

ACCE
INSTITUTE

Annual Report

2016



Reflections on 2016

No matter which way I look at it 2016 was a big year that marked a turning point for our nation and for ACCE Institute.

We spent the year fighting and winning major victories for California's low wage workers, tenants, homeowners, and undocumented residents. We launched 3 major voter engagement efforts that led to the registration of nearly 10,000 new voters, activation of dozens of precinct captains, and education of tens of thousands of voters across 6 counties. We strengthened local, statewide and national alliances, and worked to highlight an intersectional analysis and set of cross-issue fights that helped usher in a more holistic approach to organizing and even took on a few new issue areas that broadened our reach and impact across the state. Indeed, we at ACCE are proud to say that in the last couple of years we have steadily advanced a framework committed to developing, launching and advancing holistic campaigns that consider the economic, racial, and gender impacts of issues that affect the communities that we organize and engage year-round.

Despite our many victories and advancements in 2016, like so many others, we spent the year battling the growing effects of a renewed overt wave of racism, xenophobia, and sexism that took root across the country. Across the state, ACCE leaders and staff gathered late in the year to begin to understand more deeply how that wave of hatred is impacting their communities and develop strategy shifts that would enable us to meet the needs of people in this new era.

Reflecting on our 2016 victories and challenges gives us both hope and a renewed fire to fight hatred and divisions that we will carry into our 2017 work. We invite you to reflect with us on our 2016 victories to start building the vision for what is achievable in 2017.

In Solidarity,



Christina Livingston
Executive Director
ACCE Institute





Housing

DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT IN LOS ANGELES

In Los Angeles, ACCE leaders have long prioritized requiring developers to build affordable housing as part of all new developments, as well as the creation of good paying jobs accessible to low-income communities of color. Last year, ACCE leaders extended that commitment by helping to qualify and pass two critical initiatives that would require:

- **Minimum affordable housing requirements, training standards, and labor and wage regulations on residential development projects requiring zoning changes- with a provision that requires 30% of the construction workers to be Angelenos who need the jobs most.**
- **Building of 10,000 units of permanent supportive housing over the next 10 years.**

Leaders conducted an outreach program contacting more than 20,000 voters in low-income LA neighborhoods including South LA, Watts, and Pacoima in the east San Fernando Valley.

RENT CONTROL IN RICHMOND

ACCE members won Rent Control and Just Cause Eviction protections in Richmond!

ACCE leaders pushed forward a consistent, grassroots campaign led by tenants suffering rent increases and a strong network of community groups, unions and elected representatives. Prior to the victory, ACCE leaders spent countless hours organizing tenants, fighting to stop evictions, holding regular tenants clinics and testifying at City Council meetings about the rent increases tenants had been receiving.

- **Thanks to our efforts and the efforts of our allies, nearly 30,000 people in Richmond will get real tenant protections.**

STRONGER PROTECTIONS FOR OAKLAND TENANTS

Our work focused in the neighborhoods where ACCE Institutes organizes year-round and where our leaders live: Oakland's flatlands. Oakland's flatlands were the epicenter of the foreclosure crisis, losing tens of thousands of long-time Black and Latino residents and homeowners. These same neighborhoods are now the epicenter of mass scale evictions and gentrification.

After a year-long campaign of organizing with tenants, various housing groups, and taking to the streets:

- **Oakland leaders helped pass a citywide ordinance expanding tenant protections to thousands more renters in Oakland and a county-wide affordable housing bond that will generate 3-5,000 new affordable housing units.**

IGNITING THE HOUSING JUSTICE MOVEMENT STATEWIDE

Throughout 2016, ACCE community leaders and staff across the state went through an internal process to develop a vision and plan for a statewide campaign to address displacement and the high cost of housing. In July, ACCE Institute hosted a **two-day retreat for some 45 grassroots leaders from six regions of the state**, where a multi-year campaign plan began to take shape. A number of key allies – community groups, labor unions and policy groups – attended a portion of the retreat to participate in thinking together about opportunities and challenges.

In late 2016, ACCE, Tenants Together and SEIU USWW sponsored six Town Halls across the state where tenants, community groups and allies worked to educate local and state elected officials about the nature of the housing crisis and needed solutions.

Highlight: In December, as part of the statewide housing movement, 40 San Francisco ACCE leaders, community members and allies from a number of organizations gathered to

put together a statewide and local agenda, set of actions and a collective strategy to address the housing crisis. The excitement around a statewide housing agenda has been especially exciting to San Francisco leaders, who understand that statewide policies are necessary for cities that are undergoing rapid development and need additional protections to protect the remaining working class neighborhoods in their communities.

