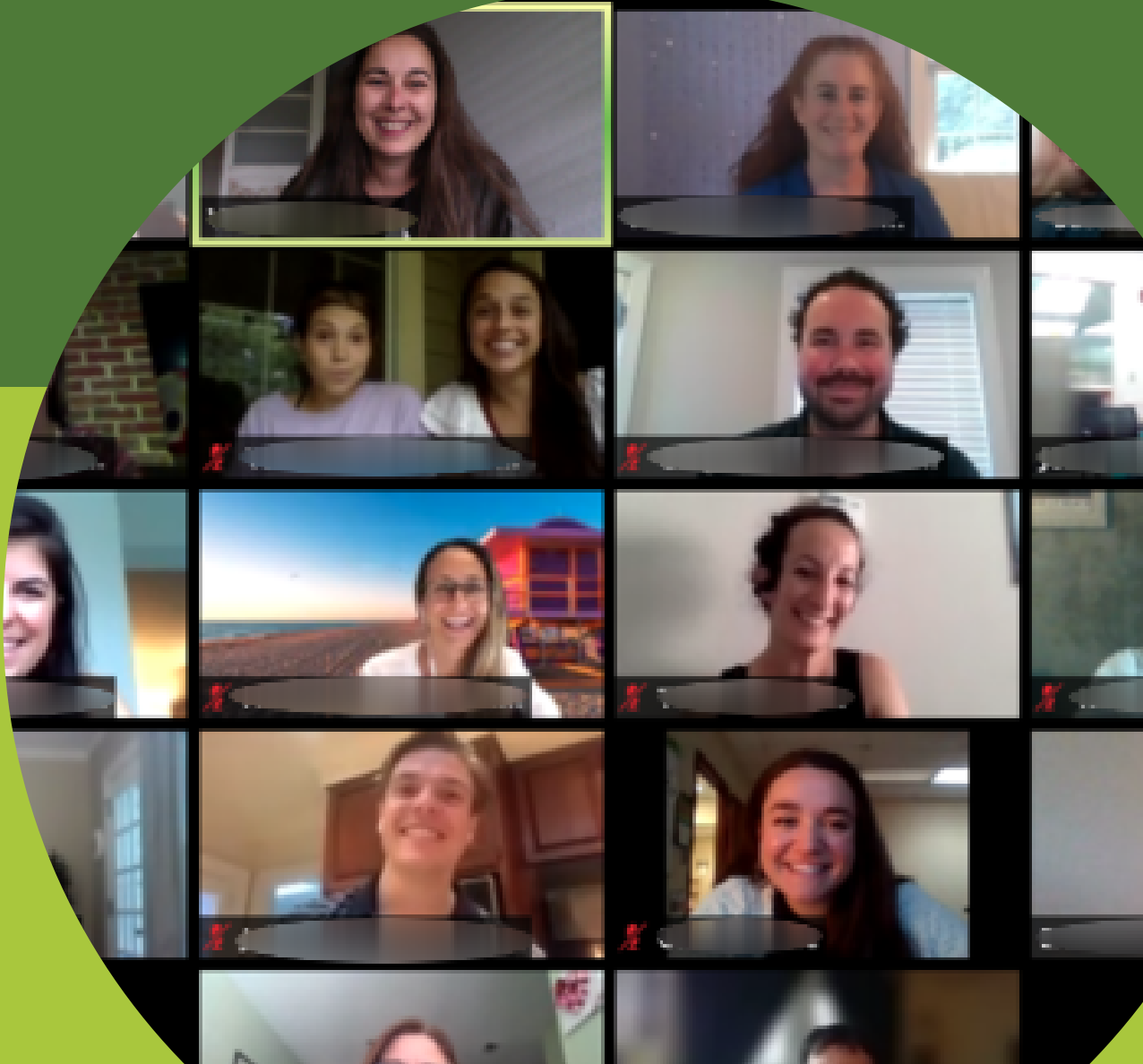


SSDN

2021 ANNUAL REPORT
AND 2022 OUTLOOK

SOUTHEAST SUSTAINABILITY
DIRECTORS NETWORK



2021 marked a year where we began to recover. Despite fits and starts, the world started to re-emerge, to heal, and to seek out the connections that were lost in 2020. As a social impact network, rooted in authentic relationships and personal connections, SSDN followed a similar path by demonstrating resilience and supporting our members and partners in ways that were positive, optimistic, and structured. In a world that can feel off-kilter, volatile, and hopeless, SSDN strives to remain stable, supportive, and connected.

