



GROUNDSWELL  
FUND

2020

# Liberation Fund Docket





GROUNDSWELL  
FUND

# 2020 Liberation Fund Docket

Currently in its fourth year of grantmaking, Groundswell's **Liberation Fund** is proud to announce that this year \$1.1 million was provided in grants to a total of 13 organizations. Grantees were curated by Groundswell staff, selected from a list of organizations recommended for funding by the Liberation Fund's advisors, 14 prominent women of color leaders from various social justice movements. Liberation Fund grantees represent some of the most effective and powerful grassroots organizing efforts in the United States today. All grantee organizations are led by women of color or transgender people of color.





“In order to rise from its own ashes,  
a Phoenix first must burn.”

— OCTAVIA BUTLER

**Dear beloved community,**

In 2020, the world came undone. The global pandemic exposed the disparities already prevalent in Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities. The racial wealth gap further exacerbated our communities' ability to respond to COVID-19. Since the pandemic began, while low-income BIPOC and trans and gender non-conforming (TGNC) communities are facing housing and food insecurity, billionaires in this country have become wealthier. In 2020, we collectively watched the failures of a government that provided relief for the one percent, while the 99 percent faced a looming economic crisis.

When the state failed to provide safety, guidance, and support to communities impacted by COVID-19, Liberation Fund grantees stepped in to provide critical support to its members and communities of color at large through organizing, advocacy, and mutual aid programs. In 2020, Liberation Fund grantee organizations and its members have continued to fight back, pivot, and actively strategize how to move their expanded mutual aid base into membership and campaigns. Pain, rage, and action poured into the streets of many neighborhoods, cities, and towns as people demanded long-overdue justice for Black lives and Black trans lives unjustly taken by state-sanctioned violence. These moments of rupture catapulted Liberation Fund grantees towards increased membership and tremendous wins that they have been fighting for—for years.

Out of the chaos of 2020, Liberation Fund grantees are building a new world in the shell of the old. With the organizing landscape forever changed, grantees rose from the ashes, fervently committed to the liberation of our people—now more than ever.

**In love and struggle,**



**Cecilia Sáenz Becerra**



CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities

# Liberation Fund Advisors

**Ai-Jen Poo**

**NATIONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS ALLIANCE**

**Alicia Garza**

**BLACK FUTURES LAB**

**Angelica Salas**

**COALITION FOR HUMANE IMMIGRANT RIGHTS (CHIRLA)**

**Bamby Salcedo**

**THE TRANSLATIN@ COALITION**

**Chrissie Castro**

**NATIVE VOICE NETWORK**

**Cindy Wiesner**

**GRASSROOTS GLOBAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE**

**Denise Perry**

**BLACK ORGANIZING FOR LEADERSHIP AND DIGNITY**

**Elle Hearn**

**MARSHA P. JOHNSON INSTITUTE**

**Isa Noyola**

**MIJENTE**

**Linda Sarsour**

**MPOWER CHANGE**

**Mary Hooks**

**SOUTHERNERS ON NEW GROUND**

**Miya Yoshitani**

**ASIAN PACIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK**

**Sarita Gupta**

**FORD FOUNDATION, FORMERLY JOBS WITH JUSTICE**

**Saru Jayaraman**

**ONE FAIR WAGE**



Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund

## 2020 Liberation Fund Grantees

### Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund (BYP100)

**\$100,000**

**National**

**[www.byp100.org](http://www.byp100.org)**

Formed in 2013 after a Florida jury found George Zimmerman not guilty for the murder of Trayvon Martin, BYP100 is a membership organization of Black youth activists and organizers, 18-35 years old, dedicated to creating justice and freedom for all Black people. Using a Black, queer, feminist lens, BYP100 is building a network focused on transformative leadership development, direct action organizing, advocacy, and education. With chapters in ten cities, and national members in 15 states, BYP100 centers its work on ending systems of anti-Blackness and protecting those living “on the margins of the margins”—women, girls, femmes, and all LGBTQ folk. Using relational organizing, BYP100 provides training in organizing, fundraising, public policy, and electoral organizing; and engages in digital content creation, political education, and consciousness raising. Through its new *She Safe, We Safe* national campaign, BYP100 is working to end the gender-based violence that Black women, girls, femmes, and gender non-conforming (GNC) people face every day. The campaign hopes to advance non-police approaches to dealing with gender violence, build teams of people trained in community intervention, and create a toolkit

