

ANTHENA GORE

Social-Environmental Strategist & Systems Leader

Chicago, IL | [LinkedIn](#)

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Strategic leader with 15 years at the intersection of environmental justice, community development, and design research. Known for translating complex community insights into policy action and equitable program design — from federal grantmaking portfolios to Senate testimony to citywide ordinance change. Brings a rare combination of hands-on facilitation, systems thinking, and operational rigor to building durable, people-centered solutions. Deeply rooted in Midwest ecosystems, with a national track record of convening diverse stakeholders and driving measurable impact.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Design Research & Strategy · Federal Grants & Compliance · Participatory Grantmaking · Program Design · Project Management · Networks & Ecosystems · Facilitation · Sustainability & Climate Equity

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Program Director — Urban Outreach, Great Lakes Thriving Communities Grantmaking Midwest Environmental Justice Network

August 2024 – Present | Federal — EPA Region 5 (Midwest)

- Surpassed regional equity targets by directing a five-month outreach campaign that exceeded the 40% urban dollar-allocation goal across a six-state EPA Region 5 territory.
- Steward a \$2.8M grantee portfolio, ensuring federal compliance through quarterly reporting, budget review, and ongoing technical assistance.
- Authored an internal movement-building analysis for executive leadership, synthesizing landscape research into a forward-looking capacity-building strategy for Midwest environmental justice groups.
- Advise grantees on compliance, partnership strategy, RFPs, and power dynamics to support project success and timely completion.

Design Research Lead / Senior Design Researcher

Greater Good Studio

October 2022 – August 2024 | National

- Evaluated \$5.26M in ARPA-funded creative placemaking investments across 47 Chicago grantees, producing the Together We Heal impact report linking arts programming to COVID-19 community recovery.
- Shaped energy assistance policy for thousands of low-income Washington households by translating community research into actionable program prototypes for the Washington Dept. of Commerce.
- Advised equitable grantmaking reform for the Episcopal Health Foundation's 81-county service area, recommending relational interventions grounded in participatory research.

Strategist, Project Manager, Project Coordinator

Elevate Energy

June 2015 – September 2022 | Chicago / State of Illinois

Strategist, Water Programs (2021–2022)

- Testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works on lead service line replacement and workforce equity — influencing national policy discourse at the federal level.
- Appointed to the Illinois EPA Lead Service Line Replacement Advisory Board; delivered equity-centered technical recommendations for statewide water infrastructure improvements.

- Drove the City of Chicago Water Affordability Analysis from community engagement through final publication, directly informing the Utility Billing Relief Program and a citywide ordinance update.

Project Manager, Community Planning (2020–2021)

- Contributed to America’s Zero Carbon Action Plan (UN SDSN), a comprehensive federal framework for achieving a carbon-neutral U.S. economy by 2050.
- Facilitated the Finance and Technical Assistance sub-group for the City of Chicago Building Decarbonization Working Group; led equity integration and co-edited the city’s final policy recommendations report.
- Served as Buildings and Energy lead for Cincinnati, Columbus, and Indianapolis through the Bloomberg Philanthropies American Cities Climate Challenge, aligning local climate action with equity principles.

Project Coordinator, Public Sector Programs (2017–2020)

- Managed the ComEd Distressed Communities program, expanding energy efficiency access across 30 under-resourced communities in northern Illinois — recognized in an ACEEE national innovation case study.
- Supported strategic planning and stakeholder engagement for the Park Forest Climate Action & Resilience Plan and the Iowa City Climate Action & Adaptation Plan.

EDUCATION

- Bachelor of Science in Communications, Economics Minor — Bradley University
- Business Management Certificate (Mini-MBA) — Loyola University Quinlan School of Business
- Public Interest Design Post-Professional Certificate — Archeworks

BOARDS & COMMITTEES

- 2025- Present: Treasurer & Founding Member, Indiana-Chicago Chapter, International Assn. of Facilitators
- 2021–2024: Wisdom Council, Aya Initiative (Black-led environment program), Prince Charitable Trust
- 2021–2023: Board Member, Black Oaks Center for Sustainable and Renewable Living
- 2019–2022: Member, Environmental Justice Self-Designation Committee, Illinois Solar for All
- 2016–2018: Strategy Lead & Founding Advisory Council Member, Environmentalists of Color Network
- 2017: Features Scout, One Earth: People of Color Protecting Our Planet (Orca Books)

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP & SELECT PUBLICATIONS

- 2023: Presenter, “Using Design to Uplift Community in Citywide Decarbonization Efforts” — Association for Community Design National Conference
- 2022: Co-Editor, “Developing an Equitable Building Decarbonization Strategy for Chicago” — City of Chicago Mayor’s Office and Office of Sustainability
- 2022: Reviewer & Panelist, IIT Institute of Design Sustainable Solutions Workshop: Reimagining the Resident/Government Relationship
- 2021: Contributor, Designing Futures for Conservation — Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies / U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- 2020–2022: Leadership Team & Historical Reckoning Committee, Metropolitan Planning Council / We Will Chicago Citywide Plan
- 2017–2018: Design research and creative direction, “Common Ground” installation — Chicago Architecture Biennial
- 2017: Speaker & Panelist, Chicago Community Climate Forum, community-led introductory event to the North American Climate Summit