

# Grants to Green

IMPROVING *the*  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
SUSTAINABILITY  
*of* NONPROFITS





“MANY BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS FEAR IT’S TOO COSTLY TO ADOPT GREEN PRACTICES. TODAY MORE THAN EVER, EVERY DOLLAR COUNTS FOR NONPROFITS, MANY OF WHOM ARE STRUGGLING TO OPERATE IN THESE TOUGH TIMES. BY MAKING SIMPLE CHANGES SUCH AS ADJUSTING TEMPERATURE SETTINGS, CLEARING BLOCKED VENTS AND TURNING OFF LIGHTS, COMPUTERS AND OTHER DEVICES, THESE NONPROFITS HAVE SAVED VALUABLE DOLLARS.”

- Alicia Philipp, president  
The Community Foundation  
for Greater Atlanta

A greater awareness of environmental issues and growing energy costs has virtually every industry looking to adopt eco-friendly practices into their work. The nonprofit sector is no exception. Going green is helping organizations reduce their environmental impact and at the same time improve their bottom line.

### OVERVIEW of the INITIATIVE

A new community initiative, Grants to Green, has helped dozens of nonprofits in the Atlanta region reduce their environmental impact while increasing the cost-efficiency of their operations. Grants to Green seeks to transform the nonprofit sector by encouraging nonprofits to build “green.” A green or environmentally sustainable building is:

*A building, which in its design, construction and operation, makes a minimal draw on non-renewable resources and gives high priority to respecting the physical environment.*

Through a partnership with The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, The Kendeda Fund and Southface, Grants to Green gives nonprofits the opportunity to renovate or build healthier work places that are environmentally efficient. Nonprofits in the 23-county region of metro Atlanta can apply for either:

**Assessment Awards** - non-cash services valued at \$4,000 to assess renovation and expansion projects for an existing or new building or

**Implementation Grants** - up to \$50,000 to support the nonprofit in its efforts to carry out specific recommendations.

For those nonprofits that receive Assessment Awards, environmental experts and engineers conduct assessments of existing or planned facility improvement and recommend opportunities to achieve environmentally friendly operations, particularly related to energy and water use. Once an assessment has been completed, the nonprofit is eligible to apply for Implementation funding up to \$50,000 with a required financial match. Implementation funds can be used to support the capital costs associated with the renovation of existing structures as well as development of new green construction, including labor costs.

### COMPONENTS of the INITIATIVE

Grants to Green’s vision is that the Atlanta region is a national leader in the sustainability movement and is recognized for its green nonprofit sector. It accomplishes this through:

- Grantmaking,
- Knowledge sharing,
- Leadership opportunities, and
- Evaluation.

### GREEN CHAMPIONS

One way the initiative makes leadership opportunities available to nonprofits is through Green Champions. Green Champions are volunteers or organization staff responsible for shepherding the green project from conception to completion. Responsibilities include:

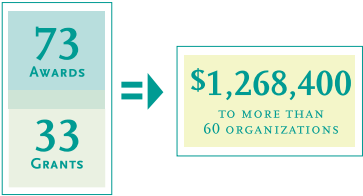
- Entering and tracking utility information into the online tracking system
- Participating in Green Champion convenings
- Creating press releases and publishing articles and newsletters about the organization’s green practices
- Posting the Grants to Green web seal on the organization’s website and linking it with a page describing the organization’s green practices
- Using the organization’s sphere of influence to inspire others to build green (e.g. giving tours of their facility or serving on panels related to environmental sustainability)
- Advancing public will and policy

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To include a broad perspective in this work, Grants to Green has created an Advisory Committee of members including representatives from academia, community development corporations, donors, foundations, nonprofits, real estate specialists and related corporate entities. The committee provides consultation, input and perspective on the Grants to Green progress.

PROGRESS to DATE

To date, Grants to Green has awarded 73 Assessment Awards and 33 Implementation Grants, totaling \$1,268,400, to more than 60 metro Atlanta organizations.



