leaders host clean-up days, fundraisers, and other large events that serve to bridge the gap between campus and community, provide an opportunity to educate thousands of student volunteers about the simple actions they can take to make a difference, and provide a much needed service to the city.

Left: Rutgers— Newark students running a can drive at a local grocery store.

In the last three years, we've served a number of agencies in New Jersey: Coming Home which provides housing for families in need, the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, the Neighborhood Center of Camden, Women's Aware which provides domestic violence services and an emergency shelter, and Five Loaves Food Pantry. In the last three years, students on the Hunger and Homelessness Campaign have done hundreds of hours of service, collected thousands items of canned food, and raised tens of thousands of dollars to donate to these agencies.



Left: RU-NB students recruiting for the National Hunger Clean-up. Center: RU-NB students volunteering at the Community Food Bank of New Jersey. Right: RU-C students volunteering at the Neighborhood Center of Camden.

Stopping the Overuse of Antibiotics on Factory Farms



"Without urgent, coordinated action by many stakeholders, the world is headed for a post-antibiotic era, in which common infections and minor injuries which have been treatable for decades can once again kill."

– World Health Organization, 2014

"Much of the antibiotic use in animals is unnecessary and inappropriate and makes everyone less safe."

–Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013



Despite these warnings, many factory farms are giving antibiotics to healthy livestock every day. Why? Crowded and unsanitary conditions, along with other practices used on factory farms can put animals' health at risk.

Instead of treating sick animals with antibiotics when they get an infection, many farming operations just distribute antibiotics to all of their animals as a preventative measure. Factory farms also discovered that giving animals a regular dose of antibiotics made them gain weight faster. And now, up to 70% of all antibiotics used in the United States are used on livestock.

That's why students in New Jersey decided to join the national effort to call on fast food chains – some of the largest purchasers of meat in the country – to stop buying meat raised with the overuse of antibiotics. Our strategy was simple: show restaurants that there was high consumer demand, especially from millennials, for meat raised without the overuse of antibiotics. After just three months of targeting McDonalds, we convinced them to phase out the use of chicken raised on our lifesaving medicines in their U.S. restaurants. Then we shifted our efforts to Subway – the largest chain the world with, by some measures, more franchises than McDonalds and Starbucks combined.

Students gathered over 5,000 petitions and over 300 photo-petitions that they posted @Subway on social media, all in preparation for a national Day of Action. NJPIRG Students planned 5 of the 50 events at Subway franchises across the country to call on Subway to take action. Two days before the event, Subway made an even stronger commitment than McDonalds!

"Subway said Tuesday that it plans to switch to meat raised without antibiotics over the next several years. The announcement comes after the company was targeted by advocacy groups calling for the change, with a coalition planning to deliver petitions to Subway's headquarters on Thursday."

- New York Times, October 2015

After their victory, students in New Jersey joined our national coalition and turned our day of action into "Thank You Subway!" events to celebrate. **Our work garnered almost 70 media hits from outlets across the country including the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, Associated Press, Reuters, Fox, ABC, and more.**

The market is shifting in response to these commitments. As of December 2015, over 40% of the chicken industry is raising chickens without the overuse of antibiotics. We're confident that if we continue to show restaurants that consumers want change, we'll see more companies committing to help save antibiotics.



Campaign to Fight Global Warming

Since 2000, we've experienced 14 of the 15 warmest years on record – including 2014, the hottest year ever recorded. Scientists overwhelmingly agree that human fossil fuel use is driving this trend. Nationally, coal plants create 40% of the CO₂ emissions in the United States. Additionally, these plants emit millions of pounds of toxic chemicals that New Jerseyans breathe every day. As a result, 18 of our 21 counties are ranked among the nation's worst in air quality and one in ten kids in the state suffer from asthma. In lower income areas near these plants, almost one in three kids suffers from asthma.

