

## Agency for Change Podcast: Becky Migas, Co-Founder, Chief CARE Connector, Women in Sustainability

- Connect with Becky on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/beckymigas/>
- Learn more about Women in Sustainability: <https://womeninsustainability.org/>

### **Becky Migas:**

Find your people. It's that simple for me.

### **Announcer:**

Welcome to Agency for Change, a podcast from KidGlov that brings you the stories of changemakers who are actively working to improve our communities. In every episode, we'll meet with people who are making a lasting impact in the places we call home.

### **Lyn Wineman:**

How many of you have recently made changes to your lifestyle in order to live more sustainably? Maybe you've decided to start composting or bringing your own reusable bags to the grocery store. If so, research says you are likely a woman. In a survey of UK residents, research for Mintel found that there were surprising differences between the sustainability habits of men and women. For example, 67% of men reported they regularly recycle compared to 77% of women. More women also indicated they turned down the thermostat when not at home. They try to use less water and compost their food waste. But despite this eco gender gap, women are still underrepresented in climate negotiations, says Forbes.

At the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference of the parties, 10 of the 12 leadership team positions were held by men, but things are changing. Organizations like Women in Sustainability, which you're going to hear from today, are working to amplify women's voices in the environmental space. This Denver, Colorado organization aims to create more inclusive sustainability, a movement that includes women and other marginalized groups with the goal of making a positive impact on the planet. So, stay tuned as we find out how Women in Sustainability is crafting an inclusive community at the intersection between environmental and social justice and how you can join the movement of the good work that they're doing.

Hey, everyone. This is Lyn Wineman, president and chief strategist at KidGlov. Welcome to another episode of the Agency for Change Podcast. Today, we are talking with Becky Migas, co-Founder and chief CARE connector at Women in Sustainability, an inclusive social and environmental justice nonprofit dedicated to caring for the people that care for the planet. I love that. Becky, welcome to the podcast.

### **Becky Migas:**

Hi, Lyn. Thank you so much. Thanks for having me today.

### **Lyn Wineman:**

I'm so glad to talk to you. I am actually a new member of your organization, so I'm really excited to talk to you because I've been following you. But let's begin with you helping our listeners understand what Women in Sustainability is.

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah. Thanks, Lyn. We love having you as members and so excited to get to know KidGlov more and how we can support the work you are doing. That's what Women in Sustainability is about, is finding that support system. We launched Women in Sustainability in 2019. My now business partner, Beth Birchfield, her and I had met up for coffee and it had been hours later that we were still spending times together. I always call her my eco-mate. She's not my soulmate. She's my eco-mate.

From there, we decided. We were like, "We need to find a time, a space for people to come together and bring our communities together," because we were learning that there's so many incredible people, mainly women, who are out doing really important work in sustainability, but there wasn't a place for these people to come together. So, we had our first meet up in 2019, and from there, people asked us to launch our Facebook group and we launched our Facebook community right after that.

We continued to do in-person community networking events and just bringing people in community together. Then Beth and I then were learning that we had an opportunity here about all the amazing work happening from our community and we wanted a platform to share that work. So, we started our educational series in late 2019. Just like everybody else, 2020 completely changed the trajectory of our world. But I really think COVID was the beginning of our story. That is really where we started to see growth and that we started to recognize there was an important need for community to come together. We live a lot in these individual silos and COVID really showcased on how detrimental that can be to us. So, people were looking for community and we were still producing events in the online world. We were actually doing weekly webinars. Anybody listening, I don't ever suggest weekly webinars.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's a lot of webinars.

**Becky Migas:**

It was a lot. We did 50 webinars in a year, which was insane, but it was a lot of fun and we had opportunities to connect just with people in Colorado, which is where we're headquartered, but with people all over the United States and globally. We had people coming into our webinars from the UK and from Thailand and from Russia and all these different countries to come together and have the same conversation about, "How do we drive sustainability forward and how do we bring community together to have that conversation?" So, we were doing this work during COVID, and at the end of 2021, right? We're 2022.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Almost 2023.

**Becky Migas:**

Sometimes I'm like, "What year is it?" At the end of 2021, we had an opportunity to get our 501(c)(3). So, we became a nonprofit. We're almost a year old. We're a week away from our first birthday.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Congratulations. I hope you're going to have a cake.

