



## People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources

### **PODER's Young Scholars for Justice Leadership Development Program**

PODER has a long history of providing leadership and empowerment programming to youth, focusing on global and local environmental, social, and economic justice issues. Over many years PODER's Young Scholars for Justice Leadership Development Program (YSJ) has graduated youth who have gone on to distinguished careers in public service, including members of the city council, Austin Independent School District Leadership, community organizers, and nonprofit leaders.

PODER's experience in community-based youth leadership programming provides education, service learning, and wellness programming that leverages the expertise to positive impact youth in the community. The Young Scholars for Justice Program (YSJ) provides linguistically and culturally relevant programming that relies on the strengths and assets of the community. The program is overseen by staff with considerable experience in youth development and supported by college interns with experience in program design for diverse populations. In addition, the program itself is largely driven by the interests and needs of the enrolled youth, which will assist in ensuring that programming not only effectively engages youth, but also reflects the culture of youth.

The YSJ is specifically designed to assist youth ages 14-18 residing in East Austin. The YSJ program, is held during an intensive half day session, Monday through Thursday, for five (5) weeks in the summer, builds the emotional, behavioral, and social needs of youth while providing opportunities for the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that build employable skills. Participants work collaboratively with staff to determine scope and sequence of activities with consideration to the goals of the program, building and extending communication, teamwork, decision-making, and conflict resolution skills. All YSJ participants received a weekly stipend of \$50.