

# Key Victories

## 2025



**Metro IAF** is a part of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), the nation's first and largest network of multi-faith, multiracial power organizations. We partner with religious congregations, civic organizations, nonprofits, and unions at the local level to build broad-based, strictly nonpartisan citizen power organizations, creating leadership development and citizen-led action opportunities and relationships across the lines that often divide our communities. This document highlights key 2025 victories won by 17 IAF/Metro IAF organizations in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, South, and Great Lakes regions, demonstrating the power of local organizing.

## Power Organizing: Accountability

[NYC Mayoral Candidates Pledge Accountability and Results to Metro IAF NY](#): 1,750+ Metro IAF leaders from East Brooklyn Congregations, Queens Power, Manhattan Together, and Bronx Metro IAF, engaged mayoral candidates Zohran Mamdani and Andrew Cuomo on a platform shaped by input from 10,000+ New Yorkers. The candidates committed to building 50,000 affordable housing units annually for 10 years with \$2.75 billion in capital funding and \$32 million for staffing each year, investing \$100 million in NYC Public Housing repairs, and creating 10 mental health crisis stabilization centers (two in each borough) with \$180 million in combined capital and operational funding.

[Durham CAN Candidates Assembly Builds Power and Wins Commitments](#): 612 delegates from 33 institutions gathered for Durham CAN's action celebrating five new African American congregations representing 9,000+ members and got mayoral and council candidates to commit to fast-tracking 100 affordable housing units, doubling funding for immigrant services, expanding youth employment with \$1 million pledged by the mayor, and convening a citywide violence reduction summit.



[Valley Interfaith Action \(VIA\) Leverages \\$200K, 1,001 Petitions to Win State Backing for Rural Transit](#): VIA organized 155 leaders, 1,001 resident petitions, 25 business letters of support, and a \$200,000 commitment to push for public transit in Rockingham County. Despite a statewide freeze on new rural transit services, more than 150 VIA leaders gathered at Zion Mennonite Church (above) and secured a "yes" from Commonwealth Transportation Board member John Good to work together to advance the project.

## Criminal Justice Reform

[Orange County Justice United Builds a Path to Low-Barrier Housing](#): After years of organizing, Orange County Justice United's new partnership with the county and Alliance Health marks a major step toward expanding reentry and low-barrier housing for residents who face the steepest obstacles to stability. Orange County and Alliance committed to an initial \$1.3 million to fund reentry housing and permanent supportive services for residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Orange County also committed 12 acres of County-owned land to include reentry housing.

[BUILD and Turnaround Tuesday Press for Maryland to Pass the Fair Chance Housing Bill](#): BUILD, TAT, and partner organizations pushed throughout the 2025 legislative session for Maryland's Fair Chance Housing Bill to limit criminal background checks, prohibit blanket denials, and promote individualized assessments to expand housing access for individuals with criminal records. Having secured support from key legislators, they're demanding its passage in 2026.

[Nearly 200 Rally with New Jersey Together \(NJT\) to Demand Action on Housing and Justice Reform](#): 200 leaders from NJT gathered to press gubernatorial candidates on affordable housing and criminal justice reform, meeting with five leading candidates, securing commitments to identify sites and subsidies for new housing, expand Cohome for adults with disabilities, and end technical parole violations that can lead to incarceration.

## Education and Childcare

[New Jersey Together's Schools Water Fountains Campaign Reaches Completion](#): NJT's organizing resulted in 1,169 new drinking fountains installed, providing clean water to approximately 23,000 students and 4,000 staff across 32 Jersey City Public Schools.

[Valley Interfaith Action's First-of-its-kind Partnership to Address Childcare Needs Launches in Shenandoah Valley:](#) 200 Rockingham County and Harrisonburg residents joined VIA and partners to dedicate the first Valley Early Education Reimagined (VEER) preschool at Park View Mennonite Church, which launched in January 2026 and will serve 45 students. A public-private partnership, VEER launches state-licensed early education centers at one-third the typical cost, providing sustainable funding, living wages, career advancement for educators, and a model for expanding affordable childcare across Virginia. A second site is planned for fall 2026.

## Housing and Neighborhood Development



[ONE Wake \(OW\) Presses for New Housing Initiative:](#) 1,000+ OW leaders gathered at Watts Chapel Baptist Church (above) to press Raleigh leaders to act on their affordable housing election campaign commitments. OW leaders demanded the Raleigh City Council and mayor issue a \$200 million affordable housing bond and identify 100 acres of public land on which to build 1,000 starter homes. Later, 200 OW leaders followed up by packing the Wake County Board of Commissioners meeting to support those same demands before their 2026 push to create the county's first housing bond.

[Metro IAF NY Organizes New York City Housing Authority Tenants:](#) More than 500 tenants informed a new action agenda unveiled at a March 30 gathering of multiple Metro IAF NY affiliates, celebrating progress made through the independent Ombudsman Call Center, while highlighting persistent NYCHA problems. Senior NYCHA leadership and Congressman Ritchie Torres pledged cooperation to improve repair reliability, confront infestations, and strengthen oversight of developers.

[Orange County Justice United Packs Public Hearing in \\$2M Housing Push:](#) Orange County Justice United leaders filled the May 20 public hearing to demand and win \$2 million in home repair funding, enough to clear a two-year waitlist of 200 low-income households. To date, 125 homes have been repaired, helping to stabilize long-standing Black neighborhoods and protect intergenerational homeownership.

[Housing Victory in Jersey City: Breaking Ground on Bayfront:](#) Jersey City Together celebrated a housing milestone with the groundbreaking of the 100 acre Bayfront development, with 35% of 210 new residential units designated as affordable. This victory stems from decades of organizing, including a \$400 million clean-up settlement and the push for the city to purchase the formerly contaminated site for \$100 million.

[BUILD Rallies 600+ Leaders to Secure \\$100M from Banks to Fight Redlining:](#) 600+ BUILD leaders gathered in West Baltimore as BUILD and bank partners publicly announced a goal to capitalize a \$100 million private fund led by PNC Financial and Bank of America to leverage the \$1.2 billion already committed by city and state governments to transform 33,000 vacant properties and lots into new homes.

[ReBUILD Metro: The Machine Works Gets Spinning on East Preston Street:](#) The 50,000 sq. ft., long-abandoned Machine Works in East Baltimore is getting a \$25 million redevelopment to become a hub for small businesses and innovative manufacturers as part of BUILD and ReBUILD Metro's long-term effort to revitalize Johnston Square and nearby neighborhoods.

[United Power Celebrates and Pushes for Increased Housing Investment:](#) 475 UP leaders gathered with Chicago officials to celebrate 75 new affordable homes completed and sold, with 75 more under construction. Mayor Brandon Johnson committed to cleaning up 500 city lots and working to invest \$25 million in bond funds. UP recognized state legislators for securing a new \$10 million for Reclaiming Communities, advancing the goal of 2,000 new affordable homes in historically divested Chicago neighborhoods.



[Fox River Valley Initiative \(FRVI\) Takes Action to Win Commitments on Housing, Mental Health, and Local Reform:](#) FRVI leaders from 21 institutions in Kane County took action to launch a rebuilding effort (above), securing commitments from their state representative and mayor to reopen a crisis stabilization center and improve affordable housing funding and access for essential workers and people with special needs.



**[BUILD Joins Baltimore Residents to Celebrate The Hammond's Grand Opening](#)**: 1,000 leaders (above) joined BUILD, ReBUILD Metro, and ReBUILD Johnston Square to open The Hammond, transforming a block of long-vacant lots in East Baltimore into 109 affordable apartments, the first new Enoch Pratt Free Library branch in 15 years, and permanent supportive housing for 12 formerly homeless families, marking over a decade of community-led revitalization and part of \$1.2 billion in public commitments.

**[DuPage United Celebrates Affordable Housing Win and Calls for Five More Countywide Developments](#)**: 250+ DuPage United leaders celebrated the groundbreaking of 42 affordable housing units, transforming an old motel, quadrupling tax revenue, and securing commitments from officials to support five more developments.

**[Lake County United Tackles Housing Shortage, Leverages Previously Secured \\$3M in State Funding for Additional Funding Commitments](#)**: Over 130 Lake County United leaders from 22 member institutions secured commitments from the mayor and County Board.

## Immigration

**[Durham CAN Leaders Win Fourth Amendment Workplace Resolution](#)**: 100+ Durham CAN leaders filled City Council chambers as the council unanimously passed the Fourth Amendment Workplace Resolution, ensuring city staff will not cooperate with ICE without a judicial warrant, mandating staff training on Fourth Amendment rights, and advancing protections for immigrant workers and families.

## Clean Energy

Metro IAF's Clean Energy Initiative is helping religious, nonprofit, and multifamily building owners in New York reduce their energy usage and manage costs in an era of increasing expenses. In 2025, we assisted with technical support and energy planning services, \$556,000 in demonstration project grants to offset the costs of energy upgrades, the completion of a competitive solar group procurement process, planning for multiple model retrofits in Nehemiah homes, and the successful dissolution of equipment leases for churches whose "energy as a service" contracts were with a company that didn't deliver those services.



**Spotlight: [United Power for Action and Justice's Reclaiming Chicago Campaign](#)** won the prestigious [\\$10 million Chicago Prize](#), a grant from the Pritzker Traubert Foundation. The Chicago Prize funds will initially focus on Reclaiming Chicago's first large-lot strategy, a development of 125 new homes in Chicago Lawn called Marquette Crossings. United Power's Reclaiming Chicago Campaign aims to build 2,000 Nehemiah for-sale homes on city-owned vacant lots, revitalizing four neighborhoods on Chicago's South and West sides. To date, United Power has raised \$52+ million from social investors, set in a revolving fund, to construct the homes. As these homes are sold, the Chicago Prize funds will recycle to allow the creation of other large-scale developments in the target communities and the continuation of Reclaiming Chicago's successful block-by-block strategy.

## Expanding Our Organizing Power



Bronx First community meeting

Metro IAF seeks to broaden and deepen its power over the next 10 years by organizing with more working class people and expanding into politically mixed areas, both in our existing footprint and in new areas in the Great Lakes, South, Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, and rural areas. Aligning with unions that share Metro IAF's organizing culture to build power through organization and train and develop leaders to lead their unions is a priority.



**Spotlight: North Carolina Statewide Power Building:**

North Carolina IAF, IAF/Metro IAF, and UNITE/HERE, the international union of 300,000 hotel, restaurant, and food service employees, launched a multi-year ground-up organizing alliance with the United Autoworkers and Communications Workers unions to build statewide power with and for working people. In a joint power-building effort beginning in July 2025 and continuing for the next 24 months, we aim to train leaders and organizers, build and launch a new IAF Mecklenburg County/Charlotte power organization, serve as allies on workers’ rights fights, and hold listening sessions with thousands of North Carolinians to develop a 2026 strictly non-partisan elections action agenda.

In 2025, we made concrete progress toward launching **new IAF/Metro IAF affiliates in five areas:**

- > **Bronx First**, a borough-wide broad-based organization with a strong base among working class residents, the rapidly growing Muslim community, health, youth, and housing nonprofits as well as other religious congregations, launched in February 2026. Over two years, local institutional leaders and the IAF/Metro IAF organizer met with 363 different imams, pastors, rabbis, presidents, and CEOs and conducted relational meetings and listening sessions involving more than 2,000 members, laying the foundation for the Bronx First power organization’s launch.
- > A **Baltimore County** organization rooted in large immigrant Catholic, African American Protestant, and Muslim congregations, many of which have 2,000-8,000 members, is planning a fall 2026 launch. The new organization will be closely aligned with BUILD and PLAN, Metro IAF’s current Maryland affiliates.
- > A **Winston-Salem/Forsyth County** organization will launch in summer 2026 with 30 institutions from across a growing and politically and racially diverse jurisdiction. It will become the fifth North Carolina IAF affiliate in the state.
- > IAF **Maine Sponsors** is a statewide organizing effort connected to the Groundwater Institute network, working to build a strictly non-partisan politically, economically, ethnically, and racially diverse organization spanning the myriad counties and municipalities in a rural state. After 400+ face-to-face meetings, 10+ info-sessions, sending 20+ leaders to IAF trainings out of state, and hosting two

3-day IAF trainings in-state, IAF Maine Sponsors is aiming for a founding action in late 2026 or early 2027.

- > **Peoria Sponsors** will officially join Illinois IAF as a chapter to build power and expand the Metro IAF ReClaiming/ Whole Blocks-Whole Neighborhoods revitalization strategy to rebuild Peoria’s blighted southside neighborhood. Peoria Sponsors will be a critical downstate ally for Illinois IAF’s four Chicagoland organizations. Twelve institutions engaged in the Peoria Sponsors organizing and sent over 100 people to local and regional IAF/Metro IAF organizing leadership training in 2025.

In addition, Metro IAF organizers and leaders did hundreds of relational meetings and many IAF power organizing introductory trainings, identifying leaders and institutions that have the appetite to work with IAF in Tidewater/ Hampton Roads, VA; Mecklenburg County/Charlotte, Greater Greensboro/High Point, and Cabarrus County, NC; Harrisburg and Lehigh Valley, PA; and Augusta, GA/Aiken, SC.

**Publications & Opinion Pieces**

**[Metro IAF 10 Years of Criminal Justice Reform Victories Report](#)**: Check out Metro IAF’s brief report on our many collective criminal justice reform victories over the last decade, all made possible thanks to organizing with returning citizens, their families, and community allies.

**[Chicago Sun Times letter to the editor](#)**: “Pope Leo: Come Home and Use Message of Love to Combat Anti-Immigration Raids.” Four leaders from United Power for Action and Justice wrote in support of Pope Leo marshalling a national and international moral force capable of resisting ICE and rolling back the assaults on immigrants.

**[New York Daily News op-ed: “For Trump, Power is Just Breaking Things”](#)**: The growing and complex American center retains the power to organize and push back on Trump’s strategy of dismantling and damaging institutions.

**[New York Daily News op-ed: “Organizing to Meet the New Challenges of Trump”](#)**: This piece offers a clearheaded roadmap for organizers navigating a turbulent national landscape, urging focus, disciplined engagement, and collaboration in the political arenas.

**[Chicago Tribune: United Power’s Reclaiming Chicago Campaign Featured](#)**: Learn more about United Power’s Reclaiming Chicago initiative, which has raised \$52 million in private capital, built and sold 76 homes, has 90 homes under development and 125 homes planned, moving toward its goal of 2,000 new homes over five years.

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