In early 2017, a **new statewide coalition** for housing justice, Housing Now!, will be launched, with a 2017 plan to expose and hold accountable some of the worst “bad actors” engaged in housing speculation.





ADVANCING A NATIONAL MOVEMENT

There are a number of factors contributing to the severe housing crisis facing Californians and other states across the country; one common factor has been the dramatic increase in housing speculation. Shockingly, the federal housing agencies HUD (Housing and Urban Development Department), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have been contributing to this problem. They are auctioning off delinquent mortgages, with 95% of the mortgages sold to hedge funds and private equity firms – Wall Street speculators-, driving up the costs of housing, and contributing to the chronic displacement of poor and working class people of color.

Last year, ACCE Institute put significant energy into providing policy, research and organizing support to community leaders advancing a new strategy that gets major banks and/or government mortgage holders- such as HUD, Fannie Mae & Freddie Mac- to sell large pools of delinquent mortgages to non-profit CDFI's (Community Development Financial Institutions).

In addition, ACCE Institute worked with a national network of elected officials, called Local Progress, to build support for local and national changes in how HUD, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac sell-off troubled mortgages. As a result of this collaboration:

- **Between January and March 2016, City Councils in 7 major cities passed resolutions calling on HUD and FHFA (Federal Housing and Finance Agency) to stop all sales in their cities and states and meet with local stakeholders to identify mission-driven entities to purchase these loan pools.**

- **On March 1st, 45 Members of Congress sent a joint letter to HUD and FHFA calling for similar changes to the programs.**
- **In May, ACCE leaders and our partners in local government held a call with top HUD officials, and they indicated that they would be making significant changes to the program, in response to us and others who have been pushing for change.**

Thanks to our efforts, **at the end of June 2016 HUD announced major changes to their program** that had been selling-off tens of thousands of delinquent mortgages!

The overall program changes include:

- **Making principal reduction the first line strategy in the modification processes**
- **Increased non-profit participation - with a goal of tripling the number of homes sold to non-profits**
- **Enhanced reporting that includes data on demographics and modifications by loan pool**
- **A commitment to work with local governments and non-profits on targeted sales**

The new program rules are resulting in more mortgage pools being sold to non-profits and more foreclosures avoided. These changes are one piece of a **larger strategy to get more of our housing stock under “community control”** – whether cooperative ownership, land trusts, non-profit or public ownership. In 2017, ACCE Institute is supporting community groups and cities in taking advantage of these new rules to get mortgages into the hands of non-profit, “good actors” locally.

Racial Justice



Year after year, our commitment to advancing racial justice within our campaigns grows stronger. Below are examples of how we are continuing to develop and apply that commitment in concrete ways that uplift black and brown communities where we organize.

JUSTICE FOR CONTRA COSTA FAMILIES

As part of the Contra Costa County Racial Justice Coalition, in December 2015, ACCE Institute signed on to a letter sent to the Board of Supervisors calling for the creation of a Racial Justice Taskforce to address racial disparities in our criminal justice system.

In April of 2016, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to create a Racial Justice Taskforce. ACCE Institute Contra Costa organizer Jovana Fajardo joined the taskforce. Already, the task force won its first victory in 2016; The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors **Unanimously Passed a Moratorium on Administrative Juvenile Fines and Fees in October.**

Thanks to the coalition and task force, **families** with children in jail and/or with children returned home from jail are **no longer ordered to pay for the incarceration of their children.** The work for implementation, community education around the issue, and victim restitution continues!

COMBATTING CRIMINALIZATION

Sacramento has continued its commitment to combat mass incarceration and fight back against the ongoing criminalization of immigrants and communities of color in the city and across the state. With the passage of Proposition 47, certain low-level, nonviolent felonies can now be changed to misdemeanors on old criminal records. Last year, ACCE leaders organized several events along with the National Lawyers Guild to provide **legal services to hundreds of Sacramento resident to answer questions about expungement under Prop 47.**

EXPANDING HEALTHCARE TO UNDOCUMENTED COMMUNITIES

Across California, many are excluded from basic health care programs. Adults and children without health care coverage generally wait to seek care until they are seriously ill, and in many cases health problems that could have been avoided with preventative care, or treated early for little cost, become significant and costly health issues.

