Welcome to the 2016 Groundswell Fund Capacity Building Program Report

As part of our 2015-2019 Blueprint, Groundswell Fund committed to increasing funding and other resources aimed at increasing the skills and capacities of reproductive justice organizations in order to build their grassroots power and, as a result, the power of the movement itself. To do so, Groundswell created two new programs – the Grassroots Organizing Institute (GOI) and the Ecosystem Initiative – and expanded our four-year-old Integrated Voter Engagement (IVE) Program. Today, 92 percent of Groundswell’s resources (including grant dollars, programming, and staff and consulting time) support women of color and trans-led organizing, and 36 percent of those resources help build the power of the movement through capacity building programs. This report documents the successes and challenges of Groundswell’s 2016 Capacity Building programs and lays out a plan for 2017 and beyond.

We are proud to announce that in 2016 Groundswell Fund’s Capacity Building programs partnered with 26 organizations and moved $2.3 million dollars in grants to support participation in the programs and implementation of the work. Leveraging the skills and talents of seasoned organizers on staff and of consulting coaches, Groundswell successfully brought traditional organizing methodologies to the Reproductive Justice (RJ) movement through three innovative programs:

Grassroots Organizing Institute: Recent years have seen an explosion of new organizations using an RJ framework, especially those led by women of color. Because so many RJ groups are relatively new, and the challenges and opportunities facing them so large and urgent, they need support to develop the skills and tools necessary to organize a membership base of individuals most impacted by reproductive injustice: women of color, low-income and working-class women, as well as transgender and gender non-conforming communities. The Grassroots Organizing Institute (GOI) was launched in 2016 to provide the financial and hands-on support grassroots RJ groups need to be successful. In 2016, the GOI trained 10 RJ groups in the art and science of grassroots organizing via two in-person sessions and 15 hours of coaching per organization. Through this process, GOI cohort organizations established a baseline for their organizing from which they can grow during the program’s second year.
Integrated Voter Engagement (IVE) Program: Piloted in 2013, the IVE Program was launched to support grantee organizations that want to enter the civic-engagement arena but lack the resources or skills to carry out meaningful and integrated voter engagement and mobilization. The program blends community organizing and non-partisan voter engagement to boost the scale and ability of grantee partners to win systems change. Further, it strengthens communities by encouraging people to participate in voting, policy development and advocacy with public officials – and to become leaders at helping others to develop these skills. After three years of investment and skills building, we are excited to report extraordinary results. In 2016, 15 IVE groups made 70,236 nonpartisan voter contacts through phone banking and door knocking efforts. This represents a threefold increase from total program impact in 2015, when 10 groups collectively made 22,414 voter contacts. More importantly, the groups exceeded their collective 2016 phone and door contact goals by 15 percent! IVE groups also made strong progress in the area of leadership development, engaging 5,370 leaders through direct voter engagement work.

Ecosystem Initiative: 2016 also marked the launch of Groundswell’s Ecosystem Initiative, which bolsters the progressive movement’s commitment to RJ issues and organizations by supporting state-based collaborative campaigns through grantmaking and other resources in three states: Florida, Georgia, and Colorado. The program brings RJ organizations together with people of color-led social justice organizations from other sectors to strengthen cross-movement alliances that lift up and fight for RJ through collective, coordinated campaigns. Working from the philosophy “better and bigger together,” Groundswell makes convening support and external facilitation available to local RJ anchors and their allies as they strive to deepen organizational relationships, expand RJ via issues that resonate with their bases, and strengthen the broader movement and state infrastructure. In this pilot year, the program focused on Florida, where Groundswell supported four organizations to unite behind a plan to organize 2,000 people in support of comprehensive sex education in public schools in Miami-Dade County in 2017.

Groundswell Fund believes that the people most affected by oppressive structures in society should lead the fight for changes that benefit not only the most marginalized sectors of our society, but also all Americans across race, class and gender divides. We believe that programs that focus on the most marginalized communities are the ones that will reap the greatest benefits for the nation overall; in fact, we believe they are the only programs that can succeed long-term. The work of our grantee partners demonstrates that when capacity building programs are designed with cultural competency, attention to local contexts, transparency, and deep, honest, and mutually accountable engagement, women of color, low-income women, and transgender-led organizations can build the power necessary to achieve an equitable, just, and truly democratic nation.

With the 2016 elections behind us, and a powerful and rising tide of resistance before us, providing capacity building support is critical to building a stronger and more vibrant movement. And with a barrage of regressive policies confronting us, organizing people to stand up, speak out, and vote is our movement’s best strategy for resisting the tide of fascism. In 2017, Groundswell Fund’s Capacity Building Program will support groups to deepen their skills, add a dynamic roster of veteran organizers as coaches, and build in self-care practices that can help us sustain through the battles ahead.

This report was created to highlight the power and effectiveness of this approach, to lift up work that too often goes unseen, and to make the case for increased support for these organizations and the communities of which they are a part. We welcome your thoughts and comments, and urge you to consider joining with Groundswell in supporting the movement- and power-building strategies and organizations highlighted in this report.

In Solidarity ~

Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett
Chief Strategy Officer
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GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING INSTITUTE (GOI)

Designed in 2015 and launched in spring 2016, the GOI program reflects Groundswell’s belief that the greatest win for reproductive justice in the U.S. is not any single policy, legal, or electoral victory. Rather, it is an organized grassroots base large and sturdy enough to advance RJ for the long haul. While RJ organizations have been organizing in their communities for years and winning impressive gains, many of our grantees told us that they could be achieving bigger and more frequent victories if they had an opportunity to strengthen their organizing power. The GOI program was created to provide that opportunity.

Groups participating in the first two-year cohort are:

- ACCESS Women’s Health Justice (Oakland, CA)
- ARC-SE (Atlanta, GA)
- Cabrini Green Legal Aid (Chicago, IL)
- Correctional Association of New York (New York, NY)
- Illinois Caucus on Adolescent Health (Chicago, IL)
- Miami Worker’s Center (Miami, FL)
- National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (Atlanta, GA)
- Power U Center for Social Change (Miami, FL)
- SisterSong (Atlanta, GA)
- Sylvia Rivera Law Center (New York, NY)

Each participating organization received the following comprehensive support in 2016:

- **Direct grant support**: A $15,000 general support grant to cover a portion of the staff time needed to participate in the program and meet benchmarks and goals.

- **Racial and gender justice education**: Ongoing civic education to create a shared understanding of the theories, strategies, and foundational texts that unify organizers across sectors. This civic education is integrated into skills-building trainings and workshops as part of the theory-to-action continuum.

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1 GOI groups were recommended by Groundswell’s grant making staff. Capacity Building staff conducted interviews with potential participants to assess organizational alignment with Groundswell’s approach to organizing and their potential to create and implement a successful organizing campaign.
● **Two in-person convenings:** The first five-day meeting was held in Oakland in mid-April. This intensive program delivered most of the pilot’s group training and skill-building fundamentals. A shorter two-day report-back and celebration was held in Oakland in early December. Workshops included how to:

   - Have an effective one-on-one conversation (and track it!)
   - Recruit and retain members/volunteers
   - Utilize a Leadership Ladder of Engagement
   - Identify community-informed issue priorities
   - Develop campaign power maps and escalation tactics
   - Manage alliance and coalition dynamics to advance an organization’s campaign
   - Execute strategic communications that build the base and shape the narrative

● **Thirty hours of coaching:** Each participating group received 25 hours with a seasoned organizer who helped develop internal systems to support effective organizing, design a campaign, and create and implement an achievable work plan. Additionally, organizations had five hours of one-on-one communications coaching to develop meaningful and attainable communications strategies to elevate their campaign work.

● **Database access and training:** All participating organizations are required to use a functioning database to capture and use organizing data. For organizations without a database, the GOI program provided three-year contracts with NationBuilder. Organizations were supported as they migrated information into the new system and then received training on how to use its basic functions.

● **Mind-body practices:** Access to such self-care and mind-body self-awareness modalities as Somatics, Forward Stance, mindfulness meditation, and yoga to accelerate culture change, build group cohesion, and foster personal sustainability.

● **Dedicated program leadership:** A key feature of Groundswell’s capacity building programs is our commitment to bringing highly skilled and culturally competent staff and coaches to support grantees. In February 2016, Xiomara Corpeño came on board to lead the GOI as Groundswell’s Capacity Building Organizer. Xiomara brings 19 years of organizing experience in Black and Brown communities on a range of issues, including economic development, immigrant rights, LGBTQ justice, and civic engagement. Xiomara designed the curriculum for the convenings and hired a seasoned set of grassroots organizers as consultants to serve as the coaches to participating organizations.