**Becky Migas:**

We'll have cake. Yes, we'll have a celebration in December, and we'll have cake. We're going to have lots of fun with it. It really has just been an incredible year of how we can find a community of like-minded people to come together and have opportunities to have really important conversations. What's really unique about Women in Sustainability is that we look at everything in a holistic viewpoint. So, everything is interconnected, and we don't talk about one industry or one topic or subject. It is really all encompassing of sustainability as a whole. So, you can find somebody in our community who is really learning or talking about water or somebody who's on waste or somebody who's on air, all these different components of environmental sustainability.

But when they get in a room together, they realize how important it is to be having similar conversations and learning how we can really work together and support each other in our work so that we can create change in a bigger picture. That's what's really cool about this community is finding how all those pieces connect together.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Becky, I love it when there's a room of passionate like-minded people. Whether it's an in-person room or a virtual room, it's really fun to see and feel what comes out of that. So, I love to go back to 2019 before the pandemic. Wow, all these founders that started right before the pandemic. It feels like I've talked to dozens now, which it takes such gumption to make it through what we've been through. But I'd love to hear just a little bit more about that founder's story. You found your eco-mate. You guys obviously had interesting and immediate connectivity. What really inspired you though to really start this organization?

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, so Beth and I had met and we're talking about all these opportunities of finding people in our communities to work together and connect together. People are like, "How did Women in Sustainability start?" I feel like it's a happy accident for me. It wasn't something that I was ever really planning, it just fell into my lap. It is the best thing that could have ever happened.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Wow.

**Becky Migas:**

With that first meetup and finding that community, Beth and I both were working our own jobs. Actually, I had worked in the entertainment industry for almost 20 years. Beth was in the process of launching her own company called ecoshyft. We weren't really thinking Women in Sustainability was going to be anything that was more than just a social networking meetup group.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Wow.

**Becky Migas:**

We had an idea that maybe someday we'd go nonprofit, but it wasn't anything that we were really thinking that we would do that down the road. Again, I think COVID just was really that light bulb moment of there is a need for community and really our future looks more in community-oriented organizations than it's going to be in individual silos. So, it really was just a great opportunity to find

different people in ways that they're looking to connect and have opportunities to learn from our people who are coming to us in the community.

I always say I'm inspired every day by the people who are our community members. They are the ones that drive me to get up in the morning and to continue to do the work that we do. As long as they're showing up, I'm going to keep doing it. That's my only role. If they keep showing up-

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's awesome.

**Becky Migas:**

... I'm here. I'll keep putting on events. I'll keep putting together workshops and educational opportunities and providing resources. That's what's important to me at the end of the day is I always have this line of if I can make somebody's life a little more simple with providing education and resources and a little more fun, then I have done my job at the end of the day. That's what we're here for.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love that. I wish we all could say that at the end of the day, I've made somebody's life more simple, more fun. Those both sound like really great goals. So, I am curious, you and Beth, as you started this, you decided to focus on women. I'm curious, why do you think women have historically been left out of the conversation on sustainability?

**Becky Migas:**

I think women have been historically left out of most conversations.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's why we're having this conversation, which is broadcasting it for everyone to listen to.

**Becky Migas:**

Exactly, exactly. Yeah, I think it's just the societal terms that we've always been on where women haven't necessarily been in those important leadership and decision-making roles. For environmentalism and sustainability climate issues, women tend to be more in touch with nature. We are nurturers just on our own. We tend to have a better understanding of the ebbs and flow of nature, and we're more in tune with what's happening in that sense. So, I think women in general are just in a really unique position to think about how we can create a future with a more female or female identifying centered view. It really is just how can we elevate and lift women's voices?

That's what Women in Sustainability is about, is how do we take opportunities to lift women's voices, to lift marginalized voices who have potentially been left out of the conversation, in addition, who are the most impacted by climate issues. So, people who are low income or marginalized communities tend to be impacted by people coming into their communities, like waste centers or we have here in Colorado, Suncor, who is affecting our lower income communities with their air quality and pollution of water. That impact is huge. Women are the ones that take on the sole responsibility of their homes. They have to be the ones that have to have access to the water, taking care of their children.