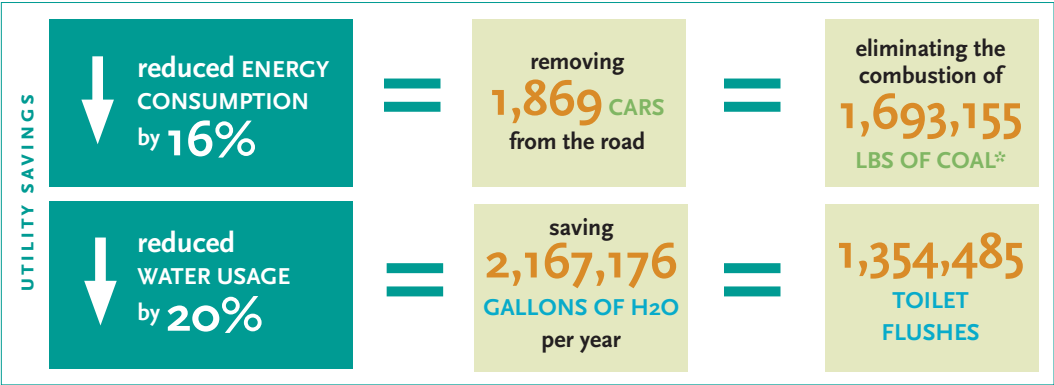
EVALUATION

To measure the impact of Grants to Green, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected from grantees prior to and upon receipt of the Assessment Award or Implementation Grant, throughout the grant process and at the end of the grant cycle or upon

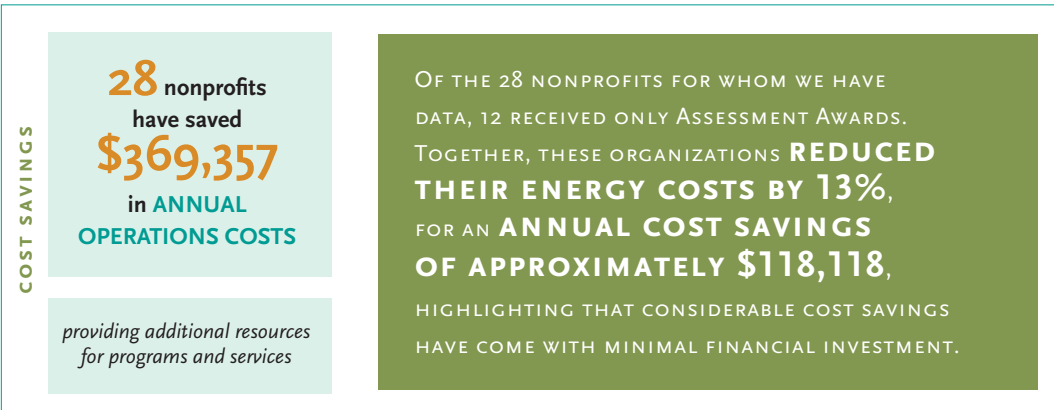
completion of the Implementation projects. These data are analyzed both on an individual grantee and an Initiative level to assess changes in energy and water usage, utility costs and knowledge, practices and policies related to environmental sustainability.

UTILITY AND COST SAVINGS

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2008, GRANTS TO GREEN HAS HELPED NUMEROUS NONPROFITS REDUCE THEIR ENERGY AND WATER CONSUMPTION AND THEIR OPERATING COSTS. SPECIFICALLY, THE 28 ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION NONPROFITS FOR WHICH WE HAVE PRELIMINARY DATA HAVE:



\* known for its danger to environmental and human health



CHANGE IN KNOWLEDGE, POLICIES & PRACTICES

In addition to generating significant energy and cost savings, another aspect of Grants to Green is to help increase a nonprofit's knowledge and adoption of various green policies and practices. Specifically, 43 grantees report that:

- ➔ Knowledge of environmental sustainability rose from average to very knowledgeable.
- ➔ The percentage of organizations that had no green policies in place prior to Grants to Green decreased from 23% to 2%.
- ➔ The percentage of those that reported having a formal energy monitoring policy (e.g. tracking and sharing utility data) in place increased by 37%.
- ➔ The percentage of nonprofits that reported employing energy conservation practices — turning off lights and computers when not in use — increased by 47%.