● **A deep bench of respected coaches:** To provide additional support to participating groups, Groundswell developed a GOI coaching team. In 2016, coaches were: Robbie Clark, a Black Lives Matter Bay Area Chapter leader and one of the famed #BlackFriday14 participants who shut down the BART system to oppose state violence against Black people; riku Matsura, a reproductive and trans justice activist and organizer who brings over a decade of experience supporting youth organizing that centers marginalized communities; Faith Santilla, co-founder of the Pilipino Workers Center in LA with 20 years of labor and community organizing experience; and Etobssie Wako, who has over a decade of experience working with grassroots, national, and international organizations addressing reproductive health, rights, and justice.

The April 2016 convening was GOI’s official launch. Xiomara Corpeño and long-time social justice leader Vivian Chang co-designed and facilitated this intensive five-day training to encourage participants to learn new concepts and immediately apply them to their own work and campaigns. Topics included: the art and science of organizing; understanding outreach vs. recruitment; scale vs. depth; developing long-term social change goals; visioning; and power mapping.

Two days of the convening took grantees on a deep dive into understanding how to organize their base. Groups were asked to identify the people most affected by their issues. Working with members of their organizations, they explored the barriers that prevent people from participating or joining. For example, if an organization is focused on building a base of working mothers, meetings need to be held after work hours and with free childcare in order to ensure solid participation. For groups working at the intersection of service and organizing, identifying the base of people most affected can mean that individuals receiving services, not volunteer service providers, are the focus of organizing. Developing strategies that allow people to access services without
feeling they are required to participate in organizing, but which invite them to do so, was a challenge raised early in the process. Teasing out the specific needs of each base helped inform outreach and recruitment strategies, which then influenced the work planning portion of the first convening.

Another important workshop focused on the “science of numbers,” to enable participants to understand, for example, how many people they need to talk with in order to get a specific number of people to take action. This hands-on exercise exposed real capacity challenges experienced by participating groups and required groups to reconsider numeric goals given the demographics of their base, the barriers the base faced, and their staff capacity. This process also informed shifts in work planning for the year.

Relationship building and storytelling are also important components of community organizing. An exercise called Social Identity Awareness Poem gave participants an opportunity to build deeper connections with one another while reminding grantees of the power of personal stories. Doyle Canning, founder of Center for Story-Based Strategy, provided a half-day communications training on how framing and messaging have impacted social movements’ ability to shift hearts and minds. This convening also included daily yoga sessions to model how self-care practices can be integrated into everyday work to support organizer sustainability.

The second convening in early December encompassed two days focused on peer-to-peer sharing of 2016’s accomplishments and challenges. GOI coach Robbie Clark created the training component of the session, which incorporated a fishbowl-style, 45-minute role-play session during which grantees practiced different parts of a scheduled one-on-one with a member, played by Groundswell Chief Strategy Officer Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett. This fun—and often funny—session allowed GOI participants to see and practice the art and science of organizing in action. Key trainings included: How to Do a 1:1 Meeting; Power Mapping, and The Science of Numbers.

The biggest lesson GOI participants learned during this pilot year is how central the Theory of Social Change (as developed by AGENDA/SCOPE) is to successful organizing. During both convenings, GOI participants were introduced (and reintroduced) to the SCOPE Theory of Social Change triangle, which comprises three components of building power for policy and systems change:

- Winning progressive laws and policies;
- Changing the dominant narrative, commonly referred to as “winning hearts and minds;” and
- Shifting power relationships so that marginalized groups have the ability to act and improve conditions in society.
Groups articulated their own organizational theory of change to better understand how and where their work fits into the larger social-change landscape and why building a vibrant and engaged base is critical to winning RJ policy and systems change.

By the end of the year, organizations made significant progress towards their two-year organizing and outreach goals and, in some cases, exceeded them. Collectively, the GOI cohort talked to 4,493 new people about RJ issues, which represents an impressive 92 percent of their two-year goals for new engagement. Of those individuals whom the organizations met for the first time this year, more than half were identified as RJ supporters and targeted for intense one-on-one follow-up. As a result, 808 of the new supporters continued to engage with the organizations as activists and volunteers over the year.

Groundswell staff were surprised at these achievements, having expected groups to struggle with incorporating new organizing practices into their work, and that there would be a ramp-up period as they became comfortable with the organizing model. Instead, groups quickly grasped and implemented these concepts and, with the help of their coaches, made huge strides towards their goals. Most organizations saw a tremendous increase in community engagement because of GOI trainings and tools. In the end, we found that, because most of the participating groups did not have much experience with base-building, their goals were not ambitious enough. The success of year one work toward these goals indicates that Groundswell staff and coaches and program participants were overly cautious. Year one success reminds all of us that these groups are deeply connected to communities that can and will step up when engaged in a systematic and consistent way. Participating groups are working with their coaches to adjust their 2017 goals upward.
Stories from the field

For organizations already using organizing as a strategy, being part of the GOI opened up opportunities for deeper leadership development. One such organization is the New York City-based Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP). This year, with GOI support, SRLP launched its first-ever paid leadership program for TGNCI (transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex) youth and community. Called TRANSFORM, this holistic leadership development program focuses on the intersections of economic justice, gender self-determination, and self-care.

Here’s an example of how the program works: SRLP organizers first met C.A., a Trans Feminine person, while she was awaiting bail/trial in New York City. She was referred to SRLP through her public defender, who had participated in an SRLP training. C.A was detained in the NYC Trans Housing Unit, where she was subjected to violence and denied basic healthcare. With community support, C.A. was able to post bail, and then SRLP offered her legal services and support. Through funding provided by a GOI capacity building grant, C.A. started a paid internship with SRLP’s movement building team, enabling the organization to boost its communications and outreach strategies to reach more TGNCI people inside jails, prisons, and detention centers. C.A. increased the content available via SRLP’s website and increased traffic to the site, making sure that the voices of SRLP members on the inside are present in the organization’s media work and blog. She is also updating SRLP referrals and expanding the organization’s vision of re-entry support and its analysis in order to better connect RJ work with Trans Justice.

Another GOI participant, ARC-Southeast, experienced similar success. Founded in 2015 and based in Atlanta, ARC-SE’s mission is to increase abortion access for people in the South. It provides direct services, including a hotline, to women seeking abortion care, and also advocates for policies and programs that increase access to abortion. Because of TRAP laws that limit or prevent abortion care in many Southern states, women often have to travel across Georgia or the region to Atlanta to receive abortion services and care. ARC joined the GOI in order to create a model for organizing the women that uses their services to campaign for expanded abortion access. ARC-SE trains its volunteers to provide compassionate and non-judgmental support to callers, including how to connect callers with a place to stay, a ride to the bus station, and other resources.

The fight for Medicaid expansion in Georgia was a major focus when ARC-SE began the GOI program. Its goal was to bring more people into its Support Volunteer Training program that recruits, trains, and organizes volunteers and activists. Volunteers talk with callers about why abortion services are so difficult to access and women don’t have control over their bodies, and about gaps in insurance plans and Medicaid coverage. They help callers see barriers to abortion as political and human rights issues, and ask them to get involved.

“Lillian” called ARC’s helpline from Mississippi seeking an abortion when she was 16 weeks pregnant. Even though she obtained an appointment with a clinic in Mississippi for an initial check-up, by the time she was able to secure an appointment for the procedure, she was past the number of weeks mandated in the state’s TRAP law. She then decided to make an appointment at a clinic in Atlanta. After driving over six hours, she was told by the physician on duty in Atlanta that she was too high-risk for an abortion because she had had “too many” Cesarean sections. Lillian had used up all the money she had saved for her abortion to pay for her travel to Atlanta. ARC was able to reach out to clinic partners and a national funder to help Lillian. Thanks to ARC’s tireless work, Lillian was able to access abortion services. She was so moved by ARC’s support that when asked if she wanted to help the organization, she immediately said YES! Lillian is now working with ARC to expand its network and organizing base in Mississippi.

2 Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP) laws single out the medical practices of doctors who provide abortions and impose on them requirements that are different and more burdensome than those imposed on other medical practices, reducing women’s access to abortion services.
GOI Lessons Learned

- **Blending organizing cultures is essential, but difficult:** Early on, we realized that differing definitions of organizing and theories of social change presented a challenge to our work with the GOI cohort. Groundswell’s capacity building staff comes out of economic justice and immigrant rights, not RJ, organizing. The strength of these sectors is their demonstrated ability to build grassroots power and smart campaigns at the scale necessary to win major policy and systems changes. However, the RJ movement has largely rejected these organizing models, viewing them as patriarchal, because they marginalize issues important to women and LGBTQ people and are rife with unsustainable practices that lead to burnout. The RJ movement is strong in its framework of inclusion and practices of sustainability, but weaker in its ability to build the grassroots power to win. In the first year of the GOI, Groundswell staff and grantees had to find ways to leverage the rigor of traditional organizing with processes that affirm the values of RJ in order for groups to achieve success. This is a work in progress, but year one created a path forward.

