

# Ecology Action

## Making an Electric Vehicle Lifestyle a Reality for Diverse Communities

### The Challenge

Electric vehicles (EVs) have become increasingly popular and available in several makes and models at various price ranges over the last several years. However, a large sector of the population still perceives the EV lifestyle as too expensive and off limits. To combat the misconception that EVs are more expensive than gas cars and only affluent drivers can afford them, education and awareness programs targeted at low- and moderate-income drivers is imperative. In addition to information gaps around the benefits and accessibility of EV ownership, navigating the actual EV purchase process is also full of complexities and often confusion. Providing on-the-ground support from start to finish during this process can be the difference between intention and ownership.

### The Solution

In 2021, Electrify America awarded more than \$3 million to six California community-based organizations, specifically for zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) education, awareness and marketing in Low Income and Disadvantaged Communities (LIC/DACs). As one of the selected organizations, Ecology Action collaborated with four trusted community partners to implement their programs and get the necessary resources into the right hands. Specific program activities included hosting in-the-community events such as ZEV “ride and drives” and ZEV display showcases, and individualized ZEV purchase guidance through bilingual EV Ambassadors. Ecology Action also implemented a targeted digital marketing and community outreach campaign, EVs for Everyone/EVs Para Todos, in both English and Spanish. By removing the perceived and real barriers of EV ownership, these efforts got many people behind the wheel on an EV not just for an afternoon, but a lifetime.

### The Results

Ecology Action set a high bar for themselves through the goals for their programming, which included educating 3,400 residents about EVs, conducting 300 test drives at “ride and drive” events and reaching 150,000 residents through their EVs for Everyone/EVs Para Todos outreach and marketing campaign – all of which were met and surpassed. By the end of 2021, **EVs for Everyone/EVs Para Todos had reached 201,091 residents** across their six Central Coast counties. They also hosted **educational events that reached nearly 5,500 residents**, such as bilingual webinars, a static car show and “ride and drives,” despite a global pandemic that for a long period of time limited in-person interactions. By pivoting their strategy to focus on virtual activities, they **successfully engaged with 1,548 residents through educational webinars and virtual test drives**.



### About Ecology Action

Ecology Action is a recognized statewide leader in the effort to create a thriving environment and low-carbon economy. They design effective programs, successfully activate communities, and forge mutually beneficial partnerships to advance equitable, climate-smart initiatives.

*Electrify America funded various Ecology Action ZEV education and awareness programs in the low-income and disadvantaged communities they serve up and down California’s Central Coast.*

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“The idea of driving here and there in an EV was intriguing, then more and more appealing, and eventually the “right thing to do.” Of course, I would not have been able to make that step without the generous incentives from CVAP and 3CE. Those rebates made getting an EV within reach of my modest income.”

— ANA RASMUSSEN, SANTA CRUZ, WHO PURCHASED A CHEVY SPARK THROUGH THE ‘EVS FOR EVERYONE’ PROGRAM