With extreme weather becoming more and more common across the country, NJPIRG Students continued our work to tackle global warming in the last three years. Nick Jermer, Rutgers –NB '16, worked with student leaders at all three campuses to educate over 11,000 students in classrooms about the campaign. He led our efforts to pass the EPA's Clean Power Plan which would make sure that coal plants in New Jersey and across the country are equipped with the newest technology to stop carbon pollution.



The response was overwhelming – Rutgers students signed over 6,400 public comments to the EPA during the open comment period. Nationally, we worked with a coalition that eventually delivered 8 million public comments by December 2014. The Clean Power Plan was adopted and has been the biggest single action the US has taken to curb global warming emissions.

Left: Associate Director of the Rutgers Initiative on Climate & Society, Professor McDermott, NJPIRG Students and other environmental groups at a press conference celebrating 6,000 public comments at Rutgers

Working to Get Big Money Out of Politics

Voter registration and voter turnout is just one aspect of NJPIRG Student Chapter's Democracy program. We have worked for decades to make sure that the student vote isn't drowned out by big money in politics. Democracy depends on the principle of all Americans having an equal, meaningful voice, but in the last few years, we've seen a few egregious court decisions curbing the voice of the people.

The worst of these cases, the 2010 *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision, opened the floodgates to allow unprecedented corporate influence over our elections by removing spending limits. As a result, in the 2012 presidential election, 32 big donors contributed more money to influence the election than all of the small donors who gave to Obama and Romney combined. **That is 32 donors outspending 3.7 million average Americans.**



Right: Rutgers—Newark students stand with the Essex County Board of Freeholders after they voted in support of overturning Citizens United

From 2012 to 2013, students worked with a statewide coalition, New Jersey for the Overturn of Citizens United, to pass more than 10 municipal resolutions against Citizens United. Students also collected over 3,300 petitions from Rutgers students and hosted a panel, *Shining a Light on Money in Politics*, with Political Science Professor Benjamin Pauli and Congressman Frank Pallone. When we launched the campaign, only three people of the fourteen in New Jersey Congressional delegation were on record against Citizen's United. Our efforts have brought that number to seven.

Go Solar New Jersey

By capturing just a sliver of the virtually limitless and pollution-free energy that strikes the nation every day in sunlight, we could power the country. In fact, the U.S. has enough solar potential to meet our energy needs 100 times over.

Across the country, cities and states are starting to make the shift. With the cost of solar energy dropping, efficiency in installations increasing, and the threats of air pollution and global warming looming, solar power has become a cost-effective and common-sense alternative. Most people wouldn't put New Jersey at the top of the list when it comes to states that could lead in solar – but in fact, we have the potential to produce six times as much electricity from solar power as we consume every year.. and we've already pushed our elected officials to pass policies to take advantage of this. In the last three years, New Jersey has ranked in the top 5 states in country for solar!



NJPIRG Students decided to work with municipal leaders to keep shining the light on solar solutions nationally by leading the way locally. Freshman Randi Stafford joined the People's Climate March National Day of Action at Rutgers – Camden and collected hundreds of petitions to deliver to Mayor Redd. Junior Nick Jermer hosted a Solar Panel Panel at Rutgers – New Brunswick to educate students about the benefits of solar. Overall, student leaders delivered over 2,500 petitions and created working relationships with their communities on the next steps towards a solar powered state.

Above: Mayor Wahler speaks in support of cities going solar

NJPIRG Student Chapters Accomplishments

40 years ago, Edward Lee Rosenthal, a junior at Rutgers University, wanted to find a way for students to address “gut level social problems” and win. With the help of a dedicated group of fellow students, he worked to establish the first chapter of NJPIRG, welcomed with overwhelming support from the campus community. NJPIRG has grown to be the premier public interest group in the state. The following is a list of some of the victories that have involved students of NJPIRG Student Chapters over the past 40 years.

