



SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH  
ASSOCIATES

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## CLP 1.0 Community Grantee Profiles

Final Regranting Evaluation Report

March 24, 2014

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## **Arab Resource and Organizing Center (AROC): Increasing Community Advocacy Capacity by Growing Its Member Base**

The Arab Resource and Organizing Center (AROC) was created with the vision of developing a strong and united Arab community to work together in shifting power and creating change, while helping to build a unified movement working towards economic and social justice. AROC was established in 2007 from the San Francisco chapter of the American Arab anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC-SF). Founded in 1987, ADC-SF was an organization that sought to build leadership among and empower the Arab Community in the Bay Area while seeking to end discrimination of all people. When ADC-SF formally established AROC in 2007, the goal for the organization was to incorporate direct services through member organizing, legal services, immigrant advocacy, and youth leadership development.

Census data suggest that Arab and Middle Eastern communities are rapidly growing in the United States and California. In the four San Francisco Bay Area counties, Santa Clara, Alameda, San Mateo, and San Francisco have the largest combined Arab and Middle Eastern populations. After 9/11, these communities have faced and continue to experience significant challenges such as media stereotyping, discrimination and hate crimes. Additionally, many families have been affected by anti-immigration policies (mass detentions and deportations). AROC works to advocate for this community, particularly lower-income Arab individuals from Arab and Muslim countries, and raise awareness about the experience of Arabs and Muslims to challenge discrimination. AROC's Executive Director, Lara Kiswani, shared that AROC's advocacy goals are to: (a) raise community members' consciousness about political actions that impact them (immigration issues or world affairs); and (b) to have them become political organizers themselves. But AROC is a small organization. Staff felt that in order to increase its advocacy capacity, it needed to building its membership base, particularly so that it could better address immigrant rights. Lara shared:

*We really wanted to broaden and build our membership base. Originally, we had only one staff member and an intern. Over the past five years, we expanded our staff and expanded some of our membership, but we really wanted to continue building upon that work to continue campaigns but ultimately to really establish our base.*

### **CLP-Funded Work**

AROC learned about the capacity-building grants offered through CLP through Asian Americans Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy (AAPIP). AROC has had a long history with AAPIP, which began after the events of September 11. AAPIP provided AROC with funds to educate the

community on Arab culture with the purpose of reducing negative stereotypes and stigma of Muslim people after 9/11. This Civic Engagement Fund is a pooled set of funds that AAPIP uses to “invest and raise the visibility of Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian communities.” AAPIP then recommended that AROC apply for CLP funds to hire a membership coordinator and bring in a consultant to help develop and increase AROC’s overall membership capacity. At the same time, AROC also received CLP funding through The San Francisco Foundation (TSFF), which it used to work with a financial consultant to develop budget templates and provide fiscal management training for AROC’s Executive Director. Lara shared that AROC’s prior relationships with AAPIP and TSFF, two regranting intermediaries for the CLP, opened opportunities for CLP funding which enabled AROC to strategically tackle its capacity-building needs, stating: “Since they both work with local organizations, it just seemed like a good partnership.”

With the support of AAPIP and TSFF, AROC worked to establish a capacity-building plan. With AAPIP’s support, AROC hired a membership coordinator to manage all efforts in recruiting, training, and retaining Arab American community members to become active members of AROC. Additionally, in order to provide support to the membership coordinator, AROC contracted a consultant (who was already an active AROC member and an experienced campaign planner) to develop a plan for building its membership base and organizing advocacy campaigns. The consultant worked with the Membership Coordinator for approximately 6 months, providing targeted guidance and training on member recruitment, training, and retention. The consultant also worked with the Membership Coordinator to develop curriculum focused on building member leadership. By the end of this period, they had built a membership recruitment plan and facilitated member workshops on political education and awareness to empower members to become involved with AROC’s campaigns.

Resources provided through AAPIP also enabled AROC to fund semi-annual staff retreats focused on developing and refining AROC’s organizational Strategic Plan and to plan, implement, and evaluate their current programs. Lara noted how important these retreats were for the organization, particularly in ensuring that AROC’s programs were appropriately addressing community needs:

*These retreats help our staff and some invited members determine what the needs of our communities are and modify our programs to fit those needs. The second retreat we held over the summer, and we used that to focus on program evaluation. We really looked at our strengths and challenges and that was very helpful to see how we could improve our programs but also our staff structure and leadership.*

As it worked with AAPIP to receive base-building and strategic planning support, AROC also worked with TSFF to improve its financial management capacity. With CLP funds and support provided through TSFF, AROC contracted a financial consultant to help build an accurate budget system to track expenditures and grant requirements. According to Lara, the consultant looked at each of AROC's programs and helped develop a plan for future funding needs. Though AROC is fiscally-sponsored by the Tides Project, which primarily manages all grant requirements and budgets, Lara felt that having an external person with a "fresh eye" develop a budget template specific to AROC's services was extremely valuable, particularly for a small, but growing organization:

*Though we have a fiscal sponsor, we are somewhat removed from how that process actually works. This person actually catered the budget to what we needed as a smaller organization that does community work. So the budget actually reflects what we do. She established it so that we're able to just plug in and play...now when I look at it, it's not so overwhelming.*

## Outcomes

Lara noted that AROC is growing rapidly from a small organization to a more established and formalized organization in the Bay Area. CLP resources have been very helpful in facilitating this shift by providing support for stronger leadership, operational, and programmatic capacity. In supporting AROC's strategic planning effort, CLP and AAPIP helped the organization to develop a thoughtful, three-year Strategic Plan for building membership, organizing strategic campaigns, and evaluating and improving current programming. With resource support from CLP intermediaries AAPIP and TSFF, AROC was able to immediately begin implementing key aspects of its strategic plan—contracting with a consultant and hiring staff to lead the membership recruitment efforts, and engaging a consultant to support them in developing more appropriate financial management tools.

At the same time, AROC's Executive Director was building her leadership skills and expanding her networks through participation in AAPIP and TSFF convenings and cohort meetings. Lara shared that, for leaders of color working in small membership based organizations, these convenings were especially valuable. Through them, community partners learned practical skills—e.g. in one convening, community partners met with staff from local foundations, who then provided feedback on their one-page organization and project descriptions so that they could improve them. Participants also built community across other leaders serving low-income communities of color – learning from one another not only about their experiences within the communities they serve, but about their sometimes challenging efforts to engage mainstream funders.

The outcomes experienced from the CLP funds will likely continue to reverberate in the communities AROC serves. Lara believes that in order to continue building organizational capacity, AROC must continue building their membership base. From her perspective, staff “comes and goes,” which is why ensuring that communities are “invested” in the work is the most effective way to continue AROC’s immigration advocacy efforts. With CLP support, AROC has been able to launch a capacity-building process that they hope will continue to strengthen the organization and the community it serves.

## **Boys & Girls Club of the Sequoias (BGCS): Community Beacon of After School Youth Services**

Visalia, the largest city in Tulare County, has been compared to Appalachia because of the extreme poverty that marks the region. About one-third of youth in Tulare County live in poverty and because a lot of youth go home to an empty house after school or are left home alone in the summer if both parents work, the Boys & Girls Club of the Sequoias (BGCS) plays a pivotal role in countering the lack of supervision and growing gang violence in the community. Located in the counties where they are most needed, i.e., usually in low-income areas, the Boys & Girls Clubs focus on youth mentorship and provide a stable afterschool environment for youth—many of whom would say they grew up in the Clubs—and helps develop youth that may not otherwise have structure, supervision, or positive role models in their lives.

In May 2011 Tulare County's two Boys & Girls Clubs merged into one organization under the name of the Boys & Girls Club of the Sequoias (BGCS). BGCS provides services across twelve sites to youth between six to 18 years old in the cities of Visalia, Tulare, Ivanhoe, Farmersville, Exeter, and Porterville. BGCS youth mirror the overall population of Tulare County which is 55-60% Latino, 20% White, and 20% African American and other ethnicities. The Club operates as a youth development organization focused on helping all young people, especially those who need help the most, to become responsible, caring, and productive members of society through academic success, character and citizenship development, and healthy lifestyles in activities such as sports fitness, recreation, education, arts, character and leadership development, health and life skills, computer education, video games, and internet safety.

While the unification of the two Clubs created a single, stronger Club, the identity of the Boys & Girls Club of the Sequoias was muddled by its name (which was the name of one of the merged Clubs), its location behind a YMCA building, and being confused with the Big Brothers and Sisters mentoring program for at-risk youth. With the national backing of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America organization, BGCS had a strong support system in place already. However, the effect of the merger on donor relations and contributions—a mainstay for all Boys & Girls Clubs—created a need for the BGCS to reconnect with and expand their community of support, which includes parents, board members, donors, and volunteers.