- **Understanding organizing as empowerment:** Groundswell staff believe the cornerstone of effective organizing is helping individuals face and surmount the fears that prevent them from realizing their own power – and that effective organizing requires pushing people (and yourself) out of comfort zones and into greater realization of personal power. In contrast, RJ organizations often bring a trauma-informed practice\(^3\) to their organizing culture. Some grantees are concerned about the dangers of pushing leaders beyond their comfort levels. Groundswell staff have countered these concerns, noting that leadership development is fundamental to organizing a powerful base and not diametrically opposed to trauma-informed modalities. At the same time, we have also taken these concerns to heart, and are building an organizing model that honors individual and community wellbeing and healing while supporting participating organizations and leaders to embrace power building and scale.

Findings From an External Evaluation of the GOI Pilot Year

An external consultant, long-time social justice movement leader Mari Ryono, used phone interviews and an online survey to evaluate the GOI program from the perspective of cohort participants. Groundswell is thrilled that Ryono’s evaluation confirms our assessment of the program’s strengths and challenges.

Ryono’s evaluation identified the following program strengths:

- **Convening:** For many of the participant organizations, the first convening was powerful, and they especially appreciated the time allotted for their teams to create plans for moving forward and the opportunity to be together with peer organizations.
- **Coaches and staff:** Some participants with less experience in the RJ movement talked about the valuable support from their coaches and Groundswell Fund to integrate reproductive justice into their work.
- **Cross-movement learning:** The majority of the survey responses indicated an appreciation for the opportunity to learn from different experiences and movements.

The evaluation identified these areas for change:

- **More time with Groundswell staff:** Many participants wanted more time with Groundswell staff in addition to their work with their coaches, but recognized that this would have to be designed thoughtfully, given other demands on staff.
- **More peer-to-peer time:** Participating organizations appreciated the peer engagement at the first GOI convening and wanted even more opportunities to build relationships and learn from each other.
- **Continuing Groundswell Fund’s staff learning** on RJ, gender, trauma, and supporting Transgender/Gender-nonconforming (TGNC) leaders.

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\(^3\) An organizational structure and framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma.
INTEGRATED VOTER ENGAGEMENT (IVE) PROGRAM

Groundswell’s IVE program is the first of its kind in the U.S. It deeply invests in the RJ movement by providing leading RJ organizations with resources to test the theory that increasing non-partisan, integrated voter engagement builds capacity to: engage underrepresented constituencies in policy, in systems change, and in the democratic process in an ongoing way, both within and beyond election cycles.

The IVE cohort expanded from 10 groups in 2015 to 15 groups in 2016. Below is a list of participating organizations for 2016:

- Alaska Community Action on Toxics (Anchorage, AK)
- Black Women for Wellness (Los Angeles, CA)
- California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative (Oakland, CA)
- California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (Los Angeles, CA)*
- Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights/COLOR (Denver, CO)
- El Pueblo (Raleigh, NC)
- Friends of the West End (Birmingham, AL)*
- Mothering Justice (Detroit, MI)
- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (TX, FL, and VA)
- New Voices for Reproductive Justice (Pittsburgh, PA)
- Reproductive Justice Collective (Milwaukee, WI)*
- Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity/URGE (OH)
- Women Engaged (Atlanta, GA)
- Women With A Vision (New Orleans, LA)
- West Virginia FREE (Charleston, WV)

In 2016, each organization received more than $150,000 in direct funding and support, including:

- A one-year grant totaling $87,000 to enable the staffing and infrastructure upgrades (including new staff positions and database systems) needed to implement a successful IVE program
- Direct and grassroots lobby field grants to ensure that IVE activities can educate on, and support, important RJ issues

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4 *Group transitioned out of the IVE program at the end in 2016. CLRJ left because its organizational theory of change doesn’t align with voter engagement work. RJC closed at the end of 2016, so is no longer part of the program. Friends of the West End departed the program due to capacity concerns. Please note that IVE numbers for 2016 do not reflect numbers for RJC or Friends of the West End, because their data were inaccessible once they left the program.
• Ten coaching hours per month with an IVE expert to develop and implement a strong IVE work plan
• Two three-day convenings focused on hands-on skill building with a diverse set of IVE practitioners and peers
• Mailing support to increase each organization’s profile in its community and prepare the way for canvassing, phoning, and other civic-engagement activities
• Canvassing and phone banking support, including technical assistance to run effective field operations and funding to increase the scale of community outreach and leadership development through paid phone bankers and canvassers
• Data support that ensures ongoing training and technical support to access and maintain clean voter data. This includes support with the VAN (Voter Activation Network) and PDI (Political Data Incorporated), as well as with the MiniVan and other app-based canvassing technologies that streamline data management and reduce environmental impact
• Social media and radio support via funding for social media campaigns and radio ads to raise the visibility of organizations and their IVE work
• Access to legal counsel to ensure full 501(c)(3) compliance for IVE activities. All materials and phone and canvass scripts are vetted by Groundswell’s legal counsel
• Evaluation support to develop bold, yet achievable, goals, along with systems for tracking progress and impact

2016 IVE Program Results

Because 2016 was a major election year, Groundswell used a two-pronged approach to scale up the IVE cohort’s work. First, grants were increased: general support grants rose from $75,000 to $87,500 for nine long-time and high-performing groups, while new and lower-performing groups received $75,000. All field grants went from $30,000 to an average of $50,000 per group. Second, all groups were asked to focus their energy, capacity, and resources on direct, nonpartisan voter contact via phones and doors.

Because civic engagement is often evaluated on the impact of outputs, tracking the cohort’s ability to set and meet IVE goals is essential. Since the IVE program is now three years old, its numbers tell a powerful story about the cohort’s growing strength and impact.
The increase in door and phone contacts is 2016’s standout result. With the concentrated training, skill building, and implementation/practice that only a major election year brings, IVE groups gathered up the capacity of their 2015 base-building work and plowed it into encouraging those people to vote. They exceeded their door contact goal, reaching 124 percent of goal. By allocating field budget dollars to pay for the Voter Activation Network’s auto-dialer5 minutes, groups saw a significant uptick in their phone banking efficacy. The number of phone attempts increased, and they fell only 315 contacts shy of their 2016 phone banking goal, reaching 99 percent of goal. Groundswell believes that as groups become more familiar with this technology, they will see an even greater return. In 2017, all groups will be required to use field budget dollars to obtain access to auto-dialers.

Each year, IVE groups set RJ ID goals—the target number of community members identified as supportive of reproductive justice issues. IVE groups were able to meet their 2016 RJ ID goals, identifying 16,104 people who positively responded to an RJ question. It’s worth noting that RJ IDs are typically easier to collect in a non-election year like 2015 than in a major election year like 2016. This is due to IRS rules that caution 501(c)(3)s from discussing potentially partisan issues with voters in the period before an election. In 2017, without the pressure of the elections, groups will be free to talk more candidly about RJ issues in order to help build their base of support. This larger base, in turn, will strengthen the RJ organizations’ long-term ability to achieve systems change.

The cohort’s nonpartisan GOTV (Get out the Vote) numbers came in at 101 percent of goal, a 398% increase from 2015. A strong nonpartisan GOTV program is the flagship of voter engagement work, and takes time to build. Given the recent programmatic shift to focus on scaling up voter contacts, 2016 GOTV numbers will become the new baseline from which to build upon in 2017. We plan to use data-driven strategies that support even more robust nonpartisan GOTV efforts next year.

Voter registration goals were not met this year for a few reasons. First, although organizations sought to do some voter registration, contacting already registered, infrequent voters was their highest priority, along with reaching ambitious voter contact goals. Second, nonpartisan voter registration is generally harder in election years because the landscape is glutted with candidate campaigns that are vigorously registering voters. Third, the chilling effect of a crackdown on immigrants made the goals more formidable for Latinx RJ organizations. For example, in Colorado, COLOR ran a lengthy, and mostly unsuccessful,  

5 Auto-dialers are computerized phone systems that dial numbers automatically, allowing phone bankers to save the time it would take to dial them manually. Phone banks that use auto-dialers typically reach a significantly higher number of people than those operating without this technology.
door-to-door voter registration campaign during the late spring. In an attempt to register Latinx voters, COLOR used a small paid team to canvass Latinx neighborhoods. Without a working list and with growing fear of ICE raids, canvassers struggled to get non-registered but eligible voters to sign up. That said, the experience helped develop stronger canvassers who were more familiar with these neighborhoods when it was time for nonpartisan GOTV.

