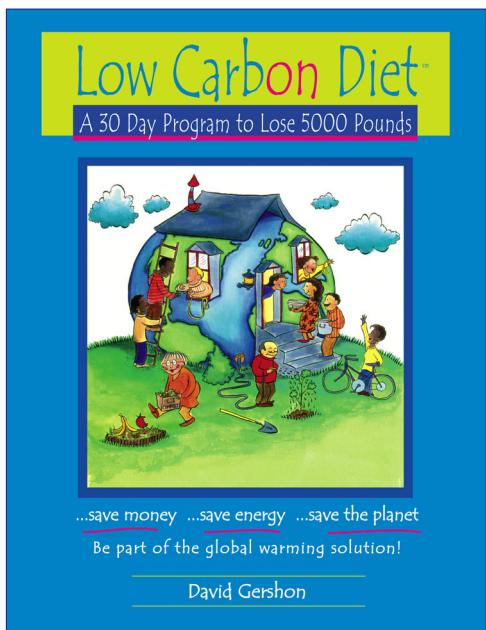


# COOL COMMUNITY CORPS

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO REDUCE THEIR CARBON FOOTPRINT



The Cool Community Corps is an opportunity for students to have a real and measurable impact on global warming while gaining valuable leadership and community organizing skills. Employing a scalable, time-tested community behavior change strategy and proven carbon-reduction program, it provides students the tools and support to become a powerful force for change on a local level.

## A Defining Moment

No challenge that humanity has faced could have prepared us to meet the climate crisis. Arresting global warming before it's too late has emerged as nothing less than the central organizing project for our civilization.

As the scientific data pours in, it is becoming clear that we have less time than we thought to bring about a reduction in our carbon emissions. According to

Rajendra Pachauri, head of the International Panel on Climate Change, scientists have recorded "much stronger trends in climate change" than anticipated. "What we do in the next two to three years will determine our future. This is the defining moment."

## An Immediate Solution

In the face of this crisis, people around the world are rallying like never before to find real solutions. But the large-scale solutions many are pinning hope upon—legislating carbon caps, renewable energy and new technologies—will take a long time to scale up. Much more time than scientists tell us we have.

There is, however, one solution that has the potential to bring about significant large-scale carbon reductions in the short term: *household energy conservation*. Over half of America's carbon footprint is created by our individual lifestyle choices. America as a quarter of the planet's footprint is the linchpin for a global solution. If enough of us take the simple actions required to reduce our own emissions, it will buy needed time to plan and implement longer-term systemic solutions. It will also help demonstrate to the world that America is doing its part.

## A Proven Strategy for Change

The tools are already in place to help America's communities empower citizens to reduce their carbon footprint. Empowerment Institute has developed, through 25 years of research, a proven behavior change and community empowerment methodology. It has helped over 250,000 people reduce their environmental footprint by 25% and trained dozens of communities to implement this methodology.

This methodology has now been applied to the issue of global warming. It is built around the acclaimed *Low Carbon Diet: A 30 Day Program to Lose 5,000 Pounds* and the Cool Community Campaign. The program provides households simple tools to measure and reduce their carbon

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footprint with the support of a small group called an EcoTeam. Participating households on average reduce their carbon footprint by 20%. The Cool Community Campaign is designed to scale up this program to achieve a 20% reduction of the community's residential carbon footprint within 2 to 3 years. The residential footprint is 50% to 90% of a community's overall carbon footprint.

### How Cool Community Corps Works

The Cool Community Corps provides students the tools and strategies to implement a Cool Community Campaign. They use these tools to empower community groups, local businesses, city government, and individual citizens to start EcoTeams who go through the *Low Carbon Diet* carbon-reduction program. They can do this as a student-driven initiative or as part of an already existing campaign, if one exists.

This Cool Community Corps provides students the opportunity to build and hone valuable leadership, empowerment and community organizing skills while contributing to the most critical issue facing humanity's future.

This can either be done as a voluntary effort or as part of a service-learning program where students receive credit. Students gear their efforts toward achieving the following concrete carbon reduction goals:

- **Silver Level:** Start 5 EcoTeams per participating student or 2-person team. (8 households per team x 5 teams = 40 households x 5,000 pounds = 200,000 pounds per year)
- **Gold Level:** Start 10 EcoTeams per participating student or 2-person team. (8 households per team x 10 teams = 80 households x 5,000 pounds = 400,000 pounds per year)
- **Platinum Level:** Start 25 or more EcoTeams per participating student or 2-person team. (8 households per team x 25 teams = 200 households x 5,000 pounds = 1,000,000 pounds per year)

### Institution Benefits and Responsibilities

Participating in the Cool Community Corps is a powerful way for the nearly 500 colleges and universities that have signed the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment to fulfill the educational and community engagement aspects of the commitment. It provides a venue to offer a valuable service to the local community and helps foster positive 'town-gown' relationships. It also enables a college or university to be on the cutting edge of positive concrete action to abate global warming.

The primary commitment is to manage the students. This could include a faculty member who oversees a service learning program, a sustainability coordinator, or other similar position.

### For More Information

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