A Selection of NJPIRG Student Chapters Accomplishments

- 1974:** NJPIRG Consumer Guide and Report: Food in NJ and Where to Shop
- 1980:** Clean Water Enforcement Study
- 1980:** A Students’ Primer on Tenant’s Rights Report
- 1980:** Insurance Redlining in NJ Report
- 1982-**
- 1992:** NJPIRG filed suits against 60 of the states most egregious water polluters. All were required to clean up and pay penalties.
- 1984:** Founding member of the National Student Campaign for Voter Registration, registered 500 Rutgers Students
- 1984:** Water Conservation Alternative Study
- 1985:** Founding member of the National Student Campaign against Hunger and Homelessness. NJPIRG Student Board Chair Pat Donahue receives an award from the United Nations for NJPIRG’s work on combating hunger
- 1987:** Won lawsuit requiring nozzles on gas pumps to reduce hydrocarbon emissions
- 1989:** Set standards for the most number of Clean Water Lawsuits in the country
- 1990:** Clean Water Enforcement Act, which requires penalties for water polluters
- 1991:** Pollution Prevention Act, for companies to reduce their use of toxic chemicals
- 1992:** NJPIRG and a coalition of over 100 groups register 5,000 Rutgers students to vote
- 1994:** NJPIRG Student Chapters wins polling places in River Dorns on College Ave Campus
- 1994:** NJPIRG Law & Policy Center created NJ Community Water Watch, an Americorps program that since its inception has involved over 31,890 volunteers. The program has educated over 100,000 K-12 children, organized over 400 cleanups removing over 1 million pounds of trash from NJ waterways, monitored over 50 different rivers and streams, and established over 100 community groups as water watch stewardship groups.
- 1995:** NJPIRG Student Chapters is part of a coalition that delivers 1.2 million petition signatures to Congress, helping to stop the rollback of environmental laws
- 1997:** NJPIRG wins funding for cleaner natural gas buses
- 1998:** NJPIRG wins regulations to reduce smog emissions from power plants
- 2000:** NJPIRG Student Chapters was one of the leading organizations to help collect 1.5 million public comments to protect 58 million acres of national forests from logging, mining, and road building.
- 2001:** The Higher Education Project secured an additional \$1.7 billion in federal financial aid
- 2001:** Distributed a guide to help students avoid credit card debt
- 2002:** Passed a New Brunswick city ordinance, which requires tri-annual inspections of rental properties to help prevent landlords from renting unsafe and ill-maintained apartments.
- 2002:** NJPIRG Student Chapters held a news conference on toy safety with 10 media outlets in attendance, releasing the most dangerous toys on the market before Christmas shopping season. The PIRG annual toy safety report has resulted in over 40 unsafe toys being removed from store shelves and the passage of tough choking hazard standards.