Base and Leadership Development Shifts in 2016

A broad base of support and solid leadership development programs ensure that IVE organizations have people to galvanize during election years. The human capacity that groups need to get to scale is directly related to their ability to reach more voters and increase their program impact on Election Day. That, in turn, enables organizations to further the cycle of engagement after the election to effect social change by advocating for policies, shifting power relationships and changing the dominant narrative.

Elections provide a clear entry point for people to engage more deeply in the work of their respective organizations. Through phone banks, door-to-door canvasses, and training, leaders have an opportunity to deepen their skills. This year, the IVE cohort was able to skillfully funnel its leaders into nonpartisan voter registration and GOTV work, engaging 5,370 leaders. While they ended the year at 86 percent of their total goal for 2016, they achieved a 27 percent increase in leaders from 2015. The cohort was able to use the elections to exceed the level 1 leadership goal by 129 percent, thus expanding the number of leaders who can speak on behalf of the organization. This represents a one-year, 104-percent increase; the cohort engaged 218 level 1 leaders in 2015 and increased that number to 444 in 2016.

The sharp influx in level 1 leaders can be attributed to a few things. After being involved in multiple campaigns in the years and months leading up to the general elections, leaders were prepared to take on more responsibility and serve as organizational spokespeople. Given the high-stakes tenor of the 2016 elections, many organization leaders attempted to run for office. For example, five of Mother Justice’s members ran for such local offices as precinct delegate and city commission. Similarly, the

Groundswell Fund designed a Leadership Ladder of Engagement to support groups as they track and assign leadership development. An individual needs to do only one of the activities named in a given category to be assigned to that category. For example, if Janette attends a rally, but also gives testimony at a public hearing, she would categorized as a level 1 leader.

Level 1: MOST ENGAGED LEADERS: Run for office, serve in a policymaking role (board, commissions, etc.), serve on the board of an allied organization, serve as a spokesperson for the issues.

Level 2: VERY ENGAGED LEADERS: Attend trainings, engage in policy fights (legislative or institutional), meet with public officials, represent the organization with allies and in other venues, facilitate meetings of the base.

Level 3: ENGAGED LEADERS: Recruit others to get involved with the organization, participate in door-to-door canvassing, attend events to show public support for RJ issues, make phone calls/send emails to others on the organization’s behalf to gain support, donate personally and move others to donate to the organization.

Level 4: SOLID ACTIVISTS: Give the organization their contact information, take an action from home: send an email, make a call, make a donation, etc.
cohort was able to meet 108 percent of its goal for level 2 leaders. These level 2 leaders attended phone banks, canvasses, and town halls, becoming the backbone of outreach efforts in 2016. The cohort exceeded the 2015 number of level 2 leaders by 133 percent. In 2017, the organizations will capitalize on strengthening the relationships with these organizational leaders by engaging them further in efforts to achieve systems change.

While the numbers of partnerships and allies didn't grow, the 2016 work deepened existing ones. Groups reached 85 percent of their public official goal, cultivating 240 relationships, greater than the number cultivated in 2015, but falling short of 2016 goals, largely because many decisionmakers were also running for reelection, limiting how groups could engage in a 501(c)(3) context. There's no election in 2017, so the organizations will have the freedom to cultivate more relationships with public officials.

Partnerships and Elected Official Relationship Shifts in 2016

In order to win long-term policy and systems change, IVE organizations must nurture partnerships with values-aligned allies and public officials. Building and tracking relationships with allies provides groups with political cover when necessary and the ability to leverage collective power to achieve policy wins. Similarly, knowing where public officials are on issues is key to moving them to become supporters or to neutralizing them. This year, we saw a drop in both categories.

Engagement with elected officials was down in 2016 because, in some cases, elected officials were running for office, making it harder to partner with them in a 501(c)(3) context. Given our intensive training around the legal lines of our IVE work, groups understood the risks and took care to avoid engagement that would jeopardize their tax status. Secondly, groups spent more time focused on grassroots strategies to increase voter scale and impact rather than policy/advocacy processes. While it remains important that relationships with elected officials continue to grow, what was lost in numbers of active relationships with elected officials this year was gained in the people power achieved from scaled-up voter contact work. Finally, while the number of partnerships and allies decreased, groups were able to coordinate and amplify impact through their partnerships.
Voter Analysis: We are the New American Majority

IVE participants are leveraging every election to connect in meaningful ways with the New American Majority’ in order to build support for RJ issues and to bolster voter participation. The 2016 voter analysis is clear: the IVE cohort is connecting with historically underrepresented voters of color and young people via strong RJ messages that make the personal political in order to encourage them to vote. In 2015, Groundswell conducted a demographic analysis of the voters IVE groups contacted. In the aftermath of the 2016 election, one of the most racially polarizing in American history, we wanted to look again at who, exactly, the IVE groups are mobilizing. What we have found is that IVE groups are talking to more Black voters than ever before, and when Latinx and API voters are added, people of color (POC) voters made up 81 percent of all voters the cohort contacted. This represents a 37 percent increase in the percentage of POC voters contacted, 59 percent in 2015 to 81 percent in 2016. It’s important to note that the decrease in the percentage of white voters is also a result of increased overall voter engagement by the cohort of organizations, 85 percent of which are led by people of color. Culturally competent messaging and contact at the doors and phones demonstrate that the IVE cohort is meeting voters where they are and doing so in a way that facilitates relationship building beyond Election Day.

SPOTLIGHT ON ACAT

Long-time IVE cohort member Alaska Community Action on Toxics (ACAT) achieved policy success in 2016 as it advanced its state-level Toxic-Free Children’s Act (SB111), legislation that would ban 10 toxic flame retardants. Over the course of four weeks of phone canvassing with five paid phone canvassers and one day with one volunteer canvasser, ACAT contacted voters in Anchorage and Juneau. According to ACAT, “We believe that without the phone canvass targeting [state] Senator Mia Costello, the chair of the Labor and Commerce committee, and other key committee members, that we never would have had a hearing on SB111. We know that Senator Costello is particularly keen on hearing from her constituents, and our canvass allowed us to rally people in her district to call and email her about SB111." In April of 2017, the Pesticide-Free Anchorage Ordinance was passed by the Anchorage Assembly, with ACAT’s leadership.

6  Groundswell Fund used only contributions from individuals to pay for the lobbying portion of Catalyst grants; no private foundation funds were used for those purposes.

7  The New American Majority is made up of people of color, single women, and millennials that together comprise the largest portion of the American electorate.
Young people ages 18-34 continue to be the largest portion of the cohort’s voter engagement work. These Millennial voters have been an enigma to the political community, but, using smart RJ messages, IVE cohort participants are successfully inspiring young people to get involved. We also saw an increase in voters 65 years and older this year. Our assessment is that IVE cohort organizations are working with communities that are inter-generational and that campaigns are focused on turning out households, not just individual voters.

Stories From the Field

There were many bright spots in the work over the course of the year. One highlight occurred in September, when West Virginia FREE held its first-ever tele-town hall: “What You Need to Know to Vote,” featuring Secretary of State Natalie Tenant. The 23,000 voters who had been contacted by WV FREE via their IVE work in recent years were invited to participate. Some 4,000 of these voters joined the virtual session, and 56 percent of them responded “yes” to a live poll asking if they would like follow-up contact. This information has gone back into the Voter Activation Network and is helping guide WV FREE as it builds its base of activists. The tele-town hall platform has proven helpful to WV FREE as it works to scale-up its base in a rural state with great distances between residents. WV FREE is certain that the large turnout for this tele-town hall would not have been possible if they had approached voters cold; it happened because voters had heard from the group regularly over time.

Another grantee, Black Women for Wellness (BWW), stood out for its sharp increase in scale this year, as it grew voter contacts from 1,410 in 2015 to 11,594 in 2016. In doing so, BWW became the first organization in the IVE program to break the 10,000 mark for voter contacts. This is the scale at which organizations can compete for higher levels of funding from more traditional civic engagement funders and are seen by the strongest civic engagement organizations as having real power and influence. This success was due to Groundswell’s long-term investment in BWW’s
IVE work, which helped the organization garner an invitation to join the African American Vote program of California Calls. California Calls is a powerful alliance of 31 grassroots, community-based organizations spanning urban, rural, and suburban counties across the state, and the premier IVE formation engaging the New American Majority in CA. As part of this program, BWW was able to access additional resources and speak to more voters than ever before.