for intervention; in 2021, BYP100 plans to win three local campaigns focused on taking money and power away from the police and putting it in the hands of the community. Through a collaborative member-based process, BYP100 created its *Agenda to Build Black Futures*, which demands reparations; protections for Black workers; elimination of the profit motive from incarceration and policing; a bill of rights for Black women workers; equality in the workplace, health care, and elsewhere for Black trans people; and investment in and revitalization of Black communities. Its local chapters are moving pieces of this agenda, and nationally BYP100 is part of the People’s Coalition for Safety and Freedom, which seeks to overturn the 1994 federal crime bill. In Durham, NC BYP100 members are working in a coalition that includes Liberation Fund grantee Southerners on New Ground to win a citizens’ police review/accountability board, and that helped win a \$15/hour minimum wage and stop an increase in the police budget. In D.C. and New York City, BYP100 members are advocating for the decriminalization of sex work and ending the targeting of trans people. In Chicago, the organization is part of a larger local coalition holding the Mayor and the city government accountable. When the pandemic hit in early 2020, BYP100 pivoted its work to virtual, created a mutual aid fund to provide financial and other forms of support to members and the larger community. In New York City alone, BYP100 raised and moved \$300,000 to nearly 1,500 community members, including sex workers and others left out of local, state, and federal aid programs.



## CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities

**\$75,000**

**Local: New York, NY**

**[www.caaav.org](http://www.caaav.org)**

Based in New York City, CAAAV is an intergenerational, grassroots organizing powerhouse that has addressed issues of poverty, gentrification, and displacement for three decades by engaging thousands of low-income Asian immigrants and refugees. In late 2019, CAAAV launched a six-month intensive strategy development process, only to have COVID-19 halt implementation. CAAAV's ongoing work with the Chinatown Tenants Union (CTU) and the Asian Tenants Union (ATU) was paused so that the organization could fully embark on Cancel the Rent (#CancelRent) and eviction moratorium campaigns. During COVID-19, CAAAV built hyper-local relationships with people at risk of eviction and supported its base via mutual aid, including providing personal protection equipment (PPE). It debunked New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA) rent relief hardship program after CAAAV members were denied program benefits because they could not prove they were out of work. CAAAV's mutual aid support has developed into monthly outdoor gathering spaces for tenants to learn about, and connect to, housing fights, including the #CancelRent

campaign and the fight to fully fund NYCHA. CAAAV organized its Chinese, Korean, and Bangladeshi membership using a mix of platforms, including WeChat, WhatsApp, UberConference, and Facebook, as well as through phone calls. This organizing led to successful in-person protests and rallies—such as a banner drop in Chinatown, organizing membership to go on rent strikes, and sending delegations to Governor Cuomo's office. CAAAV anticipates that eviction defense and #CancelRent work will continue well into 2021. The momentum to fully fund public housing and improve NYCHA management will also continue. Further, as New York faces many elected official transitions in 2021, CAAAV will strengthen its citywide, cross-issue relationships with education, criminal justice, environmental, and labor organizations to develop a unified policy platform.

## City Life/Vida Urbana (CL/VU)

**\$75,000**

**Local: Jamaica Plain, MA**

**[www.clvu.org](http://www.clvu.org)**

Working in east Boston's Jamaica Plain to win community control of land and housing and to fight for the needs of working-class tenants of color, CL/VU has organized and built the power of tenants and low-wage workers for nearly 50 years. In 2020, the pandemic hit CL/VU's communities