Despite the challenges of 2021, SSDN committed to its core goals, and the network thrived as SSDN experienced significant growth, its members made leaps in their knowledge and capacity, and their work impacted their communities and the world around them.

Here's how:

Membership

SSDN's membership hit three major milestones:

- We grew to **over 100** local governments for the first time ever. Nearly 200 individuals participate in SSDN;
- We welcomed our first **tribal government member**, Seminole Tribe of Florida;
- We merged with the Virginia Energy & Sustainability Professionals Network (VESPN), expanding to our tenth state and adding eighteen new members from Virginia.

Peer Learning

SSDN's peer learning workgroups engaged 60 members, and more than 90 participants. We reached **15 new communities**, kickstarting their work in the field. Our member priorities in 2021 were:

- Transportation Electrification
- Natural Resource Protection and Enhancement
- Just Economic Transitions
- Greening Government Operations
- Developing Sustainability and Resilience Plans, and;
- Supporting Distressed Communities.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In 2021, SSDN sharpened its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. We integrated equity into all of our peer learning activities. We awarded six local government/community partnerships with our new Community Collaboration Catalyst microgrants to support equitable community engagement. We added equity resources to our website to support individual member learning, and we are currently exploring partnerships to expand our learning resources on our platform.

Southeast Sustainable Recovery Center

We planned and launched a transformational new program, the Southeast Sustainable Recovery Center, to seize the moment of federal leadership on climate. This program assists members seeking to gain access to federal funding and technical assistance opportunities, build strategic relationships, and build member capacity for long-term success. Since September, the SSRC engaged with members over 100 times to discuss the millions of federal grant dollars coming to communities. Many of these local governments expressed challenges with navigating American Rescue Plan, infrastructure, and other federal funding opportunities, and see SSDN as a critical support mechanism for their efforts.

Policy Program

We strengthened our Policy Program by supporting 75% of our members region-wide with capacity building, action, and collaboration. Through partnerships, we supported member engagement on state policy actions in regulatory proceedings, educated members on state legislation that impacts their work, supported intervention in integrated resource plans, engaged in utility transportation electrification stakeholder processes, and more. We strengthened our partnerships with nearly 30 organizations to strategically work together on impact and actions.

Organizational Capacity

SSDN created an operating reserve, re-launched our sponsorship program, expanded the funding base, and hired new staff. To support all of this work, we expanded our staff to five. Meg and Vanessa welcomed Riyza Jose Morales as Network Coordinator, Michael Dexter as Southeast Sustainable Recovery Center Manager, and Ann Livingston as Policy Director.