These findings suggest that even making small changes can make a real difference.

*Grants to Green strives to work with organizations serving diverse community needs and serving different populations. The following five organizations demonstrate significant energy and cost savings as well as a dedicated commitment to furthering environmental sustainability, both at their organizations and in the communities they serve.*

## The Woodruff Arts Center

**“MAKING SMALL CHANGES CAN RESULT IN HUGE SAVINGS. DO WHAT YOU CAN TO REDUCE YOUR ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND THE SAVINGS WILL FOLLOW.”**

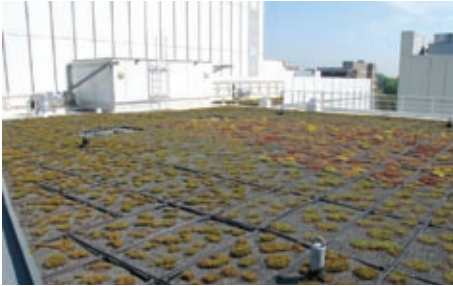
*Michael Flood,  
VP of facilities and patron experience*

With the support of Grants to Green, The Woodruff recently upgraded the lighting in its parking garage and re-commissioned its highly inefficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) unit at its off-campus Art Conservation Lab. These steps alone resulted in a **51%** reduction in energy use and more than **\$142,000** of savings in annual operating costs.

For a facility with over a million square footage of space and an annual operating budget of \$120,000,000 per year, these savings are significant. The Woodruff has been able to divert these savings to its programs, which serve on average 500,000 schoolchildren annually. Saving energy dollars helps The Woodruff sustain its focus on its core mission of arts and education.

Beyond these savings, Grants to Green inspired The Woodruff to encourage others to go green. The organization developed an interactive “Green Dashboard” available in the lobby of the Alliance Theatre and on their website. This dashboard allows patrons, including the hundreds of schoolchildren

WORKING WITH THIS MOTTO IN MIND, THE WOODRUFF ARTS CENTER, THE PREMIER VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATION IN THE SOUTHEAST, HAS DEMONSTRATED AN OVERALL SAVINGS OF **\$343,000** IN ENERGY COSTS AND A **20** PERCENT REDUCTION IN ITS CARBON FOOTPRINT FROM THE GREEN INITIATIVES IT’S IMPLEMENTED SINCE 2007.



THE WOODRUFF'S GREENGRID ROOF SYSTEM

who visit The Woodruff every day, to see how taking small steps can make a big difference.

The organization’s vice president of facilities and patron experience, Michael Flood, credits Grants to Green with helping The Woodruff successfully reduce its energy consumption.

“If we can show that we can be environmentally sustainable and reduce our carbon footprint in the arts and nonprofit setting, then others will see it’s possible,” said Flood.



## CARE USA

“THE ENERGY AUDIT PROVIDED THE DATA WE NEEDED TO SHOW THAT IMPROVING OUR FACILITY’S EFFICIENCY IS WORTH THE INVESTMENT.”

— Katy Love, project officer for the Emergency Capacity Building Project



Through a Grants to Green Assessment Award, CARE identified a number of ways to improve the building’s efficiency. After reviewing the recommendations, CARE realized that several could be implemented in-house at little or no cost by its facilities team. For example,

ONE OF THE WORLD’S LARGEST, PRIVATE HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS, CARE’S MISSION IS TO SERVE INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN THE POOREST COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD. GLOBALLY, CARE IS COMMITTED TO REDUCING ITS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND ADDRESSING THE EFFECTS OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE. RECENTLY THE BOARD AND STAFF OF CARE USA RECOGNIZED THE NEED TO LOOK INTERNALLY AND IDENTIFY WAYS IN WHICH THEY COULD ALSO MINIMIZE THEIR OWN CARBON FOOTPRINT IN THEIR HEADQUARTERS HERE AT HOME.

by simply adjusting the economizer operator and thereby eliminating the simultaneous heating and cooling, CARE was able to reduce its energy use by **13.5%** and save **\$48,237** in annual operations costs.