When climate issues happen, such as the hurricanes that we're seeing, the flooding that we're seeing, the massive wildfires, women are in charge of having to make sure that they've got everything together

to be able to get out of their home if necessary, on time. So, we are most impacted, but we have the least amount of voice in what's happening.

So, we really believe that women as those nurturers, those connections to nature have an opportunity to take on a leadership position in more decision making roles to be able to really think about what our future looks like and how that will impact everybody and not just women and how it impacts everybody, because we bring in that broader viewpoint and think about everybody in general versus just one little section of humanity.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I've got to believe, Becky, too, that as people, as women, as marginalized people, all people, as they learn to use their voice in the area of sustainability and they build that muscle so to speak, they're going to learn to use that voice in other forces for good too. So, I just think your work is going to be amplified in so many positive ways. So, we've talked about women. Can we go into a little bit more detail on who else you're trying to ensure has a voice through this work with Women in Sustainability?

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, absolutely. I'll note, too, to what you are just mentioning, I've got one of our members and a longtime friend, Jen Nguyen. She runs a women's organization called The Pledges, and that's focused on financial freedom for women and really empowering women.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I follow them online. I love the message of The Pledges. I had no idea you were going to mention them. I don't know how I started following them, but I think they do such interesting things.

**Becky Migas:**

They do amazing things. Jen's awesome. What she always says to me and to her community is that when you put money in women's hands, women are more likely to give back and spend that money into their community. I think that that's so powerful because women have better influence when they have money and impact that they created in our society. I thought that to your point of women and women in leadership, when we help to put women there, we're going to give back. I think it's so powerful. So, not just women, marginalized communities as I was mentioning. Everyone's welcoming to our community. So, we look at all of the isms. We're really working on racism, classism, sexism, gender identity.

Ageism is a big one for us. We actually have a board member who is older who has also been left out of the conversation, because again, it doesn't matter who you are, everyone's going to be affected. I was speaking to somebody not too long ago, his 80-year-old mother lives in Florida. The night that I spoke to him, you could see the worry on his face, and he said, "I can't get my mother out of her home. There's nowhere for her to go because I don't have access to getting her help." They looked into a hotel. All of the hotels in Florida, none of them have elevators. They don't have elevators.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Elevators. What?

**Becky Migas:**

So, a woman who cannot walk upstairs, all the bottom room floors were booked, but they cannot give her access to these hotel rooms because there were no elevators, which is still mind-blowing to me.

We're in 2022. How is that not ADA regulations? That's part of it too, thinking about people with disabilities. How are they impacted and affected? So, it doesn't matter who you are at the end of the day, everyone's going to be impacted by this.

Some are going to be impacted more than others, and even the wealthy people are not going to get away from climate change. They can try to spend all the money they want, but there's a whole story right now going on, I think it's in Rhode Island, about this wealthy neighborhood that sits right on the cliffs. They've had this lavish history of wealth and building this community. Well, now, they're all having to retreat their homes because their homes are falling off the cliff.

**Lyn Wineman:**

It's terrifying. When you drive into areas where they have the homes on the cliffs like that, it's just heartbreaking and terrifying just to look up and see that.

**Becky Migas:**

They spent millions of dollars trying to stop the eroding. They've done many different projects. I hate to tell you, but Mother Nature's going to win in the end. She's going to outsmart us. So, everyone's affected. I think really the goal with Women in Sustainability is having that important conversation of looking at all the isms and how everyone's going to be impacted and how we can truly start to bring everybody into a community to have their voice heard and not just be there.

Actually, truly sit down and listen to how everybody's impacted and how we can start to think about what that looks like as a more inclusive society as we develop into the future, and we develop our sustainability programs and our environmental needs. How do we find that balance between really meeting humanity's needs and meeting the environmental needs and having that balance between those two? That's what's important to us. We're still working at it too. It's still a lot that we're learning. There's still a lot that I've had to learn in my life as an adult when I've had to break down some of my childhood philosophies that-

**Lyn Wineman:**

Absolutely.

**Becky Migas:**

... have been taught to me. I learn from my community every day if something happens, people feel that they can come to me and have a conversation. We've got people who are non-binary in our community and they've been very open to speaking with me when we do something that hurts them and being able to say, "Hey, can we talk about this?" I think that that is what's important is how can we be transparent, say, "We're all learning together. This is a new world, new time and space for all of us." Be transparent, but then being open-minded and listening to those people and how we can help to support them at the end.