BGCS applied for the CLP grant in order to strengthen the organization's marketing in a way that would brand the BGCS as distinct from the YMCA and Big Brothers and Sisters programs and consequently reengage the organization's critical mass of donors and volunteers lost in the merger. Utilizing CLP funds to rebrand the BGCS through a concerted focus on marketing would serve several purposes: (1) expand their donors and the community of youth they served by countering the stereotype that the BGCS was only for troubled or at-risk youth or was related

to the YMCA; (2) relay to the community of donors and volunteers, who wanted to dedicate their contributions or time to one club or the other, that the two Clubs now were operating under the same name; and (3) allow staff to refocus on the critical task of fundraising and community engagement, which had taken a backseat to the logistics of the merger. Ultimately, BGCS hoped successful rebranding and marketing would revitalize the charitable contributions and community support that enable the organization to provide continued service to Tulare County's youth in general, and the County's most disenfranchised youth in particular.

## **CLP-Funded Work**

BGCS found out about the CLP through an invitation from Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP), with whom they did not have a relationship at the time. Although the relationship with HIP consisted primarily of email communication with the HIP director, BGCS always felt that HIP was interested in working with them. BGCS's Executive Director and Director of Development took advantage of as many of the resources, trainings, and convenings offered through the CLP and HIP as they could.

Before the CLP grant, Director of Development, Lynn Dodds, was the sole internal resource for marketing and resource development. Because Lynn's time and attention were often diverted towards special events, marketing was pushed aside and the organization was unable to keep up with the critical task of outreach and fundraising. Because of this, the organization needed a part-time staff person to focus on special events' details, which would allow Lynn to keep up with marketing and other important data maintenance.

With the CLP funds, BGCS hired a marketing expert and a part-time Special Events Coordinator, and the organization's CLP project centered on the creation and implementation of a marketing plan that would facilitate the stewardship and cultivation of donors and help brand the organization's identity in the community. BGCS saw the CLP grant as a tool to reach its ultimate goal of strengthening current community relationships (including with their board of directors), cultivating new donors, and creating a marketing plan that would help them achieve these goals which, in the end, would allow them to serve more youth in the community and continue to serve Tulare County's most disadvantaged youth.

Lynn attended the Fundraising Academy of Communities of Color that was facilitated by CompassPoint and the Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training (GIFT), which she described as "*by far, probably the best training I've ever been to, and I personally grew and professionally grew a lot from it.*" This training occurred one Thursday and one Friday a month over a four month period and, unlike many capacity-building trainings this training was much more accessible because it actually took place in the San Joaquin Valley, as opposed to in the urban centers of the Bay Area. Lynn described the contacts she made, the instructors, and the content

of the trainings as invaluable and appreciated the opportunity to establish relationships with other participants at the Fundraising Academy.

Lynn also took advantage of 15 hours of coaching offered through CompassPoint after completing the Fundraising Academy. In her weekly coaching sessions she was able to gain guidance on topics such as intra-office relationships and trust building, and how to get her message across in board presentations. She found it heartening to finally have someone within the nonprofit fundraising world with whom she could speak about balancing professional and personal life. Now, whenever anything good happens, Lynn's former coach is one of the first people she contacts to let him know what's going on.

## **Outcomes**

The BGCS' CLP focus on revitalizing the organization's fundraising capacity through adding a marketing expert and Special Events Coordinator to their team enabled incumbent staff to return their attention to the critical task of fundraising, which had the effect of improving the organization's ability to conduct outreach to and engage their community of parents, board members, donors, and volunteers. By supporting the addition of a part-time staff person to help with coordinating special events and another part-time person to focus on marketing, the CLP grant freed up the Development Director's time to focus on cleaning up the organization's current donor database. In doing so, the need to spend thousands of dollars on new software was eliminated as Lynn finally had a chance to work with the current software to its full potential. The money saved from not having to invest in new software freed up funds to buy stewardship gifts and host events to thank long-time key donors (e.g., a foundation breakfast where attendees received framed photos of BGCS youth or of groundbreaking events in which attendees had participated). As a result, donors who had not given in a long time began giving again.

BGCS has a long history of being in tune with indigent populations as well as with cultures that have the resources to serve populations in need, and one of the unique aspects of the BGCS is its ability to balance the communities with which they work—from the extreme needs of the youth communities they serve to the extreme wealth of their donor communities. Over time, BGCS has developed a culture of integrity and trust and high moral standards amongst staff, families, and donors which transcends ethnic and racial perspectives and serves BGCS well in working with both destitute and affluent communities. Lynn feels that she is just becoming aware of culturally relevant support and services available and Chief Operations Officer, Galen Quenzer, pointed out that although the organization is well on its way to being a culturally relevant organization, he realized from the CompassPoint trainings that there is a lot that BGCS can gain from consultant services, but without a grant like the CLP, the BGCS would have never had access to such resources. As explained by Lynn, there are few marketing and public relations

consultants in the area and it is rare for non-profits to spend money on consultants unless they already have a grant.

*In time marketing seems to be one of those things that gets pushed aside, but then we're mad at ourselves at the end of the year because we didn't do more . . . You're spending money, not bringing in money but ultimately, you've got to spend that money to get the awareness out. Marketing is a unique aspect to what we do. It can be overlooked, but can be very powerful if we use it right.*

BGCS's culture of stewardship improved dramatically with the CLP grant support, which facilitated the means to share with donors, principals, and superintendents what their relationships mean to BGCS. The CLP supported the creation and implementation of a strategic marketing plan and freed up the funds to help strengthen BGCS' relationships in the community. According to Galen, the CLP enabled the BGCS to achieve its ultimate goal of increasing the share of funds that come from local charitable contributions, which can be used wherever and however the organization deems most useful for ensuring the organization's health and addressing the best interests of the youth served in Tulare County.

## **El Pueblo Para el Aire y Agua Limpio: Building Community Capacity to Advocate for Clean Air and Water**

Nestled on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, at the base of the Kettleman Hills, is Kettleman City—a small, unincorporated town with few resources. There are no streetlights, few sidewalks, and no grocery stores. Of Kettleman City’s approximately 1,400 residents, 96 percent are Latino and about half are farmworkers. More than half of Kettleman City’s residents live below the federal poverty line. Kettleman City is also home to the largest toxic waste dump west of the Mississippi. Each day, up to 200 20-ton trucks filled with toxic chemicals such as benzene, asbestos, and PCBs pass through Kettleman City and are then treated and buried in the ground. In 1989, Waste Management, Inc., the owners of the toxic dumpsite issued plans to build a hazardous waste incinerator near the toxic dumpsite. In response, El Pueblo Para el Aire y Agua Limpio<sup>1</sup> (El Pueblo), was born.

A small, unincorporated organization that is fiscally sponsored by Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice (Greenaction),<sup>2</sup> El Pueblo’s original focus was to halt the expansion of Waste Management’s plans. In 1991, it worked with California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc. (CRLA) to file a lawsuit against Waste Management, Inc. The lawsuit essentially stipulated that information, community meetings, and workshops related to the expansion of the toxic dump were provided solely in English and therefore not accessible to the majority Latino community that would primarily be affected by the expansion. By 1994, two successful lawsuits were filed and Waste Management abandoned its plans for the development of the toxic waste incinerator. However the company recently started planning for a 50 percent expansion of its landfill, securing its toxic waste intake for 30 additional years.

Since then, El Pueblo has continued to fight to protect its community from environmental hazards—including pesticide exposure as well as hazards related to the impending expansion of the toxic waste site. Its members have experienced, first-hand, the effects of their toxic environment. Several have had babies born with severe birth defects such as cleft lips and palates or leukemia, or have had babies that have died soon after labor. While El Pueblo has seen some success in its advocacy work, the organization had been challenged by a lack of community

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<sup>1</sup> People for Clean Air and Water

<sup>2</sup> Greenaction is a grassroots organization based in San Francisco, California. Its mission is to “mobilize community power to win victory that changes government and corporate policies and practices to protect health and promote environmental, economic, and social justice.”

leaders that could continue the work and build the organization. El Pueblo's Executive Director, Maricela Mares-Alatorre, explained:

*We're such a small organization in a very small town and we have great turnover in our volunteer base. We have a lot of new people coming in and out so we are always having to readjust and retrain. It's been difficult to continue to motivate the community to stay involved. When it works, it's been great, which is why we were able to recruit one of the volunteers to become a community organizer for us. However, this is still challenging for us because we're fighting something [corporations] that are very big, bigger than us.\*

When the Women's Foundation of California informed El Pueblo about the capacity-building grants offered through the Community Leadership Project (CLP), Maricela saw it as an opportunity to build El Pueblo's community and program capacity by increasing its volunteer base. She shared:

*We were ready. Since we had already a prior relationship with Women's Foundation because we had received other grants from them, they kept us informed on this grant. They are a great ally for us. We wanted to continue this work and at that moment it seemed like the CLP grant would give us that support.*

## **CLP-Funded Work**

Resources from the CLP grant enabled El Pueblo to hire two part-time staff members to engage in community outreach and to build community and advocacy capacity by training Latina mothers in the community to be effective "promotoras," or advocates for environmental justice. Using curriculum developed by Greenaction, El Pueblo held monthly workshops on community education and organizing. Topics covered in these workshops included public speaking skills, civic education, environmental and health issues, community outreach and advocacy, and community organizing skills. Funds were also used to provide modest stipends to "Promotoras" for their participation in the workshops.