Despite not implementing all 15 of the recommendations, CARE has already nearly achieved the projected annual cost savings. CARE has used these savings to help offset its recent programmatic budget cuts and to persuade executive management to continue to invest in green building upgrades.

“Once we had the official recommendations and the support of our building services team, the green initiatives took off and have received serious attention at an institutional level,” said Luis Ortiz-Echevarria, senior program officer for sexual and reproductive health.

## Elachee Nature Center

“WE ARE MORE AWARE OF MAKING GREEN CHOICES. EVEN THOUGH WE ARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATION, IT WASN’T UNTIL WE GOT THE EXPERTISE TO COME IN AND ASSESS OUR FACILITY THAT WE COULD PINPOINT THE ISSUES AND HAVE A STRATEGY AND PLAN FOR ACTION.”

— Andrea Timpone, chief executive officer

ONE OF THE PREMIER ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTERS IN GEORGIA, ELACHEE NATURE CENTER IS DEDICATED TO PRESERVING AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND TO BUILDING ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY FOR GEORGIANS THROUGH QUALITY EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES, MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS, SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC.



While Elachee has always done its part to preserve the land, the organization’s staff was not aware of the tremendous opportunities available for reducing their environmental impact through making building upgrades. With the support of both an Assessment Award and an Implementation Grant, Elachee has replaced

an ailing heating and air conditioning unit, installed programmable thermostats in their Education Center, upgraded lighting and began to educate staff about ways to improve efficiency.

After implementing only these few changes, Elachee demonstrated a **21%** savings in energy use for an annual savings of just over **\$6,000**. Elachee has diverted these savings to its programs, allowing more children to learn about environmental preservation.

According to chief executive officer Andrea Timpone, the benefit of Grants to Green extends well beyond the energy and cost savings.

“The green improvements here at Elachee are so important, not only for the financial savings, but more-so for the opportunity to show our students and visitors practical measures that can be taken to make a big difference. Reducing our energy and water consumption are the most responsible actions we can take for lessening our environmental impact.”

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# Marcus Jewish Community Center

“EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSERVATION CAN MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT, TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE.”

- Garrett Van de Grift, president

GUIDED BY THE PRINCIPLE OF “TIKKUN OLAM” – LITERALLY “WORLD REPAIR” – THE MARCUS JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF ATLANTA (MJCCA) HAS PROVIDED A VARIETY OF EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES SINCE 1910. THE MJCCA DEMONSTRATES A DESIRE TO LEAVE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE AND LEAD BY EXAMPLE IN THE GREATER NONPROFIT COMMUNITY.



These greening efforts have yielded a **19.5%** reduction in energy and water usage and an annual savings of nearly **\$75,000** (more than 1.5 times the projected savings).

As an organization that relies heavily on donor support, the efficient management of these funds is paramount. The savings achieved from implementing audit

recommendations and other low cost improvements have been applied to programmatic uses. Further, staff and leadership have the opportunity to teach thousands of children and teens the benefits of sustainability and good stewardship of energy resources.

The MJCCA's chief executive officer, Howard Hyman, appreciates being able to apply lessons learned.

“The Grants to Green program is a wonderful opportunity for nonprofits like the MJCCA to not only reduce negative effects on the environment, but also to reduce our utility expenses so we can focus more of our resources on our programs and services.”

A building assessment through the Grants to Green program has allowed the organization to identify numerous savings opportunities at its Zaban Blank building, such as pool modifications, lighting upgrades and the installation of water saving features (e.g. low flow faucets and shower heads). Despite not having received funding, the MJCCA implemented some of these recommendations and also adjusted the control of the “set points” for each of its HVAC systems, which significantly reduced cooling costs.

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# Carroll Tomorrow

“IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS AND ENGAGE THEM IN THE PROCESS.”

- Daniel Jackson, president

CARROLL COUNTY IS KNOWN FOR ITS OLD SOUTH CHARM AND “NEW SOUTH” VISION. WORKING IN HARMONY, THE CARROLL COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE CHAMBER'S PARTNER, CARROLL TOMORROW, HAVE USHERED THIS WEST GEORGIA COMMUNITY INTO THE 21ST CENTURY. CARROLL TOMORROW IS A NONPROFIT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION FOCUSING ON QUALITY OF LIFE, BOTH IN THE WORKPLACE AND IN THE COMMUNITY. WITH OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS, CARROLL TOMORROW HAS MAINTAINED RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING PROGRAMS FOR MANY YEARS.



reduction in energy use for an annual savings of nearly **\$4,800**.

The success of Carroll Tomorrow has long been attributed to local business owners and the community at large. Jackson notes that identifying partners and stakeholders in the sustainability concept is key. The organization's board also embraced the philosophy of environmental stewardship early in the process, which was critical to employee participation in new environmental initiatives.

President Daniel Jackson appreciates the opportunities that Grants to Green has provided.

“The grant allows organizations to make upgrades which otherwise might not be feasible, especially for nonprofits which are strapped for resources.”

Grants to Green funding enabled the organization to retrofit existing lighting with more efficient models, upgrade an existing HVAC unit, reprogram thermostats, repair duct boots, apply film to windows and skylights and update exit signs to LED lamps. Since completing these projects, Carroll Tomorrow has achieved a **32%**



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## IMPLICATIONS

As these five stories illustrate, Grants to Green not only reduces organizations' environmental impact, but also their operating costs, thereby allowing nonprofits to divert these savings to their programs and those in need. Beyond the cost savings, the receipt of the assessment and implementation grants spurs organizations to adopt greener practices and policies and to share their successes with their staff, clients, Boards, partners and communities they serve. Once aware of the environmental impact and the tremendous savings they can achieve, organizations desire to continue building green and adopting environmentally friendly practices despite limited funds. By sharing their passion and stories with others, several other nonprofits have been inspired to build green and apply for Grants to Green funding to aid with these efforts.

Thus, what began as an initiative to help nonprofits gain expertise and support in building healthier and environmentally sustainable buildings has grown into a larger movement of individuals and organizations deeply committed to reducing their environmental footprint and educating others about the benefits of "going green."

## PARTNERS

### THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR GREATER ATLANTA

The Community Foundation connects people to the issues and organizations making a difference in the Atlanta region in four key ways:

#### 1. Engage Philanthropists

We provide personalized philanthropic advice to individuals and families interested in making a long-term impact with their giving.

#### 2. Strengthen the Region's Nonprofits

We support nonprofits through grants and guidance, strengthening their ability to make an impact on critical issues in our region.

#### 3. Advance Public Will

We lead and participate in collaborative efforts to provide solutions to community problems, often partnering with other funders, nonprofits and individual donors.

#### 4. Practice Organizational Excellence

We are a trusted steward of a long-term charitable resource for our 23-county region, and we value learning, leadership and transparency.

*By connecting donors, nonprofits and community leaders, The Community Foundation is improving communities in the 23-county Atlanta region through philanthropy. For more information visit [www.cfgreateratlanta.org](http://www.cfgreateratlanta.org).*

### SOUTHFACE

For more than 30 years, Southface has promoted comfortable energy-, water- and resource-efficient homes, workplaces and communities throughout the Southeast. Housed in an award-winning Eco-Office, a building that uses 84% less water and 53% less energy than comparably sized conventional commercial facilities, Southface offers innovative education programs, hands-on technical assistance, advocacy and research.

Southface believes the marketplace is the greatest force for environmental change and is proud to partner extensively with business, government and community leaders to deliver programs and services that support environmentally sound building practices.

For more information visit [www.southface.org](http://www.southface.org).

### KENDED A

Kendeda is a valued donor of The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta and an engaged partner in Grants to Green.