So, really, it's a community of people who have never felt like they fit into a space, but hopefully, when they come to us, they feel like they can be in a safe and welcoming space, that they, too, can have their voices heard. They, too, can make friends or feel like when they leave our events that they can go out and make an impact on the world, because that's what we want people to do, is we want people to go out making the impact.

Women in Sustainability knows itself. We're not going to change everything. It's not us doing the work. It's our community members doing the work, and then we want to make an impact on them to empower them and uplift their spirits to go out and continue the work that they want and need to do.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Becky, I love so much about what you are saying there. I'm wondering, is there a misconception that you can only join your group if you are a woman?

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, we definitely have that misconception a lot. It's more so on our webinars. I think people say it, but about a 5% of our community member base is male or male identifying or not anybody who's non-binary. I think that they are advocates of joining our community. We have one gentleman who comes to our events, and he told me one day, he's like, "My friends make fun of me when I tell them that I'm going to Women in Sustainability event." He turns around and says, "These are the best events that I go to."

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love it. Good for him, good for him.

**Becky Migas:**

But we do have a good community of men who show up. Our belief is that we don't want it to be a matriarchal viewpoint. Right now, we live in a very patriarchal society. We're not saying we want to do a total imbalance and do matriarchal. What we're saying is that we just want to start elevating and lifting women's voices and we want all of us to be coming together so that we have more of a balance between the matriarchal and the patriarchal society and what that looks like.

So, men are a big important part of it because we need men's voices too. Our board member, our vice chair is actually a male. He says all the time, he says, "Look, I know that I can get access to more things than you can, and I want to be here to support that and use that privilege for good."

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's awesome.

**Becky Migas:**

I think that that's what our community members are. It really is that we want everybody coming in, but just understanding, at the end of the day, our role is to elevate women's and women identifying voices and being able to help those voices be a little louder. So, there's a little bit more of that balance.

**Lyn Wineman:**

More balance. I like that idea of balance. So, Becky, you're obviously doing a lot of work. I mean webinars, meetings, conversations, providing resources. What are some of the things you feel like you've accomplished and is there anything you're particularly proud of?

**Becky Migas:**

This is a great question. I mean, I think I start off with the fact that we just even got our 501(c)(3).

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's a great accomplishment. People don't realize it takes a lot of work, it's a lot of paperwork, it's a lot of legalese. Congratulations to you for that because that really provides a high level of legitimacy and I think comfort and trust for people who might be donating to the organization.

**Becky Migas:**

Absolutely. Well, not just to get the 501(c)(3), but everything that comes after. I keep joking, I'm at some point in time in my life, I'm going to put together a workbook of all the things they don't tell you about starting a nonprofit.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Amen. Yes, yes. It sounds like "I want to start a new nonprofit. It sounds like such a kind, gentle, caring thing to do." It is, but it is a lot of work and there's a lot of legal things that go with it, which seem totally counterintuitive.

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, there's so much to it. I think my biggest misconception is like, "Oh, cool, I get this from the IRS. I'm good and I can just have all these advantages." You start to realize, you're like, "Oh, it doesn't really work that way." There's a lot more intricacies to it, especially the financial world. So, I've had to learn a lot over the past year.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Good for you.

**Becky Migas:**

For me, personally, that's been my biggest success story, is really being able to take on a nonprofit and really immerse myself into the nonprofit space. I'm very fortunate that I've got other friends who are also nonprofit founders, and we are a support system in our own way. We're able to help each other, support each other, and share resources within our community as well. Overall, for the community, I think it's just been a really incredible year to see how we have organically grown and how we have been able to change people's lives.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's great.

**Becky Migas:**

It is. I get messages all the time from people of, "Oh, because of Women in Sustainability, I met this person and we're now doing this project together," or "I've started a business with this person who I've met through the community," or "This person really helped me out in this way." I think that's our biggest success story this past year is really the connection of people and realizing and understanding that that is one of the most important things that we can do in our work is how we can create that support system for our community members. It's just been really cool to see.