The purpose of these workshops was twofold. The first task was to educate and empower community members about the extent of the environmental hazards they face in Kettleman City and how they impact the health of their families. Then, they worked with the promotoras to develop the skills necessary to advocate effectively for change. Maricela explained:

*Our workshops' primary intention is to educate the community and empower them to understand the primary environmental issues we face in Kettleman City. We then prepare our advocates to understand how government agencies, like county offices or the EPA, and corporations work so they can be better prepared to speak out during community meetings on environmental issues.*

## **Outcomes**

Participation in CLP resulted not only in a growing base of community advocates, but it also resulted in a stronger organization. El Pueblo benefited not only from the resources it received from the CLP, but also from the attentive support provided by its intermediary partner, the Women's Foundation of California. Maricela appreciated the accessibility and responsiveness of her program officer at the Women's Foundation and the organization's recognition of the challenges faced by small, grassroots organizations. She shared:

*Because Women's Foundation is heavily involved in the community, they have great knowledge in the needs of our organizations. While the large funders have great intention, they really cannot get to know us well. Women's Foundation was able to get to know us and understand the challenges that we face as a small advocacy organization.*

One of the most critical ways in which the Women's Foundation supported El Pueblo was by helping it overcome its geographic isolation and connecting it to other organizations that could provide added support. The San Joaquin Valley is vast, with communities spread out across a wide geographic range, making it difficult for smaller communities to access resources and for organizational leaders to find a community of peers. Maricela was thus appreciative of the fact that the Women's Foundation regularly convenes its grantees in a purposeful effort to share ideas, resources, and to build a peer network. She explained:

*It has been great because the Valley is enormous but we've been able to get to know one another at the convenings. We're learning a lot about the differences in each organization as well as learning from their challenges.*

Being part of the Women's Foundation's network of grantees gave El Pueblo access to organizations of similar size, working with similar communities. In addition, it connected El Pueblo with other funders and capacity building resources, such as trainings and workshops beyond those funded by the CLP. Maricela emphasized how important this exposure was to her organization, especially because they are located far away from large towns and cities, and therefore have difficulty accessing these kinds of resources. She said that it "opened doors," enabling them to get to know other funders and to better facilitate their community meetings.

This exposure to other funders has been key to helping El Pueblo continue the work funded through CLP. It is currently working with Greenaction to seek out and apply for other funding opportunities to sustain their efforts and to continue building the momentum and capacity for change. The campesinas, or farmworker women, are key to this change and El Pueblo plans to continue to support these women in building their courage and skills to advocate for the health of their families, and for the greater good of the community and the environment. Maricela shared:

*Funders should really understand that even “campesinas” (farmworker women) in the small town of Kettleman City are part of the bigger picture of climate change and pushing for clean air and water. If these women can stand up for themselves and are provided leadership and capacity-building skills to speak up. It’s all a chain and they are all working together. So even though it may seem like they are just funding a group of campesina women in Kettleman City, it’s this local support that is making a global impact on the environment.*

## **Hmong Culture Institute: Bolstering Community Leaders with Skills, Resources, and a New Sense of Possibility**

As one of two Hmong-serving organizations in the area, the Hmong Culture Institute (HCI) plays an indispensable role in the sizable and growing Hmong community located in Stockton.

Founded by a Hmong community member, the grassroots organization is committed to preserving and promoting Hmong history, language, and culture among younger and older generations of the local Hmong community, as well as those outside of the community. Hmong language studies, Hmong dance classes, and lessons on how to perform traditional Hmong musical instruments at spiritual gatherings and other cultural events are some examples of the unique programs and services that the organization provides to its community members.

However, HCI staff found that while they possessed deep knowledge of and connections to their local Hmong community, they were relatively inexperienced with non-profit governance and the specific structures, processes, and skills needed to ensure sound organizational management and operations. In particular, HCI Founder and Executive Director Wang Seng Thao felt that while he had assumed his leadership role through his commitment to his local Hmong community, he had never received formal training on how to fulfill his role. Likewise, HCI board members, many of whom are Hmong elders with limited English proficiency, were unfamiliar with non-profit management and felt unsure about their roles and responsibilities in leading the organization.

It is within this context that HCI staff and board members decided to take part in the Community Leadership Project (CLP). As this was their very first foray into organizational capacity-building work, Wang noted that HCI staff and board members had few specific goals for their participation in CLP, hoping simply that the initiative would help them to generally strengthen their organization. However, in working with Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC), their CLP intermediary, and CompassPoint, a CLP technical assistance provider focused on non-profit development, HCI was able to concentrate its efforts towards addressing two key leadership capacity challenges: (1) limited executive director capacity and (2) limited board capacity.

### **CLP-Funded Work**

To increase his understanding of non-profit leadership, Wang attended a series of workshops hosted by CompassPoint that focused on different aspects of organizational management. With support from CLP, Wang was also able to work one-on-one with a Hmong-speaking consultant to learn about and conduct strategic planning, fund development work, and marketing strategies, among other organizational development activities. In addition, Wang was proactive about

participating in grantee networking events that he learned about through ILRC and CLP, such as the regional Learning Labs.

HCI board members also attended some of the workshops offered by CompassPoint. For example, board members participated in one workshop that focused on training executive directors and board members on their respective roles and responsibilities, as well as ways in which they can work together most effectively. Board members were also able put some of their learnings from these workshops into practice by working with their consultant on important tasks, such as updating board by-laws.

## **Outcomes**

As a result of this CLP-funded work, Wang reflected that HCI has significantly improved its leadership capacity, in that he now has a stronger understanding of his role and responsibilities as an executive director. In particular, he said that participating in CompassPoint's workshops has “expanded [his] perspective of the roles and expectations of an organization...and the important role of being an executive director,” noting:

*[The CompassPoint workshops] taught me what I should do or not do to be an effective executive director, where to find funds, and how to fundraise... What was taught in those workshops has helped me to form the foundation of the Hmong Culture Institute.*

Wang also remarked that by participating in networking activities hosted by ILRC and CLP, he has been able to meet other executive directors who have provided him with advice, support, and insight. Making these connections has underscored to Wang the value of networking and proactively seeking out other organizations. In addition, these activities have helped Wang to learn about the different types of supports and resources that are available to organizations and their executive directors, and ways in which he can seek these out.

Another way in which HCI’s leadership capacity has been strengthened through CLP is that its board members are now more knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities and more engaged in supporting the organization. Wang reflected that CompassPoint’s workshops have helped board members, especially those who were unfamiliar with boardmanship and non-profit work, to recognize the important role that they play in leading the organization. He shared that whereas the board’s prior level of engagement was such that “whoever wanted to come to the board meetings would just show up,” board members are now “more motivated” to promote HCI and play a stronger role in shaping the organization, its work, and direction.

Ultimately, Wang feels that through its participation in CLP, HCI now possesses the knowledge, skills, and resources it needs to begin to become an effective and sustainable non-profit organization. He emphasized that HCI staff and board members have not just become more

knowledgeable about non-profit governance and operations and other nitty-gritty aspects of non-profit work; staff and board members have also become attuned to more intangible yet equally important aspects of running a non-profit, such as building visibility, being strategic in their work, and cultivating partnerships. Most significantly however, Wang shared that HCI staff and board members are now more aware of available resources and supports, as a result of having been exposed to many different types of capacity-building supports during CLP. Wang feels confident that this increased sense of possibility, coupled with the organization's bolstered leadership capacity, will enable HCI to continue to strengthen, grow, and better meet the needs of its community.