In 2015, **ACCE leaders in Contra Costa County helped win \$1 million in health care coverage program for 3,000 undocumented adults.** In 2016, the pilot program covered thousands, including ACCE leaders like 72 year old Rosa Arriaga- who is now being treated for her arthritis and asthma. ACCE leaders have continued to build the base of support for this pilot program in order to fight for its extension beyond 2017.

In Sacramento, In partnership with Sacramento Covered, ACCE Institute leaders ran a 6 week program, providing **guidance to 5,000 Sacramento residents of all backgrounds on how to apply for and access the health services** they need, including undocumented community members in Sacramento who are often the most impacted by lack of access to health care coverage.

San Diego County is 9 out of 10 worse counties in the state when it comes to under enrollment in vital services like CALfresh, CALworks and Medical. It is currently also sitting on almost 2 billion dollars in reserves, that could be invested in these vital services and programs, like housing, mental health, and rehabilitation that would help to advance the communities that need them. As a result, ACCE and several community and labor allies formed the Invest in San Diego Families Coalition to ensure the investment and prioritization within the county budget to improve the quality of life for residents in the region.



Worker Justice

RAISING THE ROOF ON MINIMUM WAGE



Over the past two years, workers across the state have been gaining significant momentum, pushing local minimum wage wins and setting the stage for statewide victories.

In March 2016, ACCE leaders celebrated when an **initiative to raise California's minimum wage to \$15** an hour by 2022 was passed, making the nation's largest state the first to lift base earnings to that level. According to worker group Fight for \$15, the increase will boost the wages of about 6.5 million California residents, or 43% of the state's workforce, who earn less than \$15.

In June, San Diego followed up with their own minimum wage and earned sick day victory, when voters approved a measure to increase the minimum wage to \$10.50 an hour immediately and increased it to \$11.50 in 2017. This puts **San Diego ahead of the state by a dollar and with 5 earned sick days instead of 3**. Earlier in the year, a worker chapter was organized where ACCE leaders voted for campaign priorities including closing the gender pay gap and continuing to organize for affordable day care providers.

ACCE leaders who would benefit from this initiative, showed up in numbers to rallies and community meetings to advance worker justice in their city leading up to the vote in June.

PAID SICK DAYS

In 2016, ACCE also continued its work with the Raise the Wage coalition in **Los Angeles**, resulting in the **passage of a citywide law requiring employers to provide a minimum of six paid sick days per year**. Activities included several grassroots events with low-wage workers from ACCE and other organizations describing the difficulty of having to choose between no paycheck and going to work sick - and pushing their elected officials through direct conversations at City Hall and in the community. ACCE worked with key partners such as LAANE, the LA County Federation of Labor, and SEIU in winning this historic victory for LA workers.

"My name is Jodi Simpson. I work at a hotel here in Sacramento as a housekeeper. I am a single mother and month to month I worry about whether I will make enough to Keep the roof over our heads and food on the table. It's timem we took steps to Raise California State Minimum wage and make sure our wages increase with the cost of living so our families can meet the basics."



— Jodi Simpson, Sacramento ACCE

FAIR WORK WEEK!

As we continue to see cities all over the state raise their minimum wages, ACCE leaders also recognize another important factor to low wages and worker insecurity: scheduling. Across California retail and fast food workers face appalling levels of underemployment, abusive clopens (closing at work one day and opening the next day), and erratic last minute schedule changes that lead directly to income instability, job insecurity, and work related stress.

In 2015, ACCE Institute began organizing retail workers in Emeryville around just hours and wages. Over the course of one year, ACCE collected several hundred surveys of Emeryville retail workers and ACCE leaders formed a committee that began to identify solutions to their scheduling problems. Based on those surveys and worker-identified

solutions, in March 2016 ACCE Institute, the Center for Popular Democracy (CPD) and the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE) released a report exposing the abusive scheduling practices of major retail corporations and calling for a Fair Work Week. After months of ACCE leaders organizing, doing actions, and visiting with the Mayor, Council Members, and community stakeholders, in November 2016 we celebrated a historical win when the Fair Work Week ordinance passed - making Emeryville the third city in the country to pass an ordinance related to scheduling!

Starting July 1st, 2017, thousands of retail and fast food employees in Emeryville will have two weeks advance notice of schedules, access to full-time work, and an end to constant last minute changes and clopens.



Neighborhood Infrastructure and Local Hiring

PROGRESSIVE REVENUE

As a convener of the Fix LA Coalition in Los Angeles, in 2016, ACCE Institute led a successful campaign to formalize the city's historic commitment to restore critical services through the creation of 5,000 new permanent city jobs and an unprecedented targeted local hiring program.

After sustained public pressure, leaders of ACCE and other Fix LA organizations were joined by LA Mayor Eric Garcetti as he signed an executive order requiring department heads to begin hiring and announcing the **local hire program that will, for the first time, make stable city jobs more broadly accessible to residents of South LA** and other low-income communities of color. ACCE's neighborhood-based organizing across LA also helped win a **multi-million dollar increase in the city budget for critical services** such as tree trimming, street repair, and trash removal.

PRESERVING COMMUNITY SPACE IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

More than ever, ACCE Institute leaders recognize the importance of progressive revenue to create and maintain community spaces.

After years of fighting to save the Ambrose Community Park swimming pool, ACCE leaders will finally celebrate its official reopening on Memorial Day, 2017. The Ambrose Park and swimming pool is both a central hub for the city of Pittsburg and for Bay Point families. Thanks to all the leaders, parents and children who went to countless meetings, spoke out, and knocked on doors- the renovation of the pool is finally back on track, with the county, city of Pittsburg and the Ambrose park district each pledging additional new money to close a \$682,000 funding gap.



Corporate Accountability

For years, ACCE Institute has been defending our communities from banks, like Wells Fargo, and going on the offense fighting for policy and regulations that advance our rights as homeowners and consumers. Last year, ACCE Institute went on the offense again with Community for Better Banks (CBB), focusing on the way Wells Fargo treats its workers.

In October 2016, news broke of Wells Fargo's continued predatory practices. Nearly 2 million fraudulent accounts were created in order to bring in record breaking profits for Wells Fargo. At the root of fraudulent accounts opened by employees, were unrealistic and extreme sales goals that put a lot of pressure on workers to meet sales quotas, by any means necessary.

Throughout 2016, ACCE partnered with CBB to support the organizing of front-line bank workers and conduct coordinated campaigns between bank workers and community members impacted by the banks' bad policies. Bank workers organizing with CBB exposed the sales goals scandal through conversations with the LA Times and LA City Attorney's office, which lead to the federal investigation and forced resignation, last year, of Wells Fargo CEO John Stumpf.

In the fall of 2016:

- **Los Angeles won a major lawsuit** filed in 2014 by Los Angeles City Atty. Mike Feuer as well as investigations by two federal regulators: the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. The bank will pay \$100 million to the CFPB — the largest fine the federal agency has ever imposed — as well as **\$50 million to the city and county of Los Angeles** and \$35 million to the OCC. The bank will also pay **refunds to customers** who paid fees on accounts they never wanted. Most importantly, the bank also **lowered sales goals**, improving the work environment for Wells Fargo employees.



- **CBB and ACCE successfully pushed for the introduction of new criteria for banks that contract with the city of Los Angeles** around social responsibility, including a ban on sales goals. CBB and ACCE are currently joining with groups organizing against the funding of new oil pipelines to **ensure that the broadest possible social responsibility criteria** are included in the final language of the city's new standards for banking contractors.
- In December, after years of ACCE members and borrowers crying out for justice, **San Francisco officials finally took action** to hold Wells accountable by calling for "Sanctioning Wells Fargo" which includes a **two-year suspension of Wells Fargo's provision of broker/dealer, commercial banking, and commercial paper dealer services** to the city as well as a two-year removal of Wells Fargo for the provision of securities investments and incorporation of social responsibility provisions in future banking contract solicitations



Political Education

Because of our commitment to long-term community empowerment and big-picture systemic change, ACCE Institute staff and leaders have made a commitment to political education as a means to more deeply understand the root causes of the problems our communities face, in order to develop a more informed plan of how to address these problems and a more concrete proactive vision of the society we are fighting for.

INTERNATIONALIZING OUR PERSPECTIVE AND STRUGGLE

For the past two years ACCE has been **invited to participate in the International Course on Political Training for Political Educators in Brazil**. The 8-week course, hosted by MST (Brazilian Landless Workers Movement), is focused on deepening understanding of political economy, movement history, culture, organizational structure and international movements that are fighting for economic justice in different parts of the world. The course, which involves over 60 members of international movements from more than 25 countries, has been an eye opening experience for staff and leaders that have attended- impacting our analysis, political education and commitment to our current and future work.