Meg Jamison
Executive Director



Vanessa King
Network Manager



Ann Livingston
Policy Director

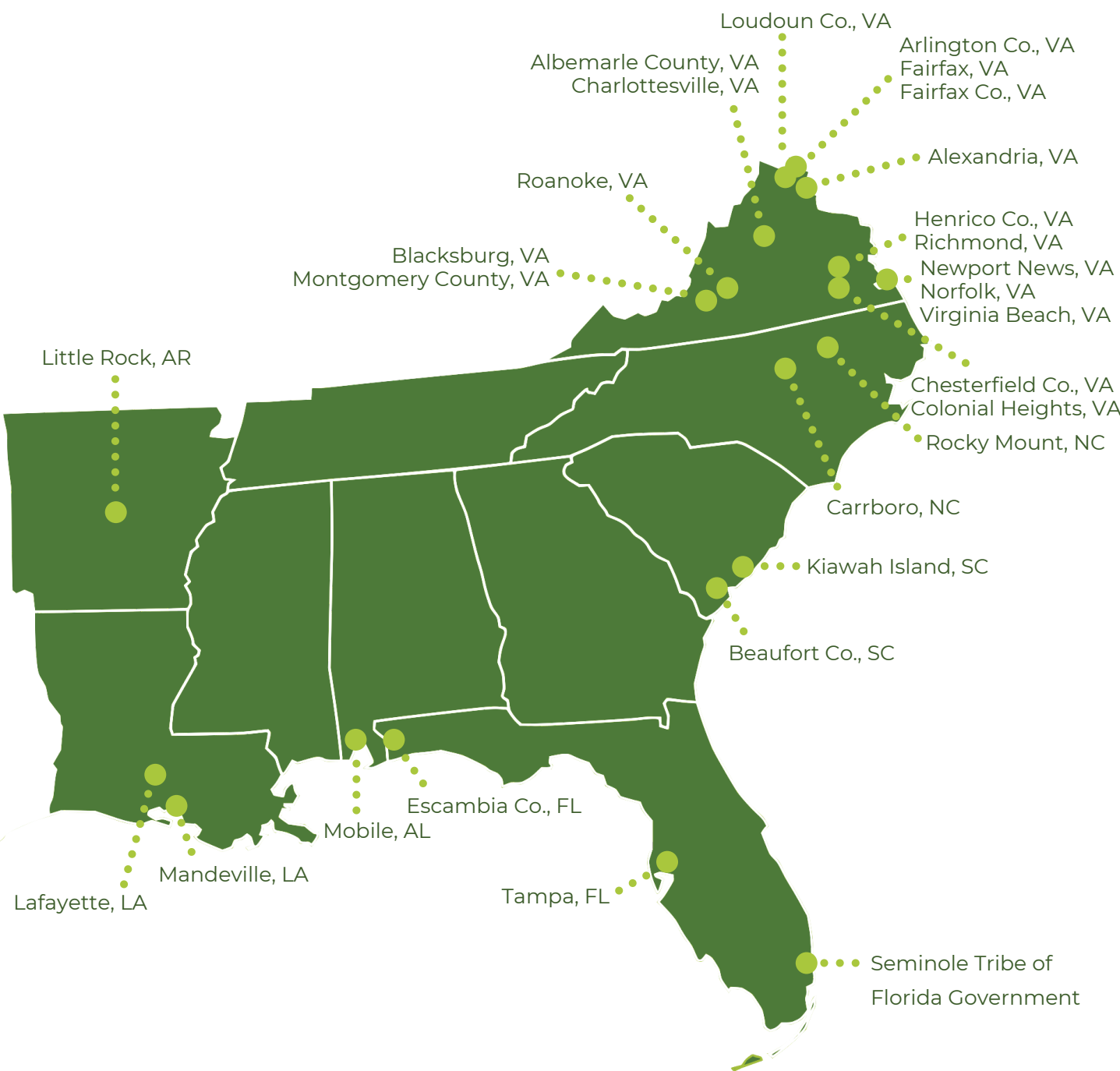


Riyza Jose Morales
Network Coordinator



Michael Dexter
SSRC Manager

SSDN'S NEW MEMBERS IN 2021



2022

In 2022, SSDN will update our strategic plan, host our first face-to-face annual meeting since 2019, deepen our capacity building for our members, and tirelessly support the growth of local government climate action in the Southeast.

We are incredibly excited to connect face-to-face with our growing network of members. We thank you and all of our partners for your ongoing support and your commitment to the work of SSDN. We look forward to staying in touch and to “seeing” you both in-person and virtually.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meg Jamison". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Meg Jamison
Executive Director

Acknowledgements:

SSDN's work would not be possible without the support of our members, Energy Foundation, The Kendeda Fund, The Kresge Foundation, The Merck Family Fund, Summit Foundation, and Z Smith Reynolds Foundation); to our fiscal sponsor, The Urban Sustainability Directors Network; and to our 2021 Steering Committee.