City Life / Vida Urbana



Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)

and base hard, and the organization realized the seriousness of public health dangers even before the city and state announced shutdown; therefore, it pivoted away from in-person organizing to virtual early in the year. It also pivoted its program priorities, giving primacy to protecting members of its community, and others like it across the city and state, from eviction. CL/VU provided legal information and assistance to the community, including a 24-hour English and Spanish language hotline that received more than 2,000 calls, and also worked in coalition with other progressive organizations to win a five-month statewide eviction moratorium that was extended until mid-October, thanks to coordinated legal and advocacy strategies. Although CL/VU and its allies pushed Massachusetts Governor Baker to extend the moratorium for at least a year, he refused to do so. CL/VU and partners continue to press the state legislature to pass a long-term eviction protection law, and in the meantime are pressing state officials to use federal CARES Act funds to support low-income renters and homeowners to prevent evictions and foreclosures. CL/VU research has found that Black families in Boston are six to seven times more likely to face eviction than white families, and after the moratorium ended, more than 100,000 Massachusetts families were evicted. The organization will continue to make the protection of these families its top priority. CL/VU also linked its community members with mutual aid resources provided by other organizations and joined in solidarity with Black-led ally organizations in uprisings and protests in response to the state-sanctioned murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and too many others. In June, it issued a powerful statement in support of decarceration and defunding police and prisons

in order to fund housing, healthcare, and other community needs; creation of a Police Accountability Office and review board; and abolishing ICE. While the pandemic and civil uprisings changed the organization's work, CL/VU continued to build its network of 29 tenant associations, led primarily by Black and Latinx women, and to hold housing developers and local elected officials accountable; it also continues the long-term campaign challenging a plan to build luxury housing and private green space on the site of the former Suffolk Downs Race Track. As proposed, the development would drive working-class immigrant families out of East Boston. Working with partner organizations, CL/VU pressed the city and the developer for mitigations to win community access to new parkland and a significant percentage of affordable housing units. In addition, as it grew its membership over this difficult year, CL/VU continued 100 Cadre, its advanced leadership development program for women of color, and its Black Feminist Praxis Circle. Over the next year, CL/VU plans to continue its organizing, base building, leadership development programs, and its campaigns to win housing security and justice for its community.

## Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)

**\$75,000**

**Local: New York, NY**

**[www.drumnyc.org](http://www.drumnyc.org)**

Founded in 2000 to build the power of South Asian and Indo-Caribbean low-wage immigrant workers, youth, and families in New York City to win economic and educational justice, and civil and immigrant rights,





Dream Defenders Education

DRUM is a multi-generational organization of 4,000+ low-income workers, families, and youth directly affected by racial profiling, immigration, educational inequity, and economic injustice. DRUM builds the leadership of the most marginalized members of its communities through membership-led direct-action campaigns, base building, leadership development, and services. DRUM focuses its base building in four neighborhoods (Parkchester, Kensington, Western Queens, and Southern Queens), and until the pandemic, convened five membership meetings every month, engaging 130 to 150 members on a regular basis. Like other organizing and base building organizations, as COVID-19 grew, DRUM quickly transformed its organizing and outreach to virtual and shifted its priorities, especially around the 2020 Census. As its community members struggled with unemployment, lack of healthcare, and financial and housing insecurity, DRUM modified the focus of its outreach to find out what people needed to get through the crisis, helping them access unemployment benefits, food, and money, and deal with immigration status challenges. DRUM was able to connect with 10,000+ people this year, thanks to the regular commitment of 70 volunteers and 40 members willing to provide direct support to those who needed it. It also conducted membership meetings by phone, since many of its members do not have access to the internet. Despite the pandemic, DRUM was able to exceed its membership goal for 2020. DRUM's advocacy at the New York City Council and with the state came to a halt during the shutdown but resumed as soon as things opened up. It focused on defunding the NYPD, supporting rent and

tenant strikes and actions, demanding financial supports for people not included in the federal CARES Act (e.g., undocumented and unemployed people), and advocating for state-level rent cancellation. Over the next year, DRUM will continue base building and leadership development, with a focus on women and girls. It will also revive advocacy campaigns, derailed by the pandemic: defunding the police and prisons, education and economic equality, immigration reform, housing justice, and gender justice. DRUM will also launch a 510(c)4 partner organization to sharpen its electoral and policy advocacy work.