- 2004:** The Student PIRG's New Voters Project registers 524,000 young voters and works to turn them out to the polls
- 2005:** The New Voters Project contributes to dramatic increases in youth voter turnout in New Jersey's off-year gubernatorial elections. NJPIRG Student Chapters and RU Voting register 3,000 Rutgers students and 5,000 students state-wide to vote
- 2006:** In response to Hurricane Katrina, NJPIRG Student Chapters and students across the country raised thousands of dollars and sent 70 volunteers to the Gulf Coast to help with rebuilding efforts
- 2006:** Fundraised over \$10,000 for hunger relief efforts. Since the Hunger campaign started in 1986, tens of thousands of dollars have been raised to help the homeless
- 2007:** NJPIRG Student Chapters Campus Climate Change campaign: runs the Dorm Challenge between 12 dorms in New Brunswick; hosts a showing of an *Inconvenient Truth* to an audience of 300 students and Congressman Pallone; and enters Rutgers and wins MTV's "Break the Addiction Challenge," a national contest, winning \$10,000 for a "green campus-center make-over."
- 2007:** NJPIRG Student Chapters hosts cleanup of Raritan River with over 400 students from fraternities and sororities to kick off the IFC's Service Week
- 2008:** RU Voting Coalition formed with Eagleton Institute of Politics and registers students to vote in Presidential primaries. NJPIRG Student Chapters runs "What's Your Plan?" to ask presidential candidates during the primaries their plans on issues that matter to young people.
- 2008:** RU Voting Coalition registers close to 6,000 students and reminds 28,000 students to vote in Presidential Election
- 2009:** Hunger & Homeless campaign organizes National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness East Coast Conference
- 2009:** Started the Energy Service Corps program
- 2009:** NJPIRG Community Water Watch organizes 5th Annual Raritan-Wide River Cleanup with over 1,400 volunteers from 23 communities along the river
- 2010:** NJPIRG partners with the City of New Brunswick and over 150 students from the Greek community for a city-wide clean-up.
- 2011:** 10,000 kids educated statewide by NJPIRG's Energy Service Corps program.
- 2012:** NJPIRG works with national coalition to stop student loan interest rates from doubling and attends the signing ceremony with President Obama. This will save student borrowers an average of \$1,000.
- 2012:** NJPIRG registers over 6,200 students to vote and reminds 15,000 students to vote in the Presidential Election
- 2013:** Passed 10 municipal resolutions in support of overturning Citizens United.
- 2013:** Educated thousands of students about the changes in the healthcare market.
- 2014:** Convinced 4 members of the New Jersey delegation to go on record against Citizens United.
- 2014:** Worked with the University Senate to pass a resolution calling for the University to fund an Open Textbooks grant program.
- 2015:** Convinced McDonalds and Subway to make commitments to buy meat raised without the overuse of antibiotics.
- 2015:** Won a U.S. Department of Education Rule to protect consumers on campus – the rule will regulate predatory fees, increase transparency around campus banking agreements, and will ensure students get a neutral marketplace to bank and to access their financial aid.

A network of Student Action

Author—Jordan Kizzmann, Rutgers—New Brunswick '16



As the coordinator for the Make Textbooks Affordable Campaign, I see it all the time. Students frustrated with a problem that impacts their ability to get an education, but unable to do anything about it. That was me before I heard about NJPIRG Student Chapter's campaign for more Open Education Resources. Our Textbooks campaign is an excellent example of how students working together across the country can make a difference on an issue that independently we could do little to change.

When we launched our campaign to increase access to OER, there were only a handful of peer-reviewed Open Textbooks on the market. On top of that, just five textbook publishers controlled more than 90% of the \$8.8 billion market. We knew that in order to shift prices down, we needed to (1) encourage more professors to write OER material, and (2) encourage more professors to choose OER materials when available and appropriate for their class. We knew that giving students immediate relief in the form of free books would make a big difference, but it wouldn't be enough. We had to move enough of the higher education community towards OER in order to give these publishers serious market competition in order to drive prices down.



This was not a campaign that one student group or one campus community could take on and win. Student leaders working with the Student PIRGs from Massachusetts to Oregon worked with me to take on the publishing industry. We debated campaign strategy on conference calls, hosted national days of action to get more media attention, and advised our full-time staff on how they could best support our campaign. Students at Rutgers who pitch in \$11.20 a semester to fund NJPIRG Students help to fund a team of national staff who make sure our campaigns win real results for students.



Top: Jordan Kizzmann talks to students about high textbook costs. Middle: Henessa Gumiran '18 and Brian Franklin '15 lobby in D.C. to close corporate tax loopholes. Bottom: Ezra Dufala '18 (left) in a lobby meeting with staff from Senator Booker's office about fair credit card regulation on campuses.

National Organizing Director Andy MacDonald provides training and advice for students that's backed by 33 years of organizing experience. Federal Higher Education Advocate Ethan Senack works full-time in D.C. to make sure our work on the ground is backed up by legislative action.

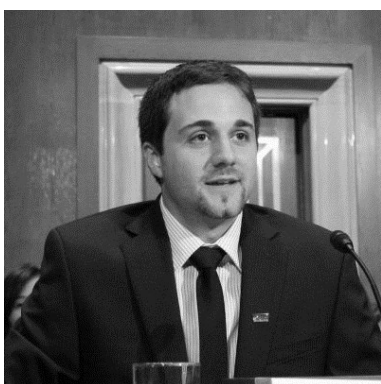
Since launching our OER efforts, California, Washington, and Connecticut have passed legislation to support OER classroom materials. Dozens of schools, including Rutgers, have endorsed or started programs to promote the adoption of OER books. As a result, we now have hundreds of open textbooks available for professors on the market. The work to shift the textbooks market isn't done yet, but we have made immense progress as a result of our national network.