Again, everybody in the community just inspires me so much and it makes me so excited and so happy that I get to share their stories and that I get to support them. Especially we have a lot of small business owners in our community, how can we help them grow when people come to us? So, a lot of people



come to me sometimes and ask me to be speaker on a panel. I'm like, "I'm not the expert on that, but I have people who are and let me invite those people." Now I've given them a connection to go and share their story and their voices and expertise in other communities. It's that web that we continue to grow and build. It's just been really fun to watch and to be a part of it.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That is great. It's great. It's a true story of "if we build it, they will come," which isn't always the story of nonprofits or new organizations of any kind. So, congratulations to you. You mentioned a minute ago, getting involved with small businesses and I imagine large businesses at times too. I'm curious when it comes to sustainability and reducing one's environmental footprint, there's an ongoing conversation about, "Should this be more of an individual issue? Should it be more of an issue for large companies which tend to have a bigger carbon footprint?" I'm curious your take on this debate.

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, I actually love this question. This is really fun. My partner and I were actually debating this question-

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love it. I love it.

**Becky Migas:**

... not too long ago. It really is interesting of how we see that. So, if your listeners are familiar, the individual responsibility goes all the way back into... I think it's the 1970s when the Keep America Beautiful Campaign started.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Yeah, I remember that. That's iconic in advertising circles. That is an iconic campaign in the history of advertising.

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, it really is. But when you actually dig down into why that campaign started and I don't know how much you know about this, but why that campaign started, it was actually started, companies like big corporations knew they were creating waste. Instead of them immediately taking that responsibility, then campaign started to put responsibility on individual people.

**Lyn Wineman:**

So, it may not be as pure as I thought it was.

**Becky Migas:**

I'll send you a podcast on it. NPR Throughline did a whole segment on it, on the actual starting of it. Environmental organizations were actually against... I can't remember which one. Anyways, so everybody basically rallied to put it so that individuals felt they had to be personally responsible for their waste at the end of the day. Don't litter, right? Put it in the trash. So, for years, we've had it where individuals haven't been made to feel responsible. Now, it's the point where individuals are like, "We can't take this all on."

**Lyn Wineman:**

We're doing everything we can, but there's only so much we can do in balance. Once again, that word balance comes into play, doesn't it?

**Becky Migas:**

So, to me and a lot of what we talk about, and a friend who I just had dinner with last night, one of our members and another member I met last week who also worked for bigger corporations have had this conversation with them, but it really is all of us. So, individuals do need to take on responsibility and be engaged, but by doing that, we are the ones who control the power as the consumer and voting with our dollars.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I do think voting with your dollars is one of the number one ways to use your voice. That really counts. You can choose to support companies who are eco-friendly, or you can choose to support companies that are not. Yeah, there's options. Everyone has options.

**Becky Migas:**

Everyone has options. I think what's so important is, and it's something that we forget, is we don't all as individuals have to take on every component of sustainability. Again, as I was mentioning, there's all these different facets of sustainability and environmentalism. Find the one that you are passionate about and care about.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's a great point.

**Becky Migas:**

Invest into that, learn about it, invest into that, take that time. Take that time to find the companies that are doing what you find really important and doing it well. I think as corporations begin to understand the consumer dollar and the power of that dollar, then they are going to be able to understand how to start making changes within the company themselves. Individuals are going to drive that for corporations. The other important part of that is not just voting with your dollars, but as we just had in this country, a big election, you have to vote in general for policy and legislation that also drives that.

So, my two friends that I just had these conversations with, they were both in the corporation. They both said, "Look, companies want to do good, but unless policy drives them to make true change, companies aren't going to do it." So, we need individuals again to be passionate about a certain area, get engaged in policy, vote for politicians, vote for legislation that is going to change our corporations. So, at the end of the day, we talk a lot about how a circular economy and sustainability... So, basically for your listener, circular economy is taking a plastic bottle, using that, putting that back into the manufacturer's hands. They redevelop it into a new product. It goes back into our hands. This is constant loop so that things aren't going into the landfill. They're in constant production or the consumer has it.

I feel that same way when it comes to this question of, "Whose responsibility is it at the end?" It's a cycle. It's a cycle where everybody has to be involved. The individuals have to have the knowledge and understanding of what's going on to vote for those politicians, that legislation that make changes for company, that then helps us have our dollars in our hands to put it back into the corporation. So, every little component is a piece.