Unite for Reproductive and Gender Equity (URGE) Ohio, which focuses on Millennial voters, also had a strong year in 2016, growing its voter contacts from 2,440 in 2015 to 8,044 in 2016. Thanks to URGE's diligence in collecting and updating voter data in 2015, it doubled its phone banking contact rate over that of 2014. To maximize each contact, URGE also asked people to register to vote, opt into its texting program, and volunteer or become an activist. It also saw a sizable increase in turnout at local events. For example, URGE's Sex Trivia Night grew from 15 people in 2015 to 85 people in 2016, with the largest increase in Bowling Green. By year-end, URGE-OH had identified 3,123 voters who support comprehensive sex education, up from 1,300 supporters in 2015. In the fall (outside of the election time frame), URGE also identified supporters for a city resolution (currently pending) that supports abortion access for all, specifically asking local lawmakers to overturn restrictions on abortion coverage and to support the federal EACH Woman Act.8

URGE-OH’s IVE success inspired URGE national to expand IVE work to its TX and AL chapters, and to send staff from these states to participate in Groundswell’s fall convening and webinar on how to phone bank and canvass. Groundswell continues to support URGE’s work in all three states in 2017.

Strengthening Skills

In addition to grants and coaching support, Groundswell’s IVE spring and fall convenings provided a boost to grantee work this year. The first convening was held in March in Pittsburgh, PA. With 39 participants, this convening focused on best practices for preparing for the primary election. Topics included nonpartisan voter registration, communications frames and messaging for social media, and door knocking. To put theory into practice, the convening culminated in a door-to-door canvass in Pittsburg hosted by cohort member New Voices Pittsburgh.

In August, the IVE cohort joined Groundswell staff and coaches in Oakland for the second convening of the year. Forty-three people attended, with two to three staff representing each organization. The convening focused on skills for conducting strong phone and door voter contact in preparation for the November 2016 elections. Groundswell staff covered the nuts and bolts of a GOTV weekend and helped groups to revise their canvass scripts. A panel discussion with Claire Tran (formerly of New Virginia Majority) and Gaby Garcia-Vera (NLIRH) highlighted how IVE programs can help organizations advance a policy agenda in a 501(c)(3) context. In addition, a hands-on Voter Activation Network training via a practice door canvass used California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative’s canvass script and materials in an Oakland neighborhood. IVE funders attended one day of the convening in order to meet the grassroots groups and better understand their work.

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8 The federal EACH Woman Act would ensure coverage for abortion for every woman, no matter her income level or whether or not she is insured.
In addition to the two convenings, we conducted a Phone Banking 101 Webinar on May 16 and 19. This 90-minute webinar reviewed key IVE definitions, the nuts and bolts of holding a phone bank, and how to capture results in a meaningful way. The two webinars were attended by a total of 24 people representing all of the cohort organizations. To ensure grantees had data management support while running their canvass programs during the general election, IVE Program Organizer Quanita Toffie held an optional weekly Data Office Hours, a standing meeting time to which grantees could bring real-time data issues and questions from the field. Data Office Hours were designed to allow groups to gain practice support and solve data-based challenges in order to inform mid-canvass course correction. These sessions were well attended and hailed as helpful by participants.

**Metrics Matters: Program Impact**

Metrics help to evaluate civic engagement work in the larger electoral landscape, and use control precincts to measure impact – i.e., compare turnout between precincts with contact programs and those without. Because this is a capacity building program, Groundswell IVE staff wanted to assess the internal capacity of grantees to move the voters they contact, and to track and measure what is or isn’t working, e.g. script, paid vs. volunteer programs, leadership development opportunities. To that end, Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett, Xiomara Corpeño, and Quanita Toffie developed a new metric for the IVE Program: Program Impact, the percentage of people who were contacted and committed to vote who actually showed up to vote on Election Day. Program impact can only be calculated after elections are certified and updated in the VAN and PDI. This important calculation allows Groundswell’s IVE staff and grantees to understand what configuration of factors work best to engage and move their base. Beyond elections, the metric helps organizations understand which tactics will be effective at achieving various types of systems change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM IMPACT</th>
<th>PPL ID’D TO VOTE</th>
<th>PPL VOTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>72%</td>
<td>30,175</td>
<td>21,871</td>
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**Key Challenges and Lessons**

- **Staff turnover resets organizations’ ability to grow:** This year, we saw significant staff turnover within the cohort. Despite a deep investment in IVE on the part of cohort organizational leadership, the technical knowledge and expertise around IVE implementation often lies with line staff. Therefore, staff transitions can create a gap in capacity during the hiring and onboarding period that can negatively impact programs. Groundswell is attempting to address this by supporting groups to build a deeper bench of staff engaged in the day-to-day operations of their IVE work and by including supervisors on coaching calls at least once a month to ensure that everyone is clear on the current IVE workplan goals and implementation tactics.

- **Increasing the sophistication of the IVE metrics:** After four years of putting the IVE program into action, we realized that our metrics needed additional tightening in order to meet the electoral sector bar for excellence. This has meant redesigning the workplan template so that groups, coaches, and staff all use more precise definitions for activities, goals, and timelines. Additionally, reporting on leadership has shifted by removing the layer that captures email sign-ups. While email sign-ups are one way of entering the base, it is the process of moving people from the email list to greater action that we aim to track and develop over time.
Building an explicit base for RJ will require 501(c)(3) lobbying: As cohort members put IVE program components in place, taking a stand on the issues they care about is the next logical step in building grassroots power for systems and policy change. Most organizations have already been engaging in some lobbying work with non-Groundswell dollars. As we think about advancing the fights in 2017, offering organizations grassroots and direct lobby resources are the obvious next step. Groundswell is working with individual donors to provide IVE cohort members with the funds needed to advance this important next step as we build the RJ movement.

**External Evaluation of IVE**

The evaluation focused on collecting feedback from grantee partners on the training, coaching, and overall capacity building provided by Groundswell Fund through the IVE Program. The staff and consultant wanted to learn how and if IVE offerings match the needs of the grantees and what insights and wisdom are emerging in this stage of the program. IVE participants were sent a 16-question online survey and asked to share their feedback anonymously. All IVE participants from each organization, along with their executive director, were asked to fill out the survey together so that the responses represented an organizational rather than an individual perspective. The survey was administered by outside consultant Mari Ryono to maximize participant confidence about providing honest feedback. Staff will use feedback to make modest adjustments for fall capacity-building support and to recalibrate the 2017 program.

**STRENGTHS:**

- **Resourcing:** Grantees noted that sufficient funding to hire organizing, civic engagement, and data management staff was key to their IVE success.
- **Staffing and Coaching:** Partners expressed pride and appreciation that they were leading voter engagement efforts with high-quality tools that they received from their coaches and Groundswell Fund staff.

**CHALLENGES:**

- **Anchoring the work organizationally:** Groups are interested in support to better integrate their broader base of staff, members, and supporters with the integrated voter engagement work.
- **Poor Data Quality:** Several groups identified the need for improved quality of voter data in the VAN.

**Conclusion**

Thanks to the IVE Program’s dynamic growth and impact on the ground, we look forward to 2017 and opportunities to innovate and grow. In an effort to lean into the audacious goals of the Blueprint, we are asking cohort groups to double down on their nonpartisan voter contact work by conducting three to five community outreach campaigns throughout 2017. The goal is 80,000 voter contacts and 30,000 RJ IDs. Thanks to an expansion of our coaching team, we are confident that groups will be able to meet these bold goals. This focus on daring goals will help groups build an engaged and informed base of voters who will obtain deep education around RJ issues, including abortion and contraception access, without the risk of falling into the pre-election partisan dragnet.

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9 Full list of IVE coaches and bios in appendix of report
ECOSYSTEM INITIATIVE

In 2016, Groundswell Fund launched a new initiative to address a long-standing problem: RJ organizations have been marginalized from the larger progressive movement and isolated from the kinds of alliances that could boost their power to win key fights. Groundswell’s Ecosystem Initiative aims to accelerate RJ policy and systems change in particular cities and states by deepening support for existing grantees and their key allies, e.g., economic justice organizations, within local and state “ecosystems.” Groundswell is supporting RJ organizations to have a seat at the table, and to bring a level of power to that table that strategic allies will respect: a strong grassroots base in key communities, capacity to mobilize voters, a willingness to engage on key issues in the larger progressive ecosystem, etc. The Ecosystem Initiative also bolsters ally organizations that are deepening their engagement with RJ work. Ecosystem states currently include Florida, Georgia, and Colorado. Groundswell layers funding, capacity-building resources, and other support more deeply in specific ecosystems where we already have strong grantee organizations. The goal is to catalyze power building, movement building, and policy change.

Groundswell’s FL ecosystem work began in 2016, with the following participating organizations, all based in Miami:

- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
- Power U Center for Social Change
- New Florida Majority
- Miami Workers Center

In June 2016, these four organizations completed a phase of exploration and political education through a series of facilitated meetings in English and Spanish to identify shared values, priorities, and possible points of alignment for ongoing collaboration. A four-day convening took place in July, with the help of trainers from Western States Center and facilitators Janvieve Williams and Etobssie Wako. Together, Groundswell staff, facilitators, and organizational leaders developed and facilitated a meaningful convening rooted in difficult, necessary, and authentic conversations that explored the following topics:

- Defining reproductive and gender justice
- Bringing your full self to the work as a political act and RJ as an underpinning framework for organizations/movements
- Beginning a process to discuss and resolve interpersonal, inter-organizational, and inter-movement challenges that present barriers to deeper trust and alignment
- Developing a power map that assesses the opportunities for coordinated, sustainable work in the FL ecosystem

The FL cohort found that to build power among allies, collaborative work must include these components:

- **Bring your whole self**: Education around RJ, gender justice, and the political orientation of the RJ movement must allow and encourage people to bring their whole selves. In most progressive organizing, people often leave parts of themselves behind, e.g., their gender, their sexual orientation, their immigration status, in order to “focus on the work.” The FL cohort determined that, to be effective, education and organizing must include and embrace “whole solves.”
● **Build sustainable collaborative campaigns:** The strongest alliances are forged in the process of working alongside one another in key fights. Doing this well requires foundational learning about building healthy and sustainable coalitions. This can include being intentional around interpretation, rotating meeting facilitation, taking notes, and decision-making practices.

● **Create movement building space:** Cohort members recognize the importance of creating movement building space in which organizations, activists, and sectors can come together to forge deeper political, organizational, and interpersonal alignment in service of a stronger progressive front. Doing this may be the hardest piece of the Ecosystem work. It takes time because it can’t be faked or forced. It is also the most challenging because as a funder, Groundswell does not want to “arrange marriages” or engineer relationships. Successful movement building requires that the Groundswell team work closely with the grantees to build trust so that they know that we are there to help make this work for them even if some of the activities they decide are necessary, e.g., additional meetings and convenings or political education, fall outside the original conception of the work.

While the process of building collective power and a more aligned movement is never easy, the phase one Ecosystem FL process made progress toward these goals. This fall, Groundswell approved a $250,000 grant to the four ecosystem groups to support joint work in 2017. This includes a plan to identify 1,500-2,000 new RJ voters, and to collaborate on a Comprehensive Sex Ed (CSE) campaign in Miami schools. The goal is implementation of CSE that includes information on full spectrum reproductive health options, including contraception and abortion. The cohort will work with local and national partners to identify a curriculum and win approval from a local school board before bringing the same plan to other school boards for adoption. The cohort will also support a Campaign for Dignity for Young Parents aimed at destigmatizing young parents and ensuring them equal access to a quality high school education.

Through the Ecosystem Initiative, participating groups articulated their long-term RJ work as building power in four key ways:

● **Reproductive Justice Policy:** The ultimate objective of collaborative efforts is changing local and state policy throughout FL to provide full access to reproductive health options for all Floridians. Changes in policy are the fundamental markers of overall systemic change. The adoption of RJ frameworks and policies at the local/municipal, county, and state levels will be the indicators of developing RJ power in FL. Over the immediate term of this project (12-18 months), the groups will focus on local-level change, establishing the groundwork for state-level change.

● **Reproductive Justice Movement:** Establishing this collaborative among South FL racial and economic justice organizations is an important step toward leveraging RJ movement power statewide. It will inject vitality, credibility, and resiliency into the RJ movement by bringing the voices of base constituencies, low-income communities of color most importantly, to the fore.

● **Reproductive Justice Organizations:** The Initiative strengthens participating organizations’ RJ framework, which in turn develops the capacity of the FL social justice infrastructure to mobilize on critical RJ issues.

● **Reproductive Justice Constituency:** Because policies change and institutions come and go, the initiative’s most important impact is that each of the four partner organizations now brings an RJ framework and consciousness to their base constituencies. Building this base—women and youth in predominantly low-income African-American, Latinx, and Caribbean communities—is a critical to long-term change in FL. By equipping these key constituencies with an RJ frame and tools, the initiative is establishing a foothold for RJ organizations, leadership, and policy for the coming decades.

The FL Ecosystem Initiative is a hopeful development that portends positive change, both short- and long-term. In 2017, Groundswell will build on the FL experience as we work with groups in Colorado and Georgia.
**Miami Workers Center**

The Miami Workers Center organizes and develops conscious leadership within Miami’s working class communities for economic, gender and racial equality. Through a movement led by working-class communities, we envision a world of democracy and social justice for all people.

MWC’s membership is intergenerational, multi-racial, and multi-national, and includes a standing Women’s Circle, as well as a Young Girls Civic Engagement program, and a recently launched Femme Agenda, South Florida’s Women & Femme Economic Congress, an inclusive gender justice space where women, girls, and femme Floridians come together to talk about how poverty and lack of economic empowerment affect their lives. MWC has engaged around comprehensive sex education issues on a state level for nearly four years and looks forward to developing the leadership of its Black, Haitian, and Latinx base.

**Florida Latina Advocacy Network**

The Florida Latina Advocacy Network (FL LAN) operates as an extension of the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH), serving as the voice and advocacy presence in Florida. FL LAN works with activists throughout Miami-Dade County to organize our communities around issues-based campaigns that impact our families and our lives. The FL LAN seeks to increase Latina visibility in the reproductive justice movement, cultivate well-informed leaders, and build networks of activists in Miami-Dade County that will inform and support our national policy agenda and strengthen state and national reproductive justice activism.

FL LAN brings an intentional focus on RJ as its core organizational framework and issue area, as well as ongoing work around young parents. It integrates legislative advocacy into its work at the local and state levels to push for public accountability with policy makers and progressive cross-movement leaders. FL LAN engages in base building and leadership development, encouraging new people to become activists in order to grow its network, actions, and organizational influence.

**New Florida Majority**

The New Florida Majority is an independent organization increasing the voting and political power of marginalized and excluded constituencies toward an inclusive, equitable, and just Florida. We believe in a participatory democracy where people can be their whole selves. We train grassroots citizens to be leaders, mobilize communities to vote, educate the public to share our values, and inspire Floridians to take action toward their dreams. We organize people, ideas, and resources to build a powerful new vision for Florida’s new majority. We believe that a strong democracy for all makes a better Florida for everyone.

NewFM is building and aggregating independent political power among the New Majority – African-Americans, Latinx, new immigrants, women, and LGBTQ communities. Its Integrated Voter Engagement processes, tactics, and technology are a core contribution to the ECO-FL initiative.

**Power U Center for Social Change**

Power U envisions a society free from all forms of oppression in which decisions are made democratically and resources are utilized for the collective benefit of everyone. We are organizing and developing the leadership of Black and Brown youth and Black women in South Florida so that they may help lead the struggle to liberate all oppressed people.

Power U has been developing organizational strategy to build power for restorative and reproductive justice for the past five years. Its organizational framework incorporates an analysis of gender, patriarchy, and reproductive oppression. Core to its model is the leadership development of Black and Brown young people to broaden the base and build capacity. The site of struggle for Power U’s on-going campaigns is the Miami-Dade County Public School District, the location of the ECO-FL initiative collaboration.
Conclusion: What’s Next?

The success of Groundswell Fund’s Capacity Building Program in 2016 is entirely due to the passion and on-the-ground impact of participating organizations. Its success is a reflection of their skills, hard work, willingness to collaborate and innovate, and, most of all, their unwavering commitment to building the power of their communities. For a funder, navigating the decision to invest in grantee organizations’ skills and development through capacity building can be tricky. But thanks to a talented staff of veteran organizers with decades of direct organizing experience and participating organizations that are always willing to dig deeper, the Groundswell Capacity Building Program continues to meet its audacious goals and challenge itself to go bolder. With so much at stake in 2017, Groundswell is increasing investment in capacity building. We believe that this is the moment to support the Reproductive Justice Movement to build a large and vibrant base that can mobilize in the streets, at the ballot box, and in statewide collaborations to advance justice via policy and systems change.
Capacity Building Participating Organizations

**Ecosystem**
- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH)* / FL
- Power U Center for Social Change / FL
- Miami Worker's Center / FL
- New Florida Majority / FL

**Integrated Voter Engagement**
- Alaska Community Action on Toxics / Anchorage, AK
- ACT for Women and Girls / Visalia, CA
- Black Women for Wellness / Los Angeles, CA
- California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative / Oakland, CA
- COLOR (Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights) / Denver, CO
- El Pueblo, Inc / Raleigh, NC
- Khmer Girls in Action / Long Beach, CA
- Mothering Justice / Royal Oak, MI
- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH)* / Miami, FL
- New Voices for Reproductive Justice / Pittsburgh, PA
- Power U Center for Social Change / Miami, FL
- URGE: Unite for Reproductive and Gender Equity* / Ohio
- West Virginia Free / Charleston, WV
- Women Engaged / Atlanta, GA
- Women with a Vision / New Orleans, LA

**Grassroots Organizing Institute**
- Access Reproductive Care-Southeast (ARC-Southeast) / Atlanta, GA
- ACCESS Women's Health Justice / Oakland, CA
- Cabrini Green Legal Aid - CLAIM / Chicago, Illinois
- Correctional Association of New York - Women in Prison Project / New York, NY
- Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health / Chicago, IL
- Miami Worker’s Center / Miami, FL
- National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF)* / Atlanta, GA
- SisterSong* / Atlanta GA
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project / New York, NY
- Trans Queer Pueblo / Phoenix, Arizona

* National Organizations
CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM STAFF

**Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett, Chief Strategy Officer**  esperanza@groundswellfund.org

Esperanza has spent the last 16 years building political power for working class, immigrant, and communities of color in Oakland and around the state of California. Esperanza’s unique role and work at the intersection of progressive politics and the social justice movement has earned her dozens of awards including: The 2010 Redford Center Art of Activism Award, the Oakland League of Women Voters’ Democracy Award 2014, and the Alameda Labor Council’s Community Organization of the Year 2015. Prior to joining Groundswell, she served as the first executive director of Oakland Rising, a multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic social justice collaboration that educates and mobilizes low-income, immigrant, and voters of color in East and West Oakland. She was the first woman, and woman of color, to lead a collaborative civic engagement formation of this kind in the United States and built a solid reputation as a savvy electoral strategist, a seasoned political organizer, and a civic engagement innovator. During her tenure, Oakland Rising identified 25 percent of Oakland’s entire electorate in support of progressive policies, issues, and campaigns. Before coming to Oakland Rising, Esperanza served as the national political director for Congresswoman Barbara Lee (CD-9), regional field director for Northern California for Barack Obama during the 2008 CA primary, a community organizer in post-Katrina Louisiana, and a Labor Organizer with SEIU 1000 (Los Angeles, CA).

Esperanza is a self-identified queer, Afro-Puerto Rican woman, native daughter of Oakland, and a graduate of Mills College with a B.A. in English Literature. Esperanza is married to wife Christine and her proudest accomplishment is her brilliant and tenacious son, Santiago. They live on a 16-acre ranch in the Cascade Mountains of Southern Oregon.

**Xiomara Corpeño, Integrated Voter Engagement Program Director**  xcorpeno@groundswellfund.org

Xiomara was born and raised in Los Angeles, the daughter of Salvadoran immigrants. She grew up in a politically conscious household and brings to Groundswell 19 years of organizing experience and a strong track record of building power for communities of color through grassroots organizing, leadership development, and civic engagement. She cut her teeth in electoral organizing at UC Riverside, where as a Students for Social Justice Fellow she got out the vote in support of affirmative action for the No on Proposition 209 campaign. She then went to work for SCOPE in Los Angeles, where she learned first-hand how electoral organizing can lead to policy change.

A long-time movement leader, Xiomara spent the next 11 years at the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA), where she developed the organization’s first in-house electoral program and organizing department. Surmounting the challenge of a membership base composed primarily of people who are not citizens and thus cannot vote, Xiomara created powerful voter programs that paved the way for an array of state and local laws that support the rights of immigrant such as drivers’ licenses for undocumented people, the state’s Domestic Worker Bill of Rights, and the One California program, which provided $2.4 million in funding for citizenship and DACA services throughout California.

Under Xiomara’s leadership, CHIRLA joined the statewide campaigns to oppose three different parental notification ballot measures, as well as the campaign to oppose Proposition 8, the ban on gay marriage. While some questioned why an immigrant rights group would get involved in these two issues, CHIRLA used its clout in the Latinx community to educate voters and their loved ones about these propositions, recognizing that Latino voters were being targeted to vote yes at their places of worship. Xiomara is also the mother to two funny and creative children who, in their spare time, like to dance and sing to pop music.
Quanita Toffie, Integrated Voter Engagement Organizer  qtoffie@groundswellfund.org

Quanita plays a leading role in Groundswell’s IVE program, which equips RJ groups with cutting edge voter engagement skills and technology. Quanita began organizing for social and racial justice alongside her parents in her native Cape Town, South Africa, during the transition from apartheid to democracy before moving to the United States in 1997. She joined her parents in voting for the first time in their lives for Nelson Mandela in 1994, and this moment sparked a lifelong passion for electoral organizing for Quanita. Prior to joining Groundswell Fund as IVE Coach in 2014-2015 and then full-time staff as Program Organizer in 2016, she was a founding staff member of the New Florida Majority (NFM), where she led the creation of statewide, data-driven C3 and C4 electoral campaigns that harnessed the power of civic engagement organizing, technology, and analytics to advance social change from 2009-2014. Prior to her work at NFM, Quanita served as a scholar-activist in the fight for housing justice with the Miami Workers Center from 2005-2008. Quanita holds a B.A. in Political Theory, Economic Development, and African Studies from Hampshire College, 2002-2007. Her thesis was on the anti-gentrification movement in Miami and the global fight against neoliberal privatization of basic human rights like housing in South Africa. Quanita supports Women of Color (WOC) leaders in civic engagement to build skills in data and technology to create a more inclusive environment for all.

Lanita Morris, Capacity Building Organizer  lmorris@groundswellfund.org

Lanita Morris is Groundswell Fund’s new Capacity Building Organizer. She brings more than 15 years’ experience leading grassroots organizing training and capacity building to increase power for workers, students, and communities of color. Lanita grew up in South Los Angeles and was an Irvine Scholar at Occidental College when she was introduced to community organizing while interning at SCOPE in 1999. Through her work on SCOPE’s cutting-edge campaigns for progressive policy and electoral change, she honed her skills in community organizing and developed a passion for using popular education and strategic facilitation to ensure that poor people and communities of color have the power necessary to win social and economic justice.

In 2006, Lanita joined the UCLA Labor Center. As its Project Manager, she developed and implemented multiple leadership development and education programs for movement building. Her accomplishments include coordinating the African American Union Leadership School; the Student Leadership Academy; and the first Black Immigrant Youth Cohort of the national Dream Summer fellowship program. Her leadership at the Labor Center led to the incubation of the LA Black Worker Center (LABWC). As a founder of the LABWC, Lanita led the creation of the membership and leadership development structures, inspiring a national organizing model to address the crisis of unemployment and underemployment in the Black community. Lanita directed the LABWC’s first Train the Trainer program through which grassroots member leaders deepened skills for effective organizing and direct action campaigns and developed their capacity to train new organizational activists. The LABWC was recognized by the Obama Administration and the U.S. Department of Labor for its successful challenge of the LA construction industry’s historic exclusion of Black workers. Thanks to LABWC, Black worker employment on one of the country’s largest light rail construction projects jumped from zero percent to nearly 20 percent. Lanita joins the Groundswell staff team after serving as a Groundswell Grassroots Organizing Institute coach during the program’s pilot year. Under her leadership and direction, the GOI is developing a powerful training model that will be implemented in the RJ movement for years to come.

Krystal Kwong, Program Assistant  kkwong@groundswellfund.org

Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, Krystal has 10 years of administrative and customer service experience in the private sector. Her educational studies focused on environmental studies and learning different ways to help people. She is a firm reproductive justice supporter and believes women should have a choice regardless of their status or income. She spends her free time and energy with her family and godson exploring the Bay Area and California.
2016 GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING INSTITUTE COACHES

Doyle Canning is a communication coach who partners with social change organizations to transform public narratives and open space for new political possibilities. She is a creative strategist and communications specialist dedicated to growing inclusive movements for racial justice, economic transformation, and an ecological future. Doyle supports strategy teams, organizations, and networks by generating creative communications strategies that inspire, reframe, mobilize, and win. A co-founder of the Center for Story-based Strategy (storybasedstrategy.org), co-creator of the story-based strategy methodology, and co-author of Re: Imagining Change—How to Use Story-based Strategy to Win Campaigns, Build Movements and Change the World (PM Press, 2010). Doyle has served as a facilitator, trainer, message creator, brand builder, strategy architect, and direct action designer for organizations of all sizes and across multiple movements for 15 years. She has been a featured speaker at such major national conferences as Netroots Nation, Bioneers, and Facing Race. Doyle is a contributor to the 2012 anthology Beautiful Trouble and has served as a source for stories on memes and social movements for journalists at publications like Waging Nonviolence and Colorlines. Her writing has appeared in publications like Organizing Upgrade, Left Turn, TheOutsider.com, and Yes! Magazine.

Robbie Clark is a queer displaced African born and raised in Oakland, CA. Robbie learned from a very young age that racism was a real thing in “progressive” California and fought against gender injustices most of their life. Robbie’s earliest campaign was to change “Altar Boys” to “Altar people” at his Catholic elementary school, at the age of eight, a campaign that showed them that they were an agitator. They didn’t really understand what this meant until they learned about Steve Biko and watched Cry Freedom as a senior in high school and decided to commit their life to social justice. As a student at UCLA, Robbie had to combat a lot of what they internalized and struggled throughout college with gender identity, sexuality, and spiritual questions. Robbie later found Causa Justa::Just Cause while performing poetry at queer bars and events in the Bay Area. Robbie was drawn to the work of the organization because of its left politics and the work it was doing to fight against gentrification and displacement in the Bay Area, which Robbie had experienced firsthand. Robbie has been at the organization for almost nine years, leading a number of fights to win protections for Oakland’s tenants through direct policy and policy changes at the regional level. In 2009, Robbie co-authored a report with the Alameda County Public Health Department, Rebuilding Neighborhoods, Restoring Health, on the public health impacts of foreclosure, and was also a contributor to Causa Justa’s Development with Displacement report, released in 2014. Most recently, Robbie has been active in the development of the Black Lives Matter Bay Area Chapter, broadening the definition of state violence. Robbie is a member of the #BlackFriday14, the 14 activists who shut down the West Oakland BART station to demand an end to the War on Black lives. Since then, the 14, with the support of their community and allies, fought and got the charges dropped. Robbie believes that one of the primary ways that oppression hurts us is by the way that the state tells vulnerable people that their bodies and lives are disposable. Robbie’s life’s work and purpose is to take agency over their body and being and to support others in their quests for self-determination.
riKu Matsuda is from Southern California. Born in Garden Grove (Orange County) and raised in the Antelope Valley in the Mojave Desert of north LA County, riKu grew up isolated as a mixed Japanese kid with white privilege who was pretty queer and gender non-conforming. riKu’s high school mascot was a confederate soldier and in senior year, a coalition of students of color won a campaign to remove it. That campaign marked the start of riKu’s identity as an activist, which continued through community college and university, working on campaigns for educational justice, economic justice and worker’s rights, LGBTQ rights and ending racial discrimination in higher education. In 2000, riKu started organizing at a reproductive justice organization centering on young Cambodian women, serving as a youth organizer on a campaign to end sexual harassment in Long Beach Unified School District and a national campaign against deportation. riKu’s commitment to reproductive justice remained steadfast with a shift in focus from cisgender to transgender bodies after coming out as a transgender man of color. riKu was part of a small group starting a radical multi-issue organizing collective of queer and trans youth of color called qteam. riKu also worked as a substitute teacher and is now with the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations. riKu focuses on youth leadership development and violence prevention at a county level, and for over a decade has been committed to trans justice and trans rights issues that include reproductive justice, gender justice, racial and economic justice, disability justice and, broadly, social justice. Campaigns have involved fighting the prison industrial complex, immigration system, healthcare system, state violence, street harassment and domestic violence.

Faith Santilla has been a labor and community organizer for the past 20 years, was a co-founder of the Pilipino Workers Center, and currently sits on the Board of Directors for Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA). An award-winning poet, her work has been cited in numerous high school and college classrooms and syllabi across the country. Her work has been published in various scholarly articles, anthologies and books, including Empire of Funk and Legacy to Liberation, and it was most recently featured in hip hop artist Bambu’s album, Party Worker. She is also the proud mother of two children.

Etobssie Wako has over a decade of experience working with grassroots, national, and international organizations addressing reproductive health, rights, and justice issues. As an independent consultant, she has worked with nonprofit organizations, government agencies, UN bodies, and foundations in supporting social justice movement-building, strategic planning, leadership development, program management, and evaluation design and implementation.

Etobssie believes systems change and social justice are seeded and nurtured in communities, and as such is committed to strengthen grassroots organizations through building practices of informed decision making, process evaluation, capacity development, strategic communication, intersectional collaboration, and fostering compassionate work environments. She upholds her ancestral teachings that communities are architects of their own solutions and believes in the power of community-centered, creative, collaborative and futuristic ideas in informing transformative and sustained change.
2016 INTEGRATED VOTER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM COACHES

Monifa Bandele is senior campaign director for MomsRising.org and has more than a decade of experience in policy analysis, communications, civic engagement organizing, and project management working with groups like the Brennan Center for Justice, Peoples Hurricane Relief Fund, and the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation. At MomsRising.org, she manages the food justice campaign, helping to successfully increase children’s access to healthy food and working to stem junk food marketing. During her tenure at the Brennan Center as national field director for the Right to Vote Campaign, the coalition successfully changed laws in five states, expanding the franchise to more than 250,000 formerly incarcerated people. Monifa is also an impact producer with nearly a decade of experience developing education curriculum, resource guides, social/trans media projects, and community engagement campaigns for films like Hip Hop—Beyond Beats and Rhymes, Banished, Pray the Devil Back to Hell, Soul Food Junkies, and the Emmy award-winning documentary Freedom Riders. She has worked as a community outreach consultant for both Working Films and Firelight Media, engaging more than 100 educational institution and partner organizations, like Center for American Progress, NAACP, Boys and Girls Club of America, Columbia University, University of Wisconsin, and Spelman College—ultimately reaching tens of thousands of audience participants.

Victoria Cepeida-Mojarro is a seasoned electoral and issue-based campaign professional. She found her passion for social justice organizing at New York University, where she organized seven students in support of adjunct professor unionizing efforts. She furthered her social justice appetite by working with a variety of community-based organizations focusing on student organizing, domestic violence, and immigrant rights. She organized with United Students Against Sweatshops before her electoral debut in New Mexico in 2008. Previously, Victoria worked with the Democratic National Committee in Los Angeles, and she was successful in saving a competitive congressional seat as the New Mexico-District 1 Field Director in 2010. She recently finished her tenure with the United Farm Workers as their CA political director, where she worked on a number of elections as well as migrant farm worker policy issues. Victoria trains with Wellstone Action and Democracy for America in electoral campaign strategies. She holds a B.A. in Metropolitan Studies from New York University. She currently serves as a consultant for down ticket electoral races and serves on a formation committee to develop a California progressive, women of color political action committee (PAC) in Los Angeles.
Tomás Garduño is 38 years old, a Native New Mexican Chicano, born and raised in Albuquerque. He lived in Portland, OR, for seven years, where he graduated from Lewis and Clark College and did student and anti-racist organizing in the anti-globalization movement, culminating in the WTO protests in Seattle in 1999. He has been doing social justice work ever since. He has worked for Western States Center and Community Alliance of Tenants, co-founded ROOTS! Reclaiming Our Origins Through Struggle, and worked as a campaign organizer with the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice.

His most formative experience was his seven years as a statewide organizer, political director, and ultimately co-director of the SouthWest Organizing Project (SWOP), a 35-year-old grassroots social justice movement organization in New Mexico. In November 2013, he moved to New York City to serve as field director for ALIGN: Alliance for a Greater New York. In January 2014, he began consulting with Groundswell Fund as an IVE coach. Since September 2015, Tomas has been an independent consultant. Through Groundswell Fund, he is currently coaching five RJ organizations across the country, including National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, URGE/Unite for Reproductive and Gender Equity, COLOR/Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights, Alaska Community Action on Toxics, and El Pueblo.

Wilnelia Rivera is a seasoned project management, community engagement, and integrated voter engagement specialist. She works with a broad range of urban public sector institutions and social justice organizations at the edge of transformational change. Currently, her clients and projects are Boston Public Schools (Roxbury Massachusetts Advanced Post-Secondary Pathways @ Madison Park), the Barr Foundation (Gold Standard Bus Rapid Transit), Community Strategies Lab, LCC (Community Health Needs Assessments: Lynn, MA), Next Shift, LLC (Community Mapping & Action Research for Community Care Brooklyn & Brooklyn, NYC), and Groundswell Fund (integrated voter specialist coach, Women With a Vision, New Orleans, LA). She holds both a B.A. in International Relations and Women’s Studies and an M.A. in Urban and Environmental Policy & Planning from Tufts University, as well as a past Mel King Fellowship recipient at Massachusetts Institute for Technology’s Community Co-Lab, where she focused her policy research on urban politics, economic democracy and sustainable community planning and economic development.
Groundswell supports a stronger, more effective U.S. movement for reproductive justice by mobilizing new funding and capacity building resources to grassroots organizing and policy change efforts led by low income women, women of color and transgender people.

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