## **Mountain Community Resources: Building Leadership and Operational Infrastructure to Ensure Sustainability**

Mountain Community Resources (MCR) was an organization borne out of need, aimed at connecting an isolated community with resources and support. The need for a community support agency became alarmingly apparent in 1982, when deadly mudslides threatened the resources and livelihoods of residents living in the mountainous communities of Santa Cruz. Recognizing that this isolated region is an hour away from county agencies and other resources, community leaders identified the need for an entity that could serve as a local hub to provide residents with access to social services and other supports. From these conversations, the Mountain Neighbor Network was established as a loose collaboration of residents that sought to better understand and assess the community's needs. Because this region is sparsely populated, they charted areas where residents lived, how they could be reached, and the identified the best ways to connect them with essential resources.

Mountain Neighbor Network reviewed its community needs assessment and decided to create the Valley Resource Center, which would serve as a community access center for social services and resources. As time passed, the Valley Resource Center eventually split into two organizations: Valley Churches United and Mountain Community Resources (MCR). Executive Director of MCR, Jennifer Anderson-Ochoa, explains that the main separation into two organizations happened because of differing philosophical values among Valley Resource Center's leadership. MCR's approach was to build a centralized location that would provide access to resources to build a strong, self-sufficient community, one person at a time. Jennifer explained:

*MCR's founder really believed in helping people to help themselves and not being completely charity-based. At MCR, we believe that everyone brings their own inner strengths to the table and we base our programming and services on that model.*

Today, MCR has established its role in the community as a family resource center serving the San Lorenzo and Scotts Valley communities. Its mission is to "build a strong Valley community—one person, one family, one neighborhood at a time—by helping people to help themselves." MCR is a key resource in this region and provides short- and long-term supports for residents. These services include referrals to housing, drug rehabilitation, or other services residents may need but do not know how to access. Since MCR shares its facilities with county agencies and other support agencies such as CRLA, WIC, and Salud Para la Gente, to provide individuals and families with access to direct services. This access is critical, particularly given that many individuals and families have difficulties securing transportation to reach these organizations

directly. In this regard, MCR plays a crucial role in facilitating these relationships between families and other social support organizations.

MCR has also become a critical service provider for the Latino community. Jennifer mentioned that some service providers are reluctant to assist undocumented immigrants and MCR fills that gap. MCR's strong involvement with the Latino community began when a large fire at a nearby lodge affected many Spanish-speaking families and the Red Cross needed translation services. MCR provided two staff members to assist in the recovery effort. MCR's participation was key, as the undocumented community was distrustful of the Red Cross and MCR helped to alleviate this tension. During this time, MCR also began working very closely with California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc. (CRLA), providing legal representation to those affected by the fire.

*Through the fire at the Brookdale Lodge, we were able to get closer to the Latino community. We met a lot of people that we didn't have contact with before and as a result our services have just grown. We're doing translations at the local schools, assisting monolingual parents with their children's IEP plans, and operating a parenting education workshop in Spanish. So right now in the valley we are seen as the only organization that serves the Spanish-speaking population.*

Jennifer noted that since she began her role as Executive Director in 2009, MCR had been keenly aware of its strengths and challenges as an organization. As an organization, they were making a great impact as one of the only service providers in the Scotts and San Lorenzo Valley. However, they also experienced some challenges as a small organization. Specifically, the small number of staff, staff turnover, and limited funds resulted in staff having to fulfill both administrative and programmatic duties. Jennifer believes this decreased their ability to run as an effective organization. When she came on board, MCR operated very informally and with little administrative structure. At that point, Jennifer began exploring the idea of merging with a larger, established nonprofit organization to increase MCR's overall organizational capacity and improve its administrative structure.

Meanwhile, MCR had also been building a strong collaborative relationship with CRLA since the Brookdale Lodge fire. CRLA utilized MCR's facilities to provide legal assistance and representation services for the mostly Latino and undocumented residents that were affected. It was through this close working relationship that CRLA encouraged MCR to apply for the CLP grant. Both MCR and CRLA recognized that MCR was more than ready to begin strengthening its capacity and efficacy as an organization, as well as exploring sustainability efforts. As Jennifer recalls, "MCR was at a point of change."

## **CLP-Funded Work**

When MCR applied for the CLP grant, Jennifer's vision was to build a sound organization that could continue to provide services and advocate for its community. More specifically, MCR hoped to utilize grant funds to develop its technological infrastructure, establish a shared data collection system, and build the Executive Director's leadership skills to strengthen overall capacity.

Prior to the grant, MCR had outdated communications and operating systems. Jennifer explained that CLP funding was used to upgrade to a VOIP telephone system, enhance their software and systems, and contract a consultant to develop a useful data collection tool to facilitate reporting. MCR's prior data collection tool was too complicated, uncoordinated, and did not capture the data needed to fulfill different grant requirements as well as fully document their impact in the community. The new tool is networked in their system and accessible to all advocates at MCR.

Additionally, Jennifer felt she benefited greatly from the CompassPoint trainings she was able to attend as part of the grant. Jennifer found the Executive Director 101 Training to be highly motivational and useful. During this time, she had also been looking for strategies to speak to MCR's Board of Directors about the benefits of merging with a larger organization to increase sustainability and improve the organization. The ED training gave her the tools to begin that conversation.

*There were two main takeaways from the ED training. The first one was that it gave me the tools to talk to my board about merging as well as explaining to them what my role was, what their role was, and more importantly what their role does was not. My board had been extreme micromanagers—they were involved with staff programmatically and the staff was calling them to ask for advice. So in order to be objective with the board, the training gave me the information to let them know what experts say their role is in an organization and how this differentiates with the role of the ED. The second takeaway was that I realized that it is my role to explore this merger because I believe it's best for the organization. The training really gave me the tools to talk to them and broach that subject.*

Throughout CLP, MCR has also received both guidance and resources from CRLA, which has been critical because CRLA deeply understands their rural context, including the unique needs of the population and the challenges of geographic isolation, and thus could provide appropriate and relevant support. It has likewise provided additional funds to further MCR's work in improving their technology systems, such as a supplemental \$2000 grant for MCR to gain remote access to Community Bridges' Raiser's Edge program. This allows Jennifer to easily access information

when working with funders. Jennifer is grateful for CRLA's support and—irrespective of funding—foresees a continued, long-lasting relationship with CRLA.

## **Outcomes**

In 2010, MCR merged with Community Bridges, a social service nonprofit organization in Santa Cruz County. Though Jennifer faced pushback from MCR's board, she was able to demonstrate the benefits of the merger and explain to the board how the merger would increase MCR's capacity. She credits the CompassPoint ED training provided through CLP as instrumental in helping her develop her communication skills and strategies to establish the merger. In a letter drafted to MCR's supporters, Jennifer stated, "The shared goal of the merger is to improve combined capacity to be responsive to the community needs and to increase financial and organizational capacity."

Not only has it done this, but the merger has also increased collaboration opportunities between MCR and five other family resource centers (FRCs) in Santa Cruz County under the guidance of Community Bridges. Jennifer noted that the merger has expanded MCR's ability to collaborate with similar organizations, increase its capacity, and begin evaluating its strengths and weaknesses as an organization. MCR went through a peer review process that enabled this and allowed MCR to develop plans on how to implement some organizational changes. Through Community Bridges, MCR and the other FRCs have been working with Strategies, an alliance of organizational development coaches and facilitators that work with FRCs, to provide assistance in analyzing their individual and collective strengths and challenges. This increased access to FRC-specific tools will help MRC continue plans for organizational improvement.

Additionally, the improved communication and data collection systems made possible by the CLP grant have positively impacted the organization. The new VOIP phone service allows MCR to better communicate with partner organizations and county agencies. Jennifer believes the VOIP system has greatly improved MCR's ability to advocate for its clients using a low-cost, reliable system. The improved data collection systems have likewise directly improved MCR's operations. as this tool feeds into a master template, leading to more accurate numbers and a system that facilitates better data for report and grant requirements. In turn, it helps MCR tell a more accurate story of its work to funders and stakeholders.

With CLP grant support and the merger with Community Bridges, Jennifer believes that MCR is on a steady path toward growth, improvement, and sustainability. Jennifer concludes that CLP, in particular the ED training, was instrumental in helping her formulate future capacity building activities for MCR as an individual organization and also as an FRC under Community Bridges.