## Dream Defenders Education (DDE)

**\$75,000**

**Statewide: Florida**

**[www.dreamdefenders.org](http://www.dreamdefenders.org)**

A statewide organization building power in Black, Latinx, immigrant, and working-class communities throughout Florida, DDE was founded in 2012 in the wake of Trayvon Martin's murder as young people across the state organized to demand action and accountability and to build a world without prisons or police. Over the past year, the organization has grown its active membership base from 450 in nine cities to nearly 1,000 in 11 cities, and continues to recruit members from rural communities as well, centering the Freedom Papers, its vision for a world in which all people can be healthy, free, and whole. DDE's work this year has been affected by both the pandemic and civil uprisings in response to the murders of Black



folks, including Tony McDade and Oluwatoyin Salau in Tallahassee, FL. Its work has pivoted to virtual and digital. Prior to the pandemic, DDE had registered 5,000 young Floridians in person. COVID-19 required a change in tactics, so DDE quickly replaced its in-person program with a voter registration website and robust social media outreach to drive new voters to it in order to reach another 50,000 people. After a primary election fraught with barriers to voting, DDE filed a lawsuit against the state of Florida that was settled out of court and resulted in important improvements in vote-by-mail, access to early voting, and additional polling places. DDE used the pandemic to advance its decarceration campaign, calling for the release of nonviolent offenders from overcrowded prisons and jails, and continued to push its campaign to disinvest in prisons and police and invest in communities. In addition, DDE responded to the physical and emotional needs of its community members, many of whom were employed in the tourist industry, providing mutual aid support and setting up a Zoom channel to keep folks connected and supported. In Orlando, Miami, and Gainesville, DDE chapters, or squadds, created centers where people could obtain PPE, get tested, sleep, or just wash their hands. Also, through its local squadds, DDE conducted nonpartisan voter education forums around important elected positions that impact community safety, such as sheriff or state attorney. DDE is continuing its No New Jails campaign, organizing in Miami to stop the construction of a \$300 million new jail and to demand investment in communities instead. Over the next year, DDE will continue its organizing and advocacy at the local and state levels to build its base, with a focus on rural areas.

## Got Green (GG)

**\$75,000**

**Local: Seattle, WA**

**[www.gotgreenseattle.org](http://www.gotgreenseattle.org)**

People of color-led GG has worked at the intersection of environmental, racial, and economic justice since 2008, organizing working-class families and building grassroots power for the creation of climate resilient communities in south Seattle. In active alliance with other progressive organizations locally, statewide, and nationally, GG advances a long-term vision that includes the creation of meaningful jobs that nourish the earth; access to healthy, sustainably produced food; access to safe and sustainable

housing in climate-resilient neighborhoods; and care for the environment rooted in relationships to the land and one another. In 2019, GG's organizing and advocacy ensured that new city funding from Seattle's soda tax went to local food security programs, and continued its efforts to win a Green New Deal (GND) in Seattle, including widespread participation in the youth-led international Climate Strike and helping to win a historic unanimous City Council vote in favor of a GND ordinance and resolution. It also launched the Movement School, a leadership development program for volunteer leaders, and hosted a regional Just Transition strategy lab. In 2020, after COVID-19 hit, Got Green organizing helped win the expansion of Seattle's Fresh Bucks food voucher program to provide millions of dollars in vouchers to low-income Seattle and King County residents affected by the pandemic, with no restrictions around immigration status. The City Council also voted unanimously for a GND resolution that calls for a federal GND program; affirms the city's commitment to ending fossil fuel dependency by 2030; calls for investments in the city's most marginalized communities to build climate resilience; and demands respect for the sovereignty of tribal nations. Thanks to GG advocacy, this commitment has a strong racial justice framework and will make Seattle a model for what a GND should be. GG also supported civil uprisings protesting the police violence against Black people, engaging in direct action in support of abolition, including a shutdown of the immigration center in Seattle.

## Marsha P. Johnson Institute (MPJI)

**\$75,000**

**National**

**[www.marshap.org](http://www.marshap.org)**

Named after one of the leaders of the Stonewall Uprising, MPJI builds the transformative leadership of transgender people to support their own healing and build collective power through media advocacy, civic engagement, public policy, and arts and culture. MPJI programