Thank You!
Community Coalition’s Gratitude Report

2020
2021
2022
Message from Miki & Alberto

Community Coalition entered 2020 understanding the material impact that the COVID-19 pandemic was having on South LA. CoCo reached out to hundreds of youth and families to understand their needs and develop strategies to help. Residents told us about their inability to connect to broadband and the lack of technology that made distance learning and virtual classrooms impossible. Additionally, many of our families are part of the service-sector, so working from home was not an option. Many more lost their jobs and immediately became unable to meet basic needs including food and rent.

In response, Community Coalition delivered water, sanitizing supplies, and paper goods to its members. We distributed more than 23,000 pieces of PPE. We gave laptops and hotspots to students and families in order to access the learning environment. Additionally, Community Coalition connected 2,000 South Los Angeles senior residents to hot meal programs and provided $525,000 in direct relief (including assistance for rent/mortgage, utilities and food).

We doubled down on our power building strategies by continuing to organize digitally, coordinating mutual aid efforts within South Los Angeles, and continuing our efforts to close corporate tax loopholes via the Schools & Communities First (Prop 15) campaign which aimed to make corporations pay their fair share in taxes. CoCo led a continued PUSH to decriminalize traffic stops in LA and centered racial equity by promoting the establishment of an Office of Racial Equity, which city officials committed to in response to the mass protests.

In partnership with Charles Drew University, CoCo provided support to a multilevel government effort which vaccinated 4,478 Black and Brown South Los Angeles residents at Jesse Owens Park in a two-week period. To date, we have worked with other partners to make sure that more than 10,000 residents in South Central have secured more protection against Covid-19.

(Continued on next page)
We worked with the Police-Free Schools Coalition (CoCo, BSS, ICS, Students Deserve, LCSC, SJLI, CADRE, UTLA) to secure $56.7 million in funding to improve Black student achievement (BSA) and provide alternatives to school police. These annual/ongoing investments will serve as the groundwork to create the truly transformative educational environment that our kids deserve. This kind of investment is specifically directed at providing alternatives to school police, increasing mental health personnel, creating culturally relevant curriculum, establishing community-based partnerships, and hiring administrative personnel solely dedicated to driving BSA program implementation with direct community oversight and input.

The Make L.A. Whole Coalition (CoCo, Brotherhood Crusade, SEIU 2015 and InnerCity Struggle) entered families, workers, small businesses and youth—who were the most impacted by the pandemic—while demanding funding for all Angelenos to thrive. The voices of the people were heard and our plan made a huge impact. The City Council’s Budget and Finance Committee incorporated more than $170 million in funding into LA’s final 2021-22 fiscal year budget.

Our organizing efforts as part of the Equity Alliance for LA’s Kids (CoCo, Advancement Project, InnerCity Struggles and Partnership for LA Schools) resulted in LA Unified Board members voting affirmatively 6-1 to distribute an additional $700 million to schools in the 2021-22 academic year using the Student Equity Needs Index (SENI). The SENI formula is used to inform the allocation of funds so that LA Unified can efficiently address the achievement gap.

As we look to 2022, this is our moment to show our gratitude and deep appreciation for all who make Community Coalition’s work possible. We thank each and every one of our members, staff, funders and donors who show their dedication to building a better South L.A. You are the reason that we remain hopeful. We are confident about all we have to do because of all we have done together.

And while we are still in the throes of a global pandemic from which we are striving to create an equitable road map forward, we know that the path together must be taken together. We are grateful to take those steps with all of you.

Message from Miki & Alberto

MIKI WOODARD
CoCo’s Board Chair
Making “Care for All” A Reality

Engaging residents on key issues impacting South LA is an every year, every month activity. Even in quiet election years, it is imperative to constantly engage with residents about what’s important to them. Here at Community Coalition, the saying “the people closest to the problem are closest to the solution” is a mantra and at the center of our values. And that core belief is the driver behind transformational public policy which can be enacted when our community is onboard, feels engaged, and is seen and heard.

Because whether you are from the farmlands of Central Valley, the suburbs of the Inland Empire or the heart of South Central, we know Cali folks innovate, lead, and make positive change. And when we stand together, our future always looks brighter. Working with We Are California, our canvassing efforts are part of our political engagement. Community Coalition is helping spearhead the “We Are South LA” campaign as a project of California Calls—a growing alliance of 31 grassroots, community-based organizations spanning urban, rural and suburban counties across the state. We team up to engage, educate and motivate new and infrequent voters—particularly young people from communities of color and from poor and working class neighborhoods—to ensure that California’s electorate reflects our state’s diverse population.

“What we want to do is to keep building the people power going into any given election year. Our goal is to mobilize at least 8,500 residents statewide to stay involved in these We Are California canvassing efforts,” said Linda Gomez Evans, Community Coalition’s Civic Engagement Manager. “To do that, you always have to listen to what residents are saying about the key issues impacting them. It helps you stay close to what’s actually happening in the community.”

The We Are California team has been engaging residents on polices and topics that include Care For All, a state and local measure that gives much-needed support care for the elderly, children, and sick loved ones. Care For All’s goal is to make sure there are community services for those facing various challenges including housing. California’s housing crisis—compounded by homelessness and exorbitant housing prices—impacted black, brown and indigenous residents pre-Covid. Post-pandemic, we know that the

When people come together, power is built and opportunities to ensure that equitable policies become a reality for those hit hardest by the pandemic are brought forward.
Solidarity: A Beautiful Struggle

In actual practice, solidarity is not always smooth sailing—far from it. But the work and effort to achieve it creates true and lasting power.

For the first time, our organizations came together as a coalition. We convened 30+ organizations, known as the People's Bloc, to conduct grassroots community engagement and education through storytelling, targeted messaging, and the creation of "Solidarity Maps" which advocated for racial solidarity when drawing new maps of representation. We put our core principles of community participation, centering people, power-building organizations, and transforming action into equity at the center of this effort. We stood strong together as organizations aligned with one another, and on a mission, to ensure the redistricting process included every day residents by elevating their voices and putting forth solutions for Los Angeles' future.

We demonstrated that our residents are the experts in, and on, our neighborhoods. We showcased what makes our communities distinct and unique. We defined our "communities of interest." We highlighted our shared priorities and concerns. We demonstrated why Lincoln Heights, Boyle Heights, and El Sereno should not be broken up. We elevated why Koreatown residents' voices should be heard and, we demanded crucial economic engines and cultural assets be returned to a district with a solidly Black Citizens Voting Age Population (CVAP), which could have empowered its residents economically and politically for the foreseeable future.

This is an unprecedented time, and we still have an unparalleled opportunity to usher in equitable transformation—as long as we remember that together we win. We will continue to fight for a South LA-wide agenda inclusive of Black and Latino people that is not defined by political lines. Stopping the (police) stops, Make LA Whole, COVID-related mutual aid, vaccinations, and educational funding—these are all fights we have advanced that aim to tear down structural racism for the benefit of Black and Brown people in South Los Angeles.

Multiracial solidarity is the only path forward. As part of our DNA, CoCo elevates the voices of our members to shift power and secure resources for the 8th, 9th, and 10th council districts of Los Angeles in which our members live. While inherently tricky at times, our struggles bring out the true beauty of our communities’ resilience.
2020 Funding Overview

**2020 Expenses**
- Programs (Youth Services, Community Organizing, Communications, Other Program Services): 77.5%
- Management and General Operations: 15%
- Fundraising: 7.5%

**2020 Revenue and Support**
- Foundations and Corporate Funding: 56%
- Government Grants: 18%
- Special Events and Other Unrestricted Funds: 23%
- Individual Contributions: 3%
Policy, Campaign and Equity Wins

2020
• CoCo wins one of four $500K LA City Great Streets Challenge grants to build the People’s Plaza on Manchester and Vermont.

• The L.A. County Board of Supervisors voted to end the collection of criminal administrative fees. $1.8 billion in previously assessed fees were discharged.

• Measure R significantly strengthened the civilian oversight of the Sheriff’s Department and increased funding for improving psychiatric care, drug treatment and other services to individuals impacted by incarceration.

• Measure J passes requiring ten percent of unrestricted county funds—between $360M and $900M annually—be spent on investments in communities disproportionally harmed by racism.

• UC System Suspends SAT Requirement. As a result of a lawsuit brought by social justice partners, including Community Coalition, University of California regents voted to suspend SAT and ACT testing requirements through 2024 and eliminate them for California students by 2025. One of the lead plaintiffs was CoCo SCYEA youth leader Kawika Smith.