## **Monterey County Rape Crisis Center: Understanding Organizational Health as Essential to Community Well-Being**

For the past 40 years, the Monterey County Rape Crisis Center (MCRCC) has played an invaluable role in Monterey County by providing sexual assault survivors with supportive services and by preventing sexual violence through community outreach and education. The organization provides its community members with a number of different programs and services, including: a 24-hour crisis helpline; assistance for sexual assault survivors navigating medical and legal processes; counseling services for sexual assault survivors and their loved ones; and sexual assault prevention clubs at local high schools. Because of its longstanding commitment to addressing sexual violence and using a holistic approach in doing so, MCRCC has not only earned the deep trust and respect of its local community members but also garnered a national reputation as a violence prevention advocate.

However, while MCRCC staff members' uncompromising dedication to addressing issues of sexual violence has been the driving force behind the organization's notable programmatic work, this hallmark has also detracted from issues of organizational health. Specifically, issues such as malfunctioning computers, and outdated human resources policies naturally fell by the wayside as staff focused on meeting the needs of their ever-growing community. Limited resources only exacerbated these issues, especially as staff sought to preserve as much resources as possible for direct services. Over time, Executive Director Clare Mounteer said that staff grew inured to these issues, persisting through their work with unreliable computers and defunct internal processes. She explained that her organization had fully assumed "the non-profit mentality of not spending money on anything that wasn't service-driven" because it "just seems wrong."

Given this, MCRCC viewed the Community Leadership Project (CLP) as a rare and much-needed opportunity to address operational capacity issues that had long sat on the backburner. Particularly since the organization has not traditionally engaged in organizational capacity building efforts nor has it had access to these types of resources, MCRCC staff were eager to make the most of their participation in CLP. Specifically, staff hoped to tap into the technical assistance and resources provided by the initiative to address two key operational capacity issues: (1) limited technological capacity and (2) outdated human resources policies and processes.

## **CLP-Funded Work**

To address their organization's limited technological capacity, MCRCC staff first worked with ZeroDivide, a CLP technical assistance provider focused on organizations' technological needs, to conduct a comprehensive technology assessment. The ZeroDivide consultants then provided MCRCC with a \$5,000 technology grant, as well as support, to tackle areas of need identified in the assessment. For example, MCRCC staff used their grant to purchase new computers for one of its two offices, as it became clear that their existing computers were so outdated and unreliable that they needed to be replaced entirely. MCRCC staff also used a portion of their grant to upgrade to the Microsoft Office 2010 suite. In addition, ZeroDivide consultants helped the organization to integrate Google Apps into their work so that staff members have improved tools for communication and collaboration, such as calendar sharing and document sharing.

Recognizing that they needed to find ways to maintain and sustain this new technology, MCRCC staff also worked with their CLP intermediary, Community Foundation of Monterey County (CFMCO), to increase their capacity to address ongoing technological needs. Specifically, CFMCO connected MCRCC to the IT Collaborative of Monterey County, a collaborative wherein non-profit organizations receive ongoing, low-cost IT support from California State University at Monterey Bay. As a member of this collaborative, MCRCC now receives ongoing technological assistance from the university, ranging from troubleshooting operating systems to guidance on effective data backup to configuration of Google Apps.

Moreover, MCRCC staff applied their CLP grant towards strengthening their human resources policies and processes by revising their organizational human resources handbook, which had not been updated since 1998. With the support of CLP, the organization was able to hire a consultant to help them to draft a new human resources handbook with policies that are more responsive to current organizational needs. MCRCC was also able to enlist the help of an attorney, who reviewed and revised the new handbook to ensure that it was legally sound.

## **Outcomes**

Clare shared that this CLP-funded work has undoubtedly strengthened the operational capacity of MCRCC, in that their new and improved technology has enabled staff to operate in a more efficient and streamlined way. She reflected that MCRCC's technological capacity was so limited prior to their participation in CLP that even being able to purchase new computers has substantially improved their operations, noting:

*[Before CLP,] our computers were seven years old; they were quietly dying one at a time... I can't tell you what a difference it makes when you come in the morning and you turn on your computer and you know it's going to work!*

She also shared that being part of the IT Collaborative of Monterey County has greatly enhanced the organization's operational and technological capacity. In addition, she shared that gaining these new technological equipment and programs through CLP has enabled the organization to begin to build a social media presence and tap into tools like Facebook to expand its reach.

Another way in which MCRCC's operational capacity has been bolstered is that the organization now has clearer and more relevant human resources policies in place. Clare reflected that being able to update these human resources policies has strengthened the organization as a whole by ensuring that MCRCC is protected from legal risks and there is internal coherence around human resources policies. She noted that it was a relief to finally address this task, which she had always viewed as an organizational priority but was "one of those things you just put off because there's no time and no energy to do it."

This CLP-funded work also had the unanticipated, but positive effect of helping Clare and other MCRCC staff members to understand the importance of treating organizational needs as priorities, rather than afterthoughts. In particular, Clare shared that she now recognizes the value of investing resources in organizational needs, as a result of having worked with highly valuable and helpful consultants during CLP. Clare remarked that she and her staff members have now come to better prioritize organizational needs and appreciate the role that consultants and other external sources of support can play in addressing those needs.

Ultimately, Clare reflected that CLP has been invaluable to MCRCC because the initiative provided her organization with the time and resources to address highly practical and longstanding organizational needs, such as unreliable computers and defunct human resources policies. She noted that while these needs may seem benign and "less service-oriented," these issues had in fact for many years constrained the organization's day-to-day operations and impeded its overall progress. In addressing these needs, Clare feels that CLP has provided her organization with "strength," noting that "with strength comes an ability to better serve the community you're trying to reach."



## **Multicultural Institute: Building Operational and Management Capacity Through a Capital Campaign.**

Founded in 1991, the Multicultural Institute is a 501(c)3 organization that serves low-income, underserved immigrant populations, especially day laborers, in three locations in the Bay Area: Berkeley, San Mateo County and Richmond. Across these three sites, it provides programs that enhance educational, health, economic and leadership opportunities to assist and build self-sufficiency. The Multicultural Institute has a small, diverse staff that consists mostly of Spanish-speaking employees who are immigrants to the United States, including Founder and Executive Director, Father Rigo, who has an extensive background in faith-based social activism. Father Rigo decided to create the Multicultural Institute when he was a faculty member at the Franciscan School of Theology, where they were “piloting and promoting multicultural ministries” and “how these phenomena occur within the church and within the Franciscans.” He founded the organization under the Franciscan Friars, a religious nonprofit that serves as the parent organization for multiple nonprofits. Given Father Rigo’s reputation, the City of Berkeley approached Father Rigo with work focusing on supporting groups, most of which were Latino and African American, that felt excluded from the local school system. This became the initial body of work for the Multicultural Institute. From here, the organization has steadily grown, and expanded its mission to serve low-income immigrant communities and other underserved populations across the Bay Area.

When the Multicultural Institute applied for multiple grants through the Community Leadership Project through The San Francisco Foundation (TSFF) and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SVCF), it was in the process of separating from its parent organization, the Franciscan Friars. It was also in the process of expanding its programming to provide more in-depth services in Richmond and San Mateo County. As an autonomous organization, the Multicultural Institute’s first goal was to launch a capital campaign. Called the Mi Siempre Adelante Campaign, its ambitious goal was to raise \$1 million to purchase and renovate a building on Seventh Street in Berkeley to serve as the organization’s headquarters.

Growing its ability to purchase this building, located in the heart of the community it serves, represents a critical milestone for the Multicultural Institute. On the corner of Seventh Street, as many as 100 day laborers line up daily in search of work. Most of these day laborers are undocumented immigrants from Mexico and Central America, as well as a small percentage of African Americans who provide construction services, gardening, and other types of manual labor. The movement towards building ownership represents the commitment and permanency of the Multicultural Institute as a pillar of support for these marginalized communities. At the same time, the Multicultural Institute is taking advantage of opportunities to build its presence in San Mateo County and in Richmond, through service to day laborer populations there that are similar

to those served in the other program sites. Paula Worby, the Multicultural Institute's Associate Director, who worked in post-war Guatemala for 15 years and has a strong background in occupational health, said,

*It was a very interesting moment—to join the CLP, when we were contemplating this institutional shift. It was a very fully formed birth because we were acting very autonomously for years, but [needed] to formalize that and undertake a capital campaign for purchase and renovation--a huge step. Then we seemed to be in this permanent expansionist mode, so these programming opportunities keep presenting themselves that we can't resist because they fit our mission.*

## **CLP-Funded Work**

Through the grant from The San Francisco Foundation, the Multicultural Institute was able to move towards its goal of launching a capital campaign. As crucial first step to this process, staff used their grant funding for consultant support to begin a feasibility study to determine the likelihood of completing the Mi Siempre Adelante Capital Campaign. The San Francisco Foundation provided a list of consultants of color to pick from to engage in this work. The consultant conducted 20 interviews with Multicultural Institute's staff, board, key donors, and prospective major donors about their willingness and capacity to engage in the campaign and grow its donor base. Based on the results of the study, the consultant assisted them with setting fundraising targets to reach their goal of raising one million dollars. The consultant also provided technical assistance and training for Multicultural Institute's board on how to ask for funding, how to articulate the goal of their campaign to potential donors, as well as how to develop marketing materials to give to donors.