At the end of the day, individuals make up corporations, individuals make up our government, and individuals are responsible of how we can make that change and drive that change. So, hard, long answer to that question, because I don't think it's as simple as one or the other, but it really is looking at it from this more holistic viewpoint of how all the pieces have to be in a fluid motion to be able to work together in our system.

**Lyn Wineman:**

What a great answer, Becky. What a great answer. What a great picture you've painted there. You know what? I'm going to ask you another big sticky question here too. In sustainability circles, the idea of environmental justice is gaining a lot of traction. I'm curious on how that connects to the work that you're doing.

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, environmental justice is huge. You can't talk environmental justice without talking social justice. So, environmental justice is basically bringing in that social piece. So, talking, as I mentioned earlier, about that marginalized piece, marginalized communities, low income, Black and Brown communities, people who have been affected most by the impact of the environment. What I remember one point as rating somebody's social media account on Instagram, a person that I follow in sustainability and for a long time they were promoting this compost company and they really loved the compost company. We all think, "Okay, compost is great. It's great for the environment. We have to compost."

Well, when she started digging into the company, she found out that this company was taking all of the compost and it was located in a low-income area. The people in this area were fighting really hard, because their air quality was detrimental. They couldn't walk outside without smelling trash. They couldn't walk outside without having poisonous gases that were in their air, their homes are being polluted, everything around them. Not just that, there was waste that was coming out of this haulers area. So, a lot of bioplastic tends to roll around in wind.

So, they had waste that was all in their neighborhood that was being generated by this compost facility. It was mind-blowing then to learn that this company she had been promoting for so long thinking that she was just doing good, the company in itself was actually doing really bad, because it was really harming an entire community of people at the end of the day. That's what environmental justice is. We're looking at what are we doing as society, not just on the front end, but how are we impacting people who are the most impacted by it. Our waste facilities going into these areas because rich neighborhoods don't want to waste facility in the neighborhood.

**Lyn Wineman:**

No, they don't. They have power and the connections often to push it away.

**Becky Migas:**

Right. So, how are we ensuring that what we're doing is not going to be more harmful. It really is, how can we bring those voices again to the forefront in helping to lead the way for a future. How can we make social justice a more important role in our future? Black Lives Matter is, I think, the most tangible for a lot of people, but indigenous rights, how can we ensure that we're working with the indigenous community? How can we ensure that we're working with low-income neighborhoods and ensuring that they're not getting waste facilities and dumps in their neighborhood?

I think that policy, again is a big important part to that, because I think sometimes, we don't realize policy passes and then how is it affected? We've got a lot of policy happening here in Colorado that has

been passing. We had extended producer responsibility. We were the fifth state to get that passed. So, that manufacturers are now required to take more interest in what they're creating and create that more cyclical society. We just passed in Denver two bills that will now require compost and recycling for all single home, multi-home events and businesses in our city, which is fantastic.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Wow.

**Becky Migas:**

Again, thinking as part of those, we looked at, "Are there initiatives in part of those policies that will help support low-income community members who maybe necessarily can't pay for composting and recycling?" They can't just show up and just start having extra bills in their pocket. How are we making it so that they can get access to having compost recycling but be able to live? Because at the end of the day, we all just have to meet that Maslow hierarchal needs. People have to put food on their table.

**Lyn Wineman:**

If you're struggling, composting is not going to be at the top of your list.

**Becky Migas:**

It is not a priority. Sustainability and environmentalism are not priorities. You just need to put food on your table, you need to have clothing, you need to have a roof over your head. Those basic needs have to be met. So, that social justice piece again of looking at, "What is that? How can we ensure that we're encompassing people so that they're not being impacted in a negative way, but can still take part of it, but still be able to meet their needs as well?"

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's fantastic. So, Becky, I want to bring this full circle. I know that your mission, Women in Sustainability's mission is to care. When you say that, CARE is in all caps and it's to care for people who care for the planet. I'm curious, so what does CARE stand for since it's in all caps? I'm assuming it stands for something.

**Becky Migas:**

It does, yes. Yeah. So, yeah, thank you. At the end of the day, our mission is to care for the people that care for the planet through our four pillars of community, advocacy, resources and education.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Nice.