The textbooks story is not unique. Our national network of staff and students working on our New Voters Project helped us increase youth voter turnout every year since 2000. Our national network gave us the power to convince Subway, the largest restaurant in the world, to shift their purchasing practices, a task that would have been impossible otherwise. Our network brings students from across the country to a National Lobby Day every year with tens of thousands of petitions in hand, which allows us to push for and win policies that we could not win alone.

Our funding is essential for this network. As passionate and talented the students at Rutgers are, we are not yet lawyers or professional organizers. The \$11.20 waivable fee gives students the resources to take on national problems like textbook affordability and voter turnout and actually make a difference. It teaches students how to do their part in the Rutgers motto of “Jersey Roots, Global Reach.”



Andy started his career with CoPIRG in the summer of 1983 after graduating from Cornell University, and later moved east to become an Organizing Director with MASSPIRG. During that time, he helped organize and run several environmental ballot initiatives, and helped pass groundbreaking legislation on toxics, acid rain, consumer protection and student rights. In 1999, Andy started ecopledge.com, an organization which works to hold corporations accountable for the environmental impact of their businesses practices. In 2003, he moved into his current position as the National Campus Organizing Director, where he works with PIRG campus chapters across the country. When he's not training others to change the world, Andy is either training for marathons or training his young daughter to take on the Kenyans in the 2032 Olympics.



Ethan Senack is the federal Higher Education Advocate for U.S. PIRG. He works in Washington, D.C., on behalf of students on college affordability and accessibility. As a UConnPIRG chapter student, he oversaw the state board and ran campaign offices on behalf of ConnPIRG. After graduation and working on a 2012 Congressional race, he joined U.S. PIRG staff, fighting for textbook affordability at schools around the country, lobbying to help keep student loan debt manageable in Congress, and protecting student consumers. Recently, he ran the New Voters Project campaign in North Carolina during the 2014 election, where his team successfully increased youth voter turnout in targeted precincts by as much as 60%. Ethan is a graduate of the University of Connecticut, where he studied Political Science and Sociology.

Planned Program 2016 - 2019

Through PIRG, I discovered potential within myself to be a student leader that I never even knew I possessed. As a student leader and activist, I strengthened real world skills like effective communication and had lots of practice with team building strategies.

My work with PIRG has inspired me to be not only a student activist, but an activist for life.

- Kristi Collemacine
Rutgers - Camden, 2016

For decades NJPIRG Student Chapters has met the changing educational needs of Rutgers University. Through each campaign, we educate students about the solutions to the problems they face as citizens, we train student volunteers and interns in practical campaign skills that apply to any career path, and we win real results for students and citizens in the community alike.

The tangible educational value of our program is invaluable and perhaps obvious. Students who complete an NJPIRG internship learn to manage volunteers, market campaigns, evaluate a non-profit budget, build coalitions, write press releases, and more. Whether a student is learning to organize a food drive or a collaborative research report, the skills we teach are practical pairings for the in classroom education that students receive. The intangible educational value of our program is perhaps even more important. Running successful campaigns that make a real difference within a semester or a few years shows students that through hard work, strategic planning, and critical analysis of results, they can have an influence over body as powerful as the President of the United States and as intangible as the health of our democracy.

We're proud to celebrate our 43 history here at Rutgers University. In that time, students have successfully campaigned for everything from cleaning up the worst toxic dump sites in New Jersey to doubling the Pell grant. We look forward to many more years contributing to the educational mission of the university.

Campaigns that Matter to Rutgers

Each semester, our Board of Directors selects what campaigns each campus will work on the next semester. We ask student leaders, faculty, administrators, and community members what issues they're working on. We reach out to the network of Student PIRGs across the country and figure out where we can work together. We talk to elected officials and our national non-profit partners. We poll students on campus and ask them what issues they'd like us to take on. After hearing from everyone in the wider community, we evaluate each campaign based on the criteria below. Based on the results, we decide on a final campaign mix of 3-10 campaigns that reflect the many conversations we've had and pass our internal criteria.

NJPIRG Student Chapters Campaign Criteria

The campaign fits within our public interest mission. There is a special interest overpowering the voice of the people.

The issue is profound – it impacts students and citizens alike. While all the issues we work on impact our community, some issues are more profound than others. Doubling Pell grants and providing higher education access to millions of students is more profound than providing an airline consumer guide. When discussing our campaign mix each semester, we value profound campaigns.

We have a track record on the issue – we have staff that have expertise on the issue and research that supports our solution. We do take on new issues and hire new staff to back them up, but we value a campaign mix that balances new issues with campaigns we have a history of working on.

The campaign has the support of the public. As a public interest group, we only pick campaigns that the vast majority of the public supports us on.

We have the resources and leverage to make a difference. We pick campaigns that we can actually win – either whole or in part. This means campaigns where we have influence over a decision maker and campaigns that have goals that are feasible in the current political landscape.

We pick campaigns that recruit well. We pick campaigns that students want to work on.

We value campaigns that have varied tactics. We may have some campaigns that only rely on lobbying or only rely on research, but we prefer ones that include lobbying, research, petitioning, social media work, and more. This provides broader educational opportunities for students.

Campaigns that are locally relevant take precedent over campaigns that are not.

Planned Program 2016 - 2019

Action Against Hunger and Homelessness

The U.S. Census reported in September 2015 that over 1 million New Jerseyans live in poverty. According to Legal Services of New Jersey, this is a 50 year record high—40 percent higher than it was before the 2008 economic downturn. National programs to alleviate poverty aren't enough. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) covers less than 11 percent of the cost of what is needed to keep a family out of poverty. At the same time, SNAP is underutilized, with 80 percent of other states doing a better job at distributing those federal funds.

Our program will first and foremost provide direct service to those in need. NJPIRG Student Chapters has partnered with the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness and Student PIRG chapters across the country to host the Annual Hunger Clean-up which raises tens of thousands of dollars to fight poverty. We will continue to provide direct services to shelters and food banks via clothing drives, can food drives, and volunteer hours. In addition to the agencies we've built relationships with over the years like the Neighborhood Center in Camden, we'll work with Rutgers Against Hunger to establish services at Rutgers for students in need.

Finally, in order to alleviate poverty on a larger scale, we'll work to preserve federal funding for programs like Women, Infants, Children (WIC) and SNAP.

New Voters Project

NJPIRG Student Chapters will continue to help register and turn out tens of thousands of students to the polls. With a big presidential race and congressional elections coming up, we'll be at the forefront of educating Rutgers students about the electoral process. In addition to working with faculty, student groups, and administrators in ad hoc coalitions each election, NJPIRG Student chapters will work to establish institutional support for engagement in the electoral process. We'll work with staff and administrators to ensure that the best practices for voter registration and turn out—like registration options during freshman move-in, are standard at all three Rutgers campuses. Finally, we'll continue to test

and implement new registration and get out the vote tactics that emerge through developing technology, and document our work through research and studies.

Environmental Program

We'll continue to make sure that New Jerseyans have access to a healthy and clean environment by advocating for national legislation that reduces air pollution, keeps our waterways pristine, and defends the natural spaces that we enjoy from the Jersey Shore to the Delaware Water Gap. We'll work to keep hazardous fracking from being allowed in the state and fight against measures to make New Jersey a fracking waste dump site. Climate change will be a key issue for this generation, so NJPIRG Student Chapters will continue to engage the community's top minds from faculty members to engineers to work towards clean energy solutions. We will continue to conduct research that documents environmental problems and provides for practical solutions.