Additionally, resource support from Silicon Valley Community Foundation enabled the Multicultural Institute to take advantage of technical assistance opportunities, which helped them with multiple goals, both broad and specific. The organization engaged in a strategic planning process and the board participated in trainings focused on governance. At the same time, they were also taking advantage of consultant support in helping the organization to think strategically about how to grow its work in San Mateo County, which is one of Silicon Valley Community Foundation's target areas. As a newly independent organization that was also working towards expansion, this technical assistance support was critical to the Multicultural Institute, as it helped staff to prioritize and make key decisions.

Notably, both The San Francisco Foundation and Silicon Valley Community Foundation engaged in similar strategies to advance their community grantees' capacity-building work, in addition to providing funding for the aforementioned activities. Both regrantors, for example, made an explicit focus on granting to organizations with leaders of color, which Paula felt was an invaluable focus. Both regrantors also incorporated grantee convenings to foster networking,

collaboration and learning exchanges. Paula commented that creating this space specifically for leaders of color “flavored the initiative” and added another dimension to this work. Paula said,

*[The San Francisco Foundation and Silicon Valley Community Foundation] both speak very explicitly about social justice and it's huge. It was a candid space, but that takes awhile to build. You don't get that in the first meeting. That takes both time and good facilitation from Mauricio [SVCF] and Yolanda [TSFF].*

Additionally, Paula expressed gratitude that this grant included funding for general-operating support, as well as provided multi-year funding, which gave them the space and flexibility to focus on their capacity building. Paula said,

*[TSFF and SVCF] are very explicit about wanting to give operating money. They don't care if it is paying your ED or the lights. That is incredible. Both the concept of operating support and the mindset of funders that we just want you to do your work, and it can go towards your salary or overhead. Also, the multi-year commitment...Wow, we have [\$10,000) in our budget for three years [and] we can count on it, which is always great. You know that is less and less in this funding environment. It is just harder to harder to find.*

## **Outcomes**

For the Multicultural Institute, the CLP grants came at a time when the organization was formalizing its independence, and this grant provided support to its leadership to grow and pursue capacity-building goals during this transition. As a result of the CLP, the organization was able to engage a consultant to conduct a campaign feasibility study and to provide leadership and fundraising training to board members. They are now more intentional about generating support from long-term donors and conducting campaign outreach. So far, the Multicultural Institute has been able to raise \$300,000 for its campaign.

Moreover, a part of the success of the campaign thus far was that TSFF funding covered the Multicultural Institute’s staff time to work with a pro bono consultant to design a new logo for their organization, as well as to work with another consultant to create new marketing materials. The ability to develop new marketing materials that would appeal to potential donors was one of their largest outcomes for the grant.

The added value of this work was TSFF and SVCF’s intentionality around convening like-minded grantees to increase their awareness, expand their networks and learn how they can leverage each other’s support to advance their common missions. According to Paula,

*Both The San Francisco Foundation and Silicon Valley Foundation are good at bringing their grantees together. Not just in this program. I have seen them use it as part of their mission to bring together like-minded*

*groups, or convening them around a topic in an intimate way to socialize with each other. Otherwise, you have to go out and look for it or form a coalition and here are two foundations who are defining that as part of their work. The cohort model is valuable and the community foundation's role overall, beyond CLP, is to draw together community groups that should know about each other. We benefitted a lot from that.*

## **Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project: Creating Films, Filmmakers, and Community**

*Filmmaking is kind of like the last bastion of straight, White men in terms of art forms—it's not accessible. Hollywood films cost about a million dollars per finished minute, independent films cost about a thousand dollars per finished minute, so it's not cheap and it's hard to get into. Furthermore, Hollywood films and American TV reflect less the world we live in as opposed to reflecting someone's fantasy of the world.*

Since its inception in 2000, Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project's (QWOCMAP) mission has been to make filmmaking accessible to queer women of color in order to provide an avenue for the creation, exhibition, and distribution of films that authentically reflect the lives of queer women of color and address social justice issues that concern multiple communities. Toward this end, QWOCMAP offers professional training, equipment, screening opportunities, and resources free of charge to lesbians, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning women from underserved communities in the Bay Area, particularly young, low-income, and immigrant queer women of color. Its free annual presentation of QWOCMAP-produced films has expanded from a one-night event into a 3-day film festival that has screened over 350 new films by, for, and about queer women of color. These films challenge all forms of racial, political, economic, sexual, and gender stereotyping and offer a diversity of new representations of queer women of color. QWOCMAP's film festival consistently attracts capacity crowds and presents a combination of art, activism, film, and public dialogue. In the process, the festival and films educate the public about queer women of color and their communities while simultaneously galvanizing community organizing and movement building. Since 2007, over 50 community partners and co-presenters have reported increased community involvement in their organizations through their partnerships with QWOCMAP.

QWOCMAP's programs have clearly been successful in raising the visibility of the community and its concerns, and building community capacity for activism and engagement. However the organization's capacity was not robust enough to adequately support its rapidly expanding programs and ensure organizational sustainability and healthy growth. As a small non-profit, QWOCMAP's organizational leadership, including management of the training program and planning for sustainability, fell primarily upon the Executive Director, with support from the Managing Director. The intense focus required to run the organization's flagship training program severely limited the Directors' ability to plan for organizational expansion and sustainability. The opportunity to apply for a grant from the Community Leadership Project (CLP), which they learned about through the Horizon's Foundation, came just in time. CLP

provided QWOCMAP with critical resources that enabled it to continue to build its momentum and expand its programming while also strengthening its organizational capacity overall. In particular, QWOCMAP aimed to use CLP support to increase staff capacity, fundraising capacity, and technological capacity. The ultimate intended outcomes were to increase the capacity of the organization's filmmaker training program in particular, and to strengthen the organization's overall capacity in general. This was to be done by allowing the Executive Director and Managing Director to shift their focus from some of the day-to-day operations of running the organization and its training program, to ensuring the organization's sustainability by seeking new partners, funders and markets.

### **CLP-Funded Work**

QWOCMAP used CLP resources to focus on strengthening its infrastructure, which the directors knew was critical to their ability to expand their external reach. They hired a fundraising consultant to help them seek additional funding support. They also attended multiple trainings to support organizational stability and sustainability, including CompassPoint's Management 101 and the Next Generation Leaders of Color Fellowship Program, which focused on augmenting internal leadership capacity.

Through participation in the CLP, QWOCMAP also strengthened its relationship with the Horizons Foundation, its intermediary partner. Though QWOCMAP and Horizons had a relationship prior to the CLP, the nature of that relationship deepened over the course of the CLP. Horizons actively and publicly supported QWOCMAP and its work, which was deeply meaningful to the organization. Horizons was especially instrumental in helping to expand QWOCMAP's networks by brokering relationships between QWOCMAP and other local and national arts-related organizations similarly focused on queer and/or people of color communities and by introducing QWOCMAP staff to people of impact who represent the community, such as celebrity George Takei. Ultimately, QWOCMAP leaders described their CLP intermediary as a true "thinking partner" that pushed them to question the fit of their CLP benchmarks and how they would accomplish them, challenged them to think more about their organizational vision and how they would achieve it, and encouraged them to be more concrete about their CLP plans.

### **Outcomes**

QWOCMAP's decision to use CLP funds to hire a fundraising consultant paid off. QWOCMAP garnered a multi-year grant from a different funder and also received a generous donation of computers for an editing suite. Having an in-house editing suite enabled QWOCMAP to train more filmmakers, which created a larger pool of filmmakers to work on contracted film jobs with

the income-earning QWOCMAP Productions team and resulted in a revenue increase described by Managing Director, Kebo Drew, as “astounding.”

QWOCMAP’s participation in leadership development training also resulted in wins for the organization. Ultimately, QWOCMAP was able to develop the organization’s internal leadership by cultivating staff and trainers from the ranks of women who have completed its training program. CLP funds supported the addition of three and a half full-time staff members, which has significantly freed up the Directors’ time to focus on procuring additional funding and expanding the training program, while empowering junior managers to take on stronger supportive roles. As a result of the CLP grant “there are now many more people to hold on to the heart of the organization, to take care of it, and protect it,” said Managing Director Kebo Drew.