**Becky Migas:**

So, CARE, everything we do fits within those four pillars. Community, the people, is first and foremost always.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Nice.

**Becky Migas:**

So always again, what I was just talking about that social justice piece of really thinking about, "How is community always at the forefront of our mind and how do we care for our community of people?" That includes how are we providing advocacy, advocating for all to help pass those policy, or just getting people engaged in advocacy. I think there's this misconception that politicians are just doing their thing and we don't need to be engaged or involved. Well, that's not true.

We have to remember we vote. We are the ones putting those people into place. They work for us at the end of the day and they're just people at the end of the day as well. It is opportunities to connect with your local legislators and you're not just staying on the federal level. State and local is just as, if not more important as people who work on the federal level of government.

**Lyn Wineman:**

A lot of this happens at the local level.

**Becky Migas:**

A lot of it happens at the local level. So, really looking at, "How do we break down those barriers of people getting engaged in advocacy?" Whether it be some of our communities' members love to go testify, they love to show up in the legislators chambers and talk about what they're passionate about, but another person, maybe that's not where they feel like they fit in. So, what can they do? Maybe it's just showing up at an event where we're all writing letters to our state legislator about something we're passionate about and doing it as a community. So, just realizing that we all can play a piece in advocacy, whether it be going to Congress and talking to them or going to your local district and just having a conversation with your local council person, which is just as important.

So, then resources - how can we provide resources? How can we make people's lives a little bit easier? And then how can we make sure we're providing education in all aspects of sustainability? We really like to take on some tough subjects. We'll take on conversations about the refugee and how does that impact sustainability and why refugee communities need to be a part of the conversation of sustainability. We just did a conversation in October on domestic violence and sustainability.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Oh, wow.

**Becky Migas:**

It was amazing, but women tend to be most impacted by domestic and intimate partner violence. Again, thinking of we want to help elevate and lift women's voices, well, we have to understand how does domestic violence and intimate partner violence play a big part in that? So, it was really powerful to learn, again, how everything is interconnected and how what we do impacts women who could be in a certain scenario where there is violence and how can we help to create that change.

Whether we work in an office and recognize that a woman is showing up in a different demeanor and just asking if they need help or creating workplace policy that women who have intimate partner violence or domestic violence at home, how they can take time off to go to court and do what they need to be able to handle those scenarios or that situation. So, it really is impactful to understand how all of these pieces play a part and we're willing to take on those conversations. Population growth, we'll talk about that.

My goal and point is to talk about religion. How does religion play a part into sustainability and what that looks like? It really is education on all different levels. Really, it is an opportunity for us to just get people to engage in the conversation to get that light bulb to go off. I always say to myself that once I know, I can't unknow.

**Lyn Wineman:**

That's a good point. Once you get the education, you may not be aware, but once you are aware, then it's hard to go back. You shouldn't go back.

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah.

**Lyn Wineman:**

So, Becky, what's next? What's next for Women in Sustainability? You've done so much in such a short time.

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, thank you. Thanks for saying that. I sometimes don't realize how much we do in that amount of time. My board chair and I sat down. My business partner and she's our board chair as well. We sat down and we put together a list of all of our accomplishments this year. I was like, "Wooh."

**Lyn Wineman:**

I know. Sometimes it's good to list them just so you can look back and go, "We did that. We did that." Good for you.

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, I recommend everybody do that at the end of the year. Sit down and write down what the accomplishments have been, because it's amazing, whether nonprofit or not nonprofit. I think nonprofits really do it, because obviously, our end of year giving, that's an important time to reflect back, but I think everybody should take that time to do it. For us, we're really excited. This is just really the beginning. We're just getting started and we're so excited. We've got an incredible board who is working on a really great strategic plan for our future to really develop those areas of care and how can we provide those support and community advocacy, resources and education. How can we create programming that really is inclusive programming?

So, we're working on that to develop that. We're going to continue building up our membership and bringing people to our community to be a part of the conversation. Our ultimate goal, hopefully within the next year, year and a half, is we want to have chapters all throughout Colorado. So, we've launched our first chapter in Denver and hope to have a few more in Colorado. Then we want to eventually be a nationwide organization with chapters all over the U.S.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love that. I don't even think you should stop there. I think Women in Sustainability takes on the world. So, I could totally see it. I could totally see it. So, Becky, if people want to find out about what you're doing, let's say they listened to this in February or March, how could they find out what's going on with Women in Sustainability?