In the Fall of 2015, NJPIRG Students brought together elected officials, university experts, and industry leaders to discuss the future of solar power in New Jersey as a part of our campaign to work with cities to get to 20% solar by 2025.



Students publicized the event through class announcements, fliers, and digital organizing. Faculty in departments ranging from engineering to environmental policy offered extra credit for their classes to attend. Over 100 students, faculty, and solar industry leaders shared ideas at the second annual Solar Summit and now students are working with Mayor Cahill of New Brunswick to make 20% solar by 2025 a reality.



Top: Mayor Cahill talking about the solar advances New Brunswick has made. **Middle:** Freshman Environmental Policy major and NJPIRG intern April Nicklaus, Kate Shackford Tri-State Executive Director for Grid Alternatives, and Dr. Robert Kopp Associate Director of the Rutgers Energy Institute. **Bottom:** Dr. Frank Felder of the Center for Energy, Economic, and Environmental Policy at the Bloustein School speaking with coalition partner Doug O'Malley, State Director for Environment New Jersey, and NJPIRG Student Chapters Organizer Julius Moye

Consumer and Higher Education Program

Young people are the most likely targets for identity theft and on average graduate from college with over \$20,00 in debt. Nationally, student loan debt has exceeded both credit card debt and auto-loan debt at over \$1.2 trillion. NJPIRG Student Chapters will continue to release reports and guides that highlight abusive practices and run campaigns to curb them and to educate Rutgers students to make sure they can make the smartest consumer choices. Student leaders will also be at the forefront of the national student movement to protect current grant and loan programs, and work to secure more federal financial aid. We will continue our work to expand Open Education Resource textbooks in order to create a more fair textbooks market.

Internship Program

Our internship program will continue to offer students a wide variety of opportunities to make an impact on public interest issues. Students will continue to have a hands-on experience running campaigns from the bottom up, from public policy research to graphic design and organizing large scale service events. NJPIRG Student Chapters will work to institutionalize our for-credit internship program in more divisions and will keep working with experts in the Rutgers family to offer our interns the best experience.

Internet and Web Design

More and more, the student community can be found interacting virtually. In recent years, NJPIRG Student Chapters has expanded its web presence through an overhaul of our website design and creating more internships that center around internet organizing. From Instagram to Snapchat and of course Facebook, we will continue to engage Rutgers students through social media while developing new ways to organize digitally and working to maximize existing mediums.

Examples of Digital Work



2012-2015

**48 MILLION AMERICANS ARE
FOOD INSECURE, FORCED TO
SOMETIMES WONDER WHERE
THEIR NEXT MEAL WILL COME
FROM.**

**IT'S TIME TO END HUNGER
AND HOMELESSNESS.**



**campaign kick-off
#SUBWAYSABX**

Wed. 9/23 Free Period, Paul Robeson Art Gallery

NJPIRG
STUDENT CHAPTERS

GO solar new jersey!
cities committing to
20% solar by 2025

NJPIRG
STUDENT CHAPTERS

Thank you Rutgers University
Senate for voting to support

Free Open Source Textbooks!

Promoting Public Interest Careers

As we work to increase civic engagement on college campuses, NJPIRG Student Chapters will let students know about opportunities to take on public interest careers after graduation. We will work with career services to co-host events like panel discussions and brown bag lunches, giving students an opportunity to talk to professionals in the public interest. Among Rutgers Alumni who have recently made careers in the public interest movement are Heather Plante, School of Environmental and Biological Sciences '07; Crystal Vassilatos School of Arts and Sciences '11. Loren Whitaker School of Arts and Sciences '14, and Marc Katronetsky, School of Environmental and Biological Sciences '15.

Name Change

In the next three years, our Board of Directors will be exploring the possibility of re-branding NJPIRG Students with a new name. As the world has become noisier and more digital, especially for students, we're exploring names that are more intuitive and better able to convey our mission. We're planning on having an open dialogue with the Rutgers community on our possible name change and look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Planned Program 2016 - 2019

Funding and Structure

Rutgers students formed the New Jersey Public Interest Research Group (NJPIRG) Student Chapters 43 years ago as a non-partisan, non-profit corporation. NJPIRG Student Chapters is controlled by a 34 seat Board of Directors comprised solely of student leaders elected from each chapter with proportional representation based on the students enrolled in each division. The board elects an Executive Committee comprised of five students who work closely with the staff to manage the organization.