A number of positive ancillary outcomes emerged from QWOCMAP’s CLP experience as well, including increased community cachet and expansion into new markets. The CLP funds generated a surge in community visibility for the organization. Not only are many more films being created, but because of the organization’s strong production team and in-house editing suite, filmmakers going through the training program have even more support, which is reflected in the increased quality of the films and their positive reception, and has led to a stronger film festival which now has components that are managed entirely by junior leaders.

The CLP grant also served as the building block that allowed QWOCMAP to expand in several new directions. First, the CLP-enhanced training program led to the creation of a youth leadership program as a spin-off of the adult-focused filmmaker training program. Second, a former Bay-area based staff person now manages an international arm of QWOCMAP in Mexico. Third, all training resources and products (videos, training manual, tests) are online and optimized for the iPad and iPhone and enables trainings to be delivered online.

Overall, the CLP grant allowed QWOCMAP to strengthen the organization’s internal team and build leadership from within the community and the organization—creating new avenues and opportunities of which the organization otherwise would not have been able to take advantage. QWOCMAP credits the CLP grant for much of the expanded work the organization is now able to do—including the QWOCMAP Productions’ filmmaker training program, the Youth Leadership Program, the Film and Freedom Academy (workshops around the country), and the online trainings done in collaboration with community partners that feature works such as reproductive justice films tied to campaigns in which community advocates are involved.

Managing Director Kebo Drew described the Hewlett, Irvine, and Packard Foundations working together to fund the CLP as significant and hopes to see such efforts sustained.

*The leadership of our tiny organizations is really vital because we're so close to the grassroots that national organizations can't mobilize people the way that we can mobilize people. . . Foundations need to invest in the "by, for and about" organizations because although there are a lot of organizations that serve people of color, it really means something when [people of color] are the ones who run these organizations and [are] the leaders coming out from our communities.*

## **San Joaquin Valley Cumulative Health Impacts Project (SJVCHIP): Ensuring Sustainability through Fundraising and Adaptive Capacity**

The San Joaquin Valley Cumulative Health Impacts Project (SJVCHIP) is a collaborative of community health and environmental justice organizations and coalitions that aims to advance the health and well being of their communities across the San Joaquin Valley. SJV CHIP started in 2008 after a group of environmental activists invited Dr. Manual Pastor from the University of Southern California (USC) to talk about his work on cumulative impacts in the Bay Area. SJV CHIP's Project Coordinator, Sarah Sharpe, said that the advice that the attendants received that day from Dr. Pastor was the thrust behind organizing this collaborative to replicate his research and policy advocacy model in San Joaquin Valley. Notably, many of the individuals and organizations in SJV CHIP had collaborated previously on various issue areas but this particular collaborative was formed because they saw that the story of the cumulative effects of environmental racism and injustice was missing and imperative to tell. They united around the common mission of conducting research, as well as advocating with and on behalf of low-income communities and communities of color who, more often than not, reside at the intersection of multiple sources of pollution such as unhealthy air and water quality, and pesticides etc. Sarah said,

*Some of us had already worked together on air quality policy issues, and water quality and other things. We already have networks and collaboratives, but the thrust of this one was to get some research done about our region and about the story of environmental justice and the communities that are here. To tell the stories in a more complete way, and to not just look at one problem or another, not just looking at water quality or air quality or pesticides. But, all together how it is affecting us, at the same time, in the same bodies, in the same communities.*

In partnership with the University of California Davis, which secured the initial funding for the Project, the collaborative launched community mapping workshops. They invited “everyday people, like neighbors” to talk about health impacts in their city, and created maps that pictorially display the harsh reality that low-income communities and communities of color populated the areas of town most affected by multiple types of pollution. Sarah explained, “This was the initial engagement of the communities to explain to them about what we meant by cumulative impacts, but to also get their buy-in, hopefully, and support for the project and to continue to be involved.” As the Project developed, SJV CHIP’s strategy was to partner these community members with academics to further their research and to mobilize community

members to be advocates for their communities and participate in regulatory decision-making meetings.

Moreover, as a mission-driven, budding collaborative, its members were passionate about their cause; however, they were tasked with navigating the logistics of establishing leadership, the details of their project, and especially securing more funding for the work. They received their first grant through the Rose Foundation. With this seed funding, they were able to establish an Initiating Committee of eight groups to act as the decision-making body for the Project on their research and policy issues. These committee members include Fresno Metro Ministry, California Rural Legal Assistance, California Prison Moratorium Project, Californians for Pesticide Reform, Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment, Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice, Medical Advocates for Healthy Air/Clinica Sierra Vista, and San Joaquin Valley Latino Environmental Advancement Project. Still, as a growing collaborative, they had to focus on developing their fundraising capacity in order to sustain their work. Importantly, SJV CHIP was faced with the reality that all of their staff were volunteers who donated their time to work on the Project, in addition to having full-time positions at other organizations. Thus, increasing their fundraising capacity was crucial to the sustainability of the collaborative, especially so that could hire a full-time coordinator to manage the schedules of the participating organizations.

### **CLP-Funded Work**

Due to SJV CHIP's prior relationship with the Rose Foundation, when they heard about the funding through the Community Leadership Project, they were motivated to apply because they knew the Rose Foundation believed in their mission. At the beginning of the grant, their vision was to grow their fundraising capacity, with the end goal of having enough funding to hire a coordinator. Sarah said, “[CLP] was for us to build our capacity to be able to fundraise more for the Project so that we would have more capacity. I was the coordinator, I was a part-time employee, and I wrapped it into my other work.” Moreover, included in this lack of staffing capacity was that many of the members did not have the time or resources to focus on writing grants, nor to develop their skill set or understanding of the process of grant writing; thus, they needed to quickly raise more funding in order to have the flexibility to apply for more grants and to increase their learnings around fundraising processes to sustain the work. Additionally, at the time of CLP, their research with UC Davis was well underway, and their findings created a sense of urgency and immediacy to address these issues, and SJV CHIP was quickly tasked with expanding its capacity to meet these needs. Sarah said,

*Due to the pressure we created with our research, all of the agencies are listening and they want to do something and they are going through all of these processes and we are not able to engage that much because we are*

*all busy doing different things. We really want someone to be monitoring that and engaging with it, and also do all the hard work of coordinating a collaborative of eight really busy people, not to mention keeping the other partners involved.*

To this end, through the funding from the Rose Foundation, they developed a Fund Development Committee to lead the process for grant writing to increase their fundraising capacity. With the funding they hired a grant writer who was located in the San Joaquin Valley to help the collaborative members understand how to write letters of intent and proposals and how to apply to specific grant opportunities. They began working with the consultant on a weekly basis, especially if they had to meet a proposal deadline. Furthermore, they wanted assistance on how to communicate, and express the complexity of their work, since they represent an eight-organization collaborative that advocates on behalf of eight regions in the San Joaquin Valley.

Meanwhile, another San Joaquin Valley collaborative, California Center for Environmental Justice (CCEJN) received funding from the Women's Foundation through CLP. Since there was high degree of overlap between members of SJV CHIP and CCEJN, they decided to leverage these grants by focusing on their adaptive capacity through engaging in a strategic planning process to ensure the financial and staffing stability of both collaboratives. Leveraging the Rose Foundation and Women's Foundation grants proved to be an important strategic move in order to grow the fundraising effort and, ultimately, staff capacity of both groups since CCEJN was navigating some of the same challenges as SJV CHIP. For example, CCEJN has always had a strong membership base; however, their staff was also all volunteers who participated in the work because of their passion to improve the health outcomes in their communities. After many discussions about the merger, with the CLP grants, they held two retreats and conducted a SWOT analysis to see how they could combine the collaborative to best utilize their resources and the communities they serve.