BUILDING DOMESTIC CROSS-MOVEMENT SOLIDARITY

PEP, the Popular Education Project, is a collective of organizers and popular educators based in the United States, conducting courses and providing a space for organizers, leaders, and activists to study, discuss,

and reflect on the issues that we encounter in our current political and economic system. PEP courses have focused on an introduction to popular education and study in areas including people's history of the U.S., the history of resistance movements in specific regions of the US, and grassroots popular education methodology, among other themes. ACCE members and staff have participated in several PEP courses including the Detroit Summer School of Resistance, the Salinas School of Resistance, and short courses on the affordable housing and displacement crisis impacting cities across the country. Our experience with PEP has broadened our understanding of the interconnectedness of U.S. historical and current struggles around issues of racial and economic justice, as well as of the forces that are driving many of the key problems we address such as the rising cost of housing and the defunding of public education and services.

A-TEAM

Last year, 78 ACCE leaders completed an intensive training and worked over 500 volunteer shifts, helping to mobilize the vote on Election Day!

The A-Team "Precinct Captain Training" was a 2-day intensive program focusing on education and skill development. A particular priority was on analyzing the history of U.S. voter disenfranchisement. Leaders constructed a historical timeline going as far back as 1772 to understand the historical roots of exclusion of black people, Native Americans and new immigrants from civic participation. There was also a focus on the many social movements that fought hard to make legal and cultural headway on breaking this pervasive cycle of exclusion. After this intensive political education, which resonated with many on a personal level, leaders were eager to activate their knowledge and make an intervention. The second day, leaders were trained on high-skill, electoral canvassing, followed by a field day of visiting and engaging their own neighbors in their precincts on critical local and statewide issues. After the 2 day training, Precinct Captains continued to do voter outreach until election night.

We intend to build on this leadership, using our general framework of deep political education, personal transformational and skill building to continue to expand our grassroots leadership.

Creating Organizational Alignment

ROADMAP PROJECT

Throughout 2016 the 3 largest community groups/networks in California (ACCE, PICO California, and California Calls) met to collectively unpack the structural and institutional racial and economic inequities rooted in all levels of our society. We are developing the analyses and tools that we think are necessary to tackle those inequities including:

- **A shared analysis of the interconnected drivers of racial and economic inequality.**
- **A power analysis of the forces that maintain the status quo.**
- **A larger framework and 10 year roadmap of both policy and power building strategies that would move the state toward structural shifts needed to tackle inequity and build progressive infrastructure.**

MVP

The Million Voter Project (MVP) is a collaboration of California's strongest community-based networks, including ACCE, Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), California Calls, the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA), Mobilize the Immigrant Vote (MIV), and PICO California, with support from the nation's largest online Latinx organizing group, Presente.org.

Through MVP, ACCE Institute helped contact and activate 80,000 new voters in 2016. We are building our collective voter base to one million by 2018, helping to build enough political power to become a consistent and decisive voting block to advance common values that include community investment, healthy neighborhoods, united communities and cross-racial and cross-issue solidarity.



2016 REVENUE: 2,760,055.72

2016 MAJOR FOUNDATIONS AND UNION SUPPORTERS

American Federation of Teachers
Arca Foundation
California Community Foundation
Communication Workers of America
East Bay Community Foundation
Firedoll Foundation
Ford Foundation
Friedman Family Foundation
Liberty Hill Foundation
Mertz Gilmore Foundation
Needmor Fund
NoVo Foundation
Piper Fund
Service Employees International Union Local 721
Service Employees International Union -United Services Workers West
San Francisco Foundation
Y&H Soda Foundation
Solidago Foundation
Surdna Foundation
The California Endowment
United Teachers of Los Angeles
Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock
The Whitman Institute

“Under the leadership of Executive Director Christina Livingston, ACCE Institute continues to be one of the most effective organizations in the country working on economic and racial inequality and issues of financialization. From engaging and supporting low-income communities impacted by privatization, predatory municipal finance, gentrification and the housing crisis, to spearheading grassroots organizing on municipal finance, to conducting research that elevates the role of hedge funds and private equity in driving foreclosure and community displacement in California and nationwide- ACCE Institute is critical in fostering a media and community debate about the ways in which federal agencies and corporate actors should engage our communities and articulating solutions for how to hold them accountable. The Arca Foundation is proud to support organizations

like ACCE Institute, that don’t back down from the big fights that are getting us closer to an equitable economy, where people are put before profits.”



— Anna Lefer Kuhn,
Executive Director, Arca
Foundation

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