The principal responsibilities of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee include: approval of the annual budget, approval of all new issues areas and programs, initiation of litigation, and hiring of the Executive Director. The State Board, in consultation with local chapters, decides on which projects chapters will do.

The Organizing Director, hired by and responsible to the Executive Director, manages NJPIRG Student Chapters on a day to day basis. NJPIRG Student Chapters employs a staff of issue experts, campus program staff, and administrators. The staff brings technical expertise and credentials while providing the stability to undertake large projects.

NJPIRG Student Chapters is affiliated with NJPIRG Law & Policy Center, a tax-exempt research and education foundation, and the NJPIRG Citizen Lobby, a non-student citizen funded research and advocacy group. NJPIRG Student Chapters shares staff with these affiliated organizations in cases where the program relates to the program decisions of the Student Board, often times including the Executive Director, Field Staff, Administrative Director, and some advocacy staff.

Through these affiliations, NJPIRG Student Chapters is able to conduct joint educational, service, and research projects. For example, for 15 years, NJPIRG received an Americorps grant to run the Water Watch program, and recently received a three year grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service to run the Energy Service Corps program. The joint venture allowed for the placement of full time Americorps members with NJPIRG Student Chapters. Other joint projects include public health, federal student aid, affordable textbooks, and other environmental and consumer issues.

NJPIRG Student Chapters does not lobby the state Legislature and is in compliance with Public Law 1995 Chapter 63. Each year NJPIRG Student Chapters is audited by one of the state's leading accounting firms to demonstrate compliance with the law's requirements. NJPIRG Student Chapters provides a copy of this audit to Rutgers University each year.

NJPIRG Student Chapters is funded through a fee, which appears on the term bill. The fee is assessed at Rutgers University where 25% + 1 of the eligible students vote in the affirmative in a campus-wide referendum to fund the program, according to the University Senate's guidelines regarding special student organizations. NJPIRG Student Chapters is proposing that students vote on a waivable fee of \$11.20 per semester during its next scheduled referendum in the fall of 2016.

Legal Addendum

In 1995, the New Jersey state legislature enacted a law that bars student-funded groups at state colleges and universities from lobbying the Legislature or employing legislative agendas. NJPIRG Student Chapters fully complies with this law. In 1995, NJPIRG Student Chapters Board of Directors resolved that:

- NJPIRG Student Chapters would not engage in or fund any state legislative programs.
- NJPIRG Student Chapters would not engage in joint projects that involve taking a position on pending state legislation

To ensure strict compliance with the state law, NJPIRG Student Chapters has established rigorous financial systems that are certified by annual audits. This audit is undertaken by Mercadian Group, an independent accounting firm. This audit is provided to the University at

the end of the fiscal year. NJPIRG Student Chapters maintains its own bank accounts. There is no comingling of funds between NJPIRG Student Chapters and any other corporation.

NJPIRG Student Chapters Board of Directors has further defined the corporation as a discrete non-profit corporation, funded and directed by Rutgers University students by:

- Changing the name of the Public Interest Research group of New Jersey to NJPIRG Student Chapters
- Moving the corporate headquarters from Trenton to New Brunswick
- Creating NJPIRG Student Chapters letterhead and business cards
- Identifying NJPIRG Student Chapters projects as such in all media releases.

No members of the NJPIRG Student Chapters Board of Directors sit on the Board of Directors of the NJPIRG Citizen Lobby and the Law and Policy Center. NJPIRG Citizen Lobby and the Law and Policy Center have separate missions and Governing boards.



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NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08901
NEW JERSEY PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH
GROUP STUDENT CHAPTERS
NJPIRGSTUDENTS.ORG