**Becky Migas:**

Yeah, absolutely. We always have lots of events going on that people can get involved in. We do anywhere between in-person networking events to in-person workshops as well as online. So, any of your listeners who are not in Colorado currently can still come and be a part of our community. We'll continue to do our Community Voices series, which is really elevating the voices of our community members and giving them opportunities to talk about the work that they're doing. So, we'll look forward to that again in 2023 and beyond. People can join our Facebook group. So, we have a Facebook group. It's Women in Sustainability Colorado, but everybody is welcome.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Got it.

**Becky Migas:**

They can join that. Then we also have our website at [womeninsustainability.org](http://womeninsustainability.org) with all of our upcoming events listed there as well as our Instagram page. People can join us on Instagram. Eventually, we're going to have TikTok. I'm trying to get in with the cool kids and learn TikTok.

**Lyn Wineman:**

Nice. I know. TikTok is a totally different strategy. That is the key. You got to get in with the cool kids, somebody who's already got a following, but it sounds like a great place for you. So, this has been, Becky, such an inspiring conversation. You've done, once again, I'm going to say it again, so much in such a short amount of time. I want to ask you my favorite question, because I am inspired by motivational quotes and I'm wondering if you could give us a few of your own words of wisdom to inspire our listeners.

**Becky Migas:**

Find your people. It's that simple for me. Find your people. For me, it really is about community, and I really truly think community is going to be the most important part of our future. Find your people. Find your people that make you feel good. Find your people that help you want to do the work that you do and elevate you and lift you. As I mentioned, for me, it's not just Women in Sustainability, right? There's this community here, but also, I have my people in my nonprofit space that I can lean on when I'm having a really bad day.

I can call up my friend Cora and say, "I'm struggling with this. What do I do?" She can support and help me and vice versa, right? Find those people who not just take from you but give back to you. There's a mutual relationship. I truly think that that is our future, collaboration, community, empowering one another, supporting one another, and just taking time to be together in space and just find your people.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love it. That's great. I love it because it takes it all the way back to you in 2019, meeting someone new who became your eco mate, you two founding a movement that became a nonprofit that started in Denver that soon will take on the world. So, I'm so excited about your trajectory there. Becky, as we wrap up this great conversation today, I'm curious, what is the most important thing about your work that you would like our listeners to remember?

**Becky Migas:**

What drives us is care. The most important thing is to care. Find what you care about and where that piece is that you want to just get involved and engage and join the conversation. So, we just ask everybody to come and be a part of our conversation. You don't necessarily need to be a member. You don't have to be a donor. We would, of course, would love for you to engage in that way because it's very important for nonprofit organizations. Financial contributions are what help us to continue to do the work we do.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I imagine people could do that at [womeninsustainability.org](http://womeninsustainability.org) too. If they were inspired by this conversation to donate, they could go straight there.

**Becky Migas:**

They could. We have a link that says ways to care and it gives you multiple opportunities on ways that you can care for the organization, but that's what it is for us is that if we can just find those spots that people are interested in and engaged in, then we can just start to get people to bring on part of the conversation, because again, that interconnectedness, I truly believe that when you start to learn about where your interests and your passion lies, you start to recognize and realize how it is connected with all these different pieces. You start to get a little bit of a bigger picture to it.

It's important for us that people are part of the conversation and that they are excited and engaged and feel like they're supported to get up and do the work that they need to do, to get up and have the conversations with their family members or their colleagues to share out in the world, or to get up and go and testify or write their legislators. Whatever they want to do to engage in the way that feels most comfortable to them, we just want people to be part of that conversation.

**Lyn Wineman:**

I love that. Becky, when you talk about finding your people, I'm glad that somehow, I found you and we got connected to have this fun conversation today. I really believe the world needs more people like you and more organizations like Women in Sustainability. So, thank you so much for sharing your story with us today.

**Becky Migas:**

Thank you, Lyn. Thank you so much for having me. This has been such a wonderful day and I hope your listeners get inspired to find something they're passionate about and go find their people and get involved as well. So, thanks for all that you do with this podcast and with KidGlov. Thank you so much.

**Announcer:**

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