## **Outcomes**

As a result of their expanded fundraising capacity, and strategic planning process, SJV CHIP and CCEJN have successfully merged. SJV CHIP is now a project within CCEJN's portfolio of work. The CLP funding played a critical role, allowing them to take the time to make the "hard decisions" to see where each collaborative was contributing most, and where they were duplicating services. Sarah explained that this merger made sense programmatically because SJV CHIP is engaged in the research, policy and advocacy work that CCEJN was hoping to complete yet never had the capacity. Additionally, through engaging in the capacity-building efforts with the grant writer, members of both collaborative were able to be exposed to and become more familiar with the process of grant writing. Sarah reflected,

*We learned a lot through the process. I know I did...because it was not just a committee to get funding. It was a committee to learn how to get funding. It had a capacity-building component to it. We had trainings from the grant writer we were working with. We did not just tell her what we wanted and send her out there. We had her come and help develop the program and work through the process with us on how to develop a successful grant. This is the main reason that we asked for money from the Rose Foundation because we wanted help with fundraising and broadening our capacity to do that.*

Lastly, as a result of their investment in building their fundraising capacity, they were able to secure enough grants to be able to hire a full-time project coordinator, which fulfilled their initial goal for this work. Sarah reflected on their growth through participating in CLP,

*...Because we knew we had really huge visions for what we wanted to accomplish for the project, and it was not going to happen unless we found a way to secure more resources for it. [Prior to CLP] we made a lot happen with the little resources that we have...Now, at the end of this grant, we are at the point, where we can hire a coordinator to be a shared coordinator between this project and CCEJN*

## **Teatro de la Tierra (Teatro): Expanded Vision of Fund Development**

Teatro de la Tierra (“Theater of the Earth”), was born out of the Chicano Movement in Los Angeles in the 1970s. The founder, Agustin Lira, is considered one of the pioneers of Chicano music and theater. In 1965, Agustin Lira and Luis Valdez began to compose “agitprop” theater during the Great Delano Grape Strike led by Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers. Lira also founded Teatro Campesino, a company that would act as a catalyst for the creation of Chicano Teatro companies across the country. Teatro Campesino received critical acclaim such as the New York Off-Broadway OBIE Award, and the L.A. Drama Critics’ Circle Award.

In 1974, Agustin relocated to his hometown of Fresno and started to develop small theater groups, which lead to the creation of Teatro de la Tierra. With the support of pro-bono lawyers, Teatro de la Tierra (Teatro) transformed from an organization that provided informal supports to the community, to a fully incorporated 501(c)3. At this time, fellow artist and activist, Patricia Wells was a student at Cal State University Northridge and became involved in boycotts, marches, and demonstrations during the United Farm Workers’ secondary boycott of Gallo Wines. During these demonstrations is where she met Agustin Lira, and decided to join his movement to raise awareness and funding for the United Farm Worker’s boycott and working at Teatro de la Tierra.

Since then, they have served the low-income, immigrant, Latino/Chicano community by providing outlets for youth to celebrate their culture and foster ethnic identity through arts education and by promoting the arts as a tool of resistance to the oppression experienced by the Latino community.

In the San Joaquin Valley, the Latino/Chicano community comprises a majority of the agricultural labor, which is a critical component of the local economy. However, racism and anti-immigrant sentiments result in these laborers being underpaid, and denied supportive services because they are undocumented. Given rising rates of poverty in the area, there has also been a growing gang population to which many youth in the region fall victim to joining due to a lack of supports in the area. Thus, Teatro’s unwavering mission has been to provide music and arts classes to youth as an avenue to fight for justice and equity for their community and to not succumb to gang life. Patricia said,

*A lot of times, it is the Latino communities who have the least advantages. This is what is happening to their families...falling through the cracks...having to suffer racism. This is not something that we can [directly] address as an organization but through our music and our theater, we inspire people. We are giving [the community] something back that is still ours and still theirs. It is the language, the music, and the*

*added ingredient of fighting back and saying “no.” I think our position in this town has been to offer the music and the arts, which people think has no relationship to health. If you accept yourself, and who you are, and love your ancestors and where you came from, you are going to be a much more powerful person. So, that really is what we stand for and what we do.*

Nurturing artists and activists, Teatro has always had a strong pulse on their strength of their organization to mobilize and inspire the community through music and the arts as their mission to promote community health and well-being. However, in order to sustain their work, they knew that they had to take some steps to build their organizational infrastructure, despite their apprehensions that doing so could distract them from focusing on their program delivery.

Notably, when Teatro found out about the capacity-building grant from Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA) through the Community Leadership Project, it was Patricia’s prior relationship with ACTA’s Executive Director, Amy Kitchener, and her knowledge of ACTA’s commitment and longstanding history of social justice work through the arts in the San Joaquin Valley that assuaged their apprehensions and motivated them to apply for the grant. When Teatro leaders decided to apply, their initial vision for the grant was quite limited due to a lack of experience with capacity building and limited exposure to thinking about organizational challenges through a capacity-building framework. Thus, their hope was simply to recruit another staff member to handle administrative functions so they could focus on their passion of teaching youth.

### **CLP-Funded Work**

Once Teatro was awarded the grant, ACTA exposed them to myriad of resources which quickly expanded the vision for how this opportunity could serve the organization. Quickly, their focus shifted to growing Teatro’s operational/management capacity, with a core focus on building a strong fund development strategy. ACTA engaged in a multi-pronged approach to work collaboratively with Teatro to push this vision forward. ACTA engaged a learning community with all of their CLP grantees that included funder- and grantee-driven agendas in order to promote cross-learning and networking among the CLP portfolio. Additionally, ACTA was able to plug Teatro into a network of resources such as capacity-building trainings, workshops, and opportunities, while also providing ongoing technical assistance that specifically catered to arts organizations and/or organizations serving communities of color.

One capacity-building activity of pivotal importance for Teatro was attending a set of financial capacity-building workshops in the San Joaquin Valley. Hosted by the Executive Director of Fresno Barrios Unidos, these workshops focused on cross-learning among participants and sharing fundraising strategies, and were attended by eight other organizations serving

communities of color. ACTA informed Teatro about this opportunity and attended the workshops with them. Patricia Wells reflected that a major shift occurred in their thinking about fundraising when she heard like-minded organizations share about how they engage donors and “make the ask.” Patricia Wells reflected that she had many cultural and personal apprehensions about asking for money. At their core, they are activists and not fundraisers, and thus have a lack of familiarity with these practices. Yet, after hearing her peers share their success in asking for donations and engaging in some role-playing activities, she felt more confidence and called a donor to “make the ask.”

After the trainings, Patricia shared, “We starting putting together all of the elements” with the continued support and guidance of ACTA staff members, especially ACTA’s Program Manager, Nayamin Martínez Cossío. Patricia commented that part of the success of ACTA’s approach is its deep knowledge and earned trust in the community. ACTA’s staff members are seen as pillars of support for the arts community and communities of color, which is reflected in ACTA’s diverse staff and its principles of engagement with grantees. Patricia said that it was invaluable to have Nayamin as a mentor, in part because she is a Spanish-speaking Latina from Mexico. She appreciated Nayamin’s grassroots, “on-the-ground, in the trenches” approach to the work. She said, “Nayamin is persistent, and a lot of it is her personality. But, a lot of it is that she is a Latina, and she comes from a different country, and she puts so much into it...bringing in more Latinos into the fold to let them know there is funding and there is support.”

## **Outcomes**

As a result of these strategies and engagement with ACTA, Teatro’s increased fundraising capacity has had ripple effects for the organization. Teatro began to ask more people for donations and received additional funding from ACTA for a consultant to create a system on Teatro’s website to collect donations. Additionally, Patricia drafted a donor request letter, which she shared with ACTA for feedback. Moreover, during the grant, Patricia reflected that they reached the point of readiness to engage in a donor campaign, which they never had the capacity to do before. Patricia said,

*This [a donor campaign] is something that I had heard about but never tried it. Now, it is almost set up. We have quite a list of people, and people who tell us, ‘I am not going to give you anything unless you ask.’ We have a couple of new board members too that have donated money, and they are part of our donor campaign.*

Through this opportunity, they not only decided to engage in a donor campaign, but they had already raised enough money to train and pay contractors and interns to run the donor campaign. Patricia explained that given the nature of Teatro's work and the trust and strong reputation it has earned in the community, they have always been able to recruit reliable volunteers. Throughout Teatro's organizational history, their annual budget has rarely varied from \$25,000, but during the duration of CLP, it has doubled, with their annual budget of \$62,000 in 2013. Therefore, they are now in a position to pay part-time contractors and interns for their time. Moreover, Teatro's increased exposure and access to funding opportunities increased the organization's grant writing savvy. As a result, in 2013, Teatro received a \$75,000 grant, their largest grant to date, to start the Theater for Boys and Young Men of Color Project. Through this project, Teatro is creating a space for boys and men of color, ages 16-28, to share their struggles, and receive acting and production training to turn their stories into skits and one-act plays to be shared with the community. Patricia attributes their ability to have this resource in the Fresno community as directly related to their increased fundraising capacity through CLP. She said,

*[The ability to do this project] is directly related to all of these [CLP] activities. A direct result of networking, of meeting people and letting them know what we do, inviting them to the shows, having them check out the website. The process of my learning and our organization's learning all the ways of surviving.*