2021
• Funding Black Student Achievement was another milestone victory in the fight to divest from school police and invest in Black students in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). This win ensured a budget amendment that permanently reallocated $25 million from the L.A. School police budget, and an additional $12.1 million per year to be spent in ways the community demanded. This includes:
  - $4.4 million—Curriculum & Instruction
  - $2 million—Community Partnerships
  - $2 million—Expansion of "Community Schools" model program
  - $30.1 million—School Climate & Wellness (Psychiatric Social Workers, Counselors, School Climate Coaches, Restorative Justice Coordinator, and Flexible Grant dollars)
  - $600K—Implementation & Accountability team (specifically dedicated to this initiative)

• “SENI 2.0 Equity is Justice Campaign” garnered an additional $700 million to schools using the Student Equity Needs Index for 2021-22 academic year. The SENI is a formula used to inform the allocation of funds so that L.A. Unified can efficiently address the achievement gap.

• $170 million in funding demanded by The Making Los Angeles Whole plan was included in the final budget to address the needs of families and communities adversely affected by COVID-19. The leaders and members of the Make It Whole Coalition created a bold community reinvestment platform that centered on women, families, and youth.

• Mommy, Daddy & Me resolution was passed unanimously. SCYEA youth leader and LAUSD Board Member Kamarie Brown’s resolution provides support for youth parents throughout the district—a historically underserved student population. The resolution is inclusive of student lactation centers, day/infant care services, staff training, comprehensive sexual health education and more.
Community Coalition had a major responsibility to create a virtual learning experience in order to curb learning loss, support families, and kick off the 2021-2022 school year in a way that empowered our students and parents. To do that, we put together the Summer Academic Program (SAP) for 90 young scholars ages 8-18 from across South LA. It was an opportunity for families and their children to become reengaged with all aspects of in-person learning: from waking up on time to being transported to the learning environment to a full day out of the house and interacting with fellow students.

Parents were deeply concerned about student learning loss in addition to students' socio-emotional health due to increased isolation and family deaths. Parents also expressed frustration with their students' schools due to a lack of communication and transparency about the 2021-22 school year. Lastly, parents voiced a strong desire for the SAP to include pro-social extra-curricular activities that would foster positive student development.

"I noticed with all three of my kids who were involved in the program that they were just more social, able to communicate better, and back in that mindset of seeing their friends in person," said Angelica Ramos, a South LA parent who is also a member of Community Coalition.

The SAP focused on project-based learning. Classrooms had different creative themes like developing ideas for restaurants, brainstorming how to bring more healthy food into South LA, and photojournalism. There were also gardening activities and interactive financial literacy and political education sessions.

"My kids now love plants and are asking me to get more of them," Ramos said with a laugh.

Given the impacts of the pandemic, mental health and wellness were also at the core of the program. Youth had the opportunity to share their feelings about going back to school, what happened in their world during the pandemic, and any losses they experienced. Trained staff members also led sessions offering coping strategies to participants. The strategies focused on building healthy relationships and resilience, stress management, and communication skills.

Overall, the program engaged students 5 days a week for 7 weeks. Three of the 5 days were in person while the other 2 days were virtual learning days. Community Coalition hired a culturally knowledgeable and sensitive academic team consisting of six instructors and seven student engagement facilitators. All academic instructors were/are South LA educators who have experience working with Black and Brown families.
Taking Leadership Development to New Levels

Community Coalition is building upon our 30-year history of building people and political power from the ground up, anchored in community organizing, civic engagement, policy advocacy, mass communications, and strategic alliances, to actualize our vision of creating a Center for Community Organizing (CCO). The Center, which will be a program of CoCo, is dedicated to supporting local power building across the country with people of color who have the most at stake in winning progressive, and transformative social change. It will also increase CoCo’s ability to engage larger numbers of South LA residents through cultural organizing and civic leadership training, as well as a new social enterprise that meets a critical community need.

There has been considerable change in the field of community organizing over the past three decades that can help inform and strengthen local power building strategies. The goal is to utilize the Center as a contribution to the larger social justice movement. CoCo will train a cadre of activists and organizers that can operate in different communities and contexts nationally.

We know we cannot export movements; however, we can share the greatest lessons learned over the course of our three decades of developing leaders, winning policies, and building power for African Americans and Latinos. We know that when everyday people win tangible victories, they are more likely to stay engaged long-term—which is critical to defending and protecting policy, structural, and political wins. The need for trained, collaborative, and strategic organizers and activists has never been greater.

Based on interviews with over 20 organizational and movement leaders across the country in early 2019, CoCo compiled a snapshot of the opportunities and gaps among base building organizations that impact the sector’s ability to build people and political power. There is a particular need for advanced training with sustained learning and connection in the progressive movement. Most notably, more organizing training with a racial justice analysis is needed to help center Black liberation for other communities of color.

Participants will be trained in CoCo’s distinctive model of building power, improving the material conditions of community residents, and developing grassroots Black and Latino leadership. Participants will also explore deep neighborhood and high school campus organizing that produces grassroots leadership, in addition to large mass-based organizing that produces the scale necessary to win policy and electoral campaigns.
In 1990, South LA providers convened a conference entitled “Crack: Crisis in the African American Community” and from that convening, Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment was born. A few years later, the Coalition formally launched the Prevention Network (PN)—an alliance of South LA social service agencies providing drug treatment, transitional housing, mental health, and other services in the community.

Over the last 30 years, social service providers in the PN identified key issues that drove decisive campaigns throughout Community Coalition’s history, including “Rebuild South Central Without Liquor Stores,” which resulted in the closure of 150 liquor stores in South L.A. after the 1992 civil unrest. The Prevention Net-work also led local and regional efforts to pass California’s Proposition 47, a historic bill in 2014 that stopped the use of excessive prison sentences for minor crimes and invested prison spending savings into prevention and treatment services.

On September 7, 2021, the Prevention was relaunched.

“I think the Prevention Network relaunch is timely and very relevant. COVID-19 amplified inequities that already existed, creating greater need for South LA residents,” says Marianna Hernandez, Community Coalition’s Prevention Manager. “The PN brings together service providers to strengthen the social safety net of the community by providing holistic care for those in need.”

The power of the Prevention Network is the ability to bring together service providers from across the Service Planning Area 6 (SPA 6) to shape the social services delivery landscape in order to create avenues of investment that South Los Angeles so richly deserves. More than 52 providers joined the relaunch to hear the results of the Covid-19 Communities of Color Assessment presentation from Dr. Cheryl Grills and became members of the newly reformed network.

“Prevention is about trying to reach family members before intervention is needed,” says Corey Matthews, Chief Operating Officer of Community Coalition. “We are pushing an agenda to help persons as a whole with their overall needs because people come to you whole.”

The Prevention Network continues to direct policy initiatives and resource distribution according to the real human needs they see and address on a daily basis. Network members remain at the forefront of the movement to increase the state’s investment in programs that help families and local neighborhoods thrive.
We continue to face a crisis unlike none we’ve seen before. The loss of lives due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19, the protests for racial justice and equity, the chaos of the census and redistricting, and the uncertainty of when we will be able to return to more public lives continue to perpetuate stress, anxiety, and feelings of disconnectedness. In addition, we are still facing various social, racial, and political challenges that cause fear, mistrust, and division.

The need for collaborative conversations to discover equitable solutions has never been greater. Likewise, the willingness of communities, countries, and governments to work together to acknowledge the value of people power for the collective human interest has never been more relevant.

With all we’ve faced this year, what gives us strength, hope, and solace is that we’ve done so with you—our members, donors, and partners. We are grateful for you and the relationship you share with CoCo. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.”

For any social justice organization, longevity is by no means guaranteed, so we were honored by your continued support and allyship. We are sending our sincerest thanks and so much gratitude for your support this year. Together, we have made a tremendous impact on improving the conditions in South LA because together, we win!

As 2021 comes to a close, I cannot help but feel inspired by the amount of hope we created together during this unforgettable year. Your financial support allowed us to do amazing work while remaining socially distanced and in virtual environments. Your gifts fueled another year of progress, community building, and resiliency in South L.A. communities that we all love so much!

I know I speak for the entire staff of Community Coalition when I say we are excited to make 2022 a year in which we strengthen our momentum to gain significant political, economic and social justice wins with our community residents and members leading the charge.

With Hope,

GERI LAWRENCE
Deputy Director of Advancement

Thank You For Your Support!