



LINK TO IMAGES

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SHORT DESCRIPTION

Engage, Connect, Protect highlights the need to recognize the work of environmental champions in communities of color, and create opportunities for business, educators, and policymakers to engage with diverse youth as the next generation of environmental stewards through culturally relevant learning and career opportunities.

Engage, Connect, Protect
Empowering Diverse Youth as
Environmental Leaders

Angelou Ezeilo with Nick Chiles
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CONTACT INFORMATION

WEBSITE:

<http://www.angelouezeilo.com/>

EMAIL:

angelou@angelouezeilo.com

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MAIN DESCRIPTION

Building environmental strength through a diversity of youth

While concern about the state of our land, air, and water continues to grow, there is widespread belief that environmental issues are primarily of interest to wealthy white communities. *Engage, Connect, Protect* explodes this myth, revealing the deep and abiding interest that African American, Latino, and Native American communities – many of whom live in degraded and polluted parts of the country – have in our collective environment.

Part eye-opening critique of the cultural divide in environmentalism, part biography of a leading social entrepreneur, and part practical toolkit for engaging diverse youth, *Engage, Connect, Protect* covers:

- Why communities of color are largely unrecognized in the environmental movement
- Bridging the cultural divide and activating a new generation of environmental stewards
- A curriculum for engaging diverse youth and young adults through culturally appropriate methods and activities
- A resource guide for connecting mainstream America to organizations working with diverse youth within environmental projects, training, and employment.

Engage, Connect, Protect is a wake-up call for businesses, activists, educators, and policymakers to recognize the work of grassroots activists in diverse communities and create opportunities for engaging with diverse youth as the next generation of environmental stewards.

AUTHORS' BIO

ANGELOU EZEILO is founder and CEO of the Greening Youth Foundation. A leading social entrepreneur, she was a 2016 Ashoka Fellow, is a member of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights' Women in Solidarity Society and is on the boards of the Atlanta Audubon Society and the South Fork Conservancy. She is also an advisory Board Member for the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area and Outdoor Afro, and she is on the Steering Committee for the new Children's Wellbeing Initiative — a network of 22 changemakers working together to promote children's wellbeing across the country. She splits her time between the city of Atlanta, GA and Victoria Island, Nigeria, with her husband and partner. www.gyfoundation.org

NICK CHILES is one of the nation's foremost chroniclers of African American life, culture, and celebrity. He is the author or co-author of 14 books, including three *New York Times* bestsellers he wrote with R&B icon Bobby Brown, civil rights leader Rev. Al Sharpton, and gospel legend Kirk Franklin. Chiles, a graduate of Yale, served as a newspaper reporter, magazine writer, and magazine and website editor-in-chief during his years in journalism, winning nearly 20 major awards, including a 1992 Pulitzer Prize as part of a *New York Newsday* team. He is also a college professor of journalism. He lives in Atlanta, GA.

SELLING POINTS

- Author is founder and CEO of the Greening Youth Foundation
- African Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans are far more likely to be impacted by environmental degradation and have been largely left out of the discussion around conservation and land stewardship
- The environmental movement has not been inclusive in its platforms, concerns and cultural perspectives
- This book is the untold story of the crucial work that is being done by a unique, hopeful and creative movement activating a new generation of environmental stewards
- Explains how publicizing the positive effects of connecting to nature and healthy living is leading more young people of color into careers in natural resource management
- A larger political statement about the urgency to create a workforce in these communities as well as an education about the resources that already exist
- A roadmap for understanding how America is creating environmental leaders in communities that sit far outside the stereotypical upper-middle-class white liberal enclaves
- Explores solutions that are working in communities of color
- Includes a new database of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Institutions and Universities and Tribal Colleges along with their areas of focus in the book.

ENDORSEMENTS

"Angelou Ezeilo with Nick Chiles offers an accessible guide to respond to the inequities faced by persons of color marginalized by mainstream environmentalism. All of the chapters provide invaluable tools including 'Activating a New Generation.' Readers have practical tools for doing diverse environmental work."

— **Rev. Dr. Dianne Glave**, author, *Rooted in the Earth: Reclaiming the African American Environmental Heritage*

"*Engage, Connect, Protect* challenges hypocrisies and challenges all of us in positions of leadership — from the private, public, and social profit sectors — to get comfortable with looking in the mirror to open doors and create cultures where underrepresented people can be vulnerable, authentic, and can feel...safe. Part memoir, part history lesson, part manifesto, this work highlights the cultural connection to nature that black and brown people have always had, and the need, for the sake of our physical, mental, and spiritual health, for it to be reclaimed."

— **Kamilah Martin**, Global Youth Educator and Vice President at the Jane Goodall Institute

"As climate change and race dominate the national dialogue in the United States, Angelou Ezeilo's *Engage, Connect, Protect* is right on time. Ms. Ezeilo artfully articulates the obscured problem of racism in the country's environmental movement and unapologetically sets forth solutions that loom to benefit all of us and the planet."

— **Elaine Brown**, author, *The Condemnation of Little B and A Taste of Power*, slated for film production by Robbie Brenner Productions and Netflix, Fall 2019.

"*Engage, Connect, Protect* is a delightful critique of the pervasive myth that communities of color — namely African American, Latino, and Native American communities — are not as engaged in the fight for environmental justice as their white counterparts. Angelou Ezeilo shows us that people of color, those usually left out of the climate discussion, are working hard to ensure that we preserve this amazing planet of ours. Ezeilo's commitment to engaging and centering youths of color in the fight against climate catastrophe is pivotal to engendering passionate advocates from all walks of life."

— **Kibiriti Majuto**, student organizer, Virginia Student Power Network

"As one who has been with Angelou since the beginning — she called me from New Jersey to discuss the need she saw for this work in Atlanta — I have observed its perfect evolution and the breathtaking new dimensions it has charted. How proud I am to declare wherever we're speaking, 'If you're looking for young people of color who are ready to take their place in stewardship of our public lands, call Greening Youth!' Congratulations!"

— **Audrey Peterman**, author, *Legacy on the Land: A Black Couple Discovers Our National Inheritance and Tells Why Every American Should Care*

"Ezeilo's book is powerful, personal and practical. Speaking truth to power, she engages our hearts while challenging our comfort zones as it relates to race and the environment. She reminds of what's at stake with the only home we all know and what becomes possible if we take risks that challenge the status quo. What's that saying — when you know different, you can do different? Well, read this book and let's get started!"

— **Carolyn Finney, Ph.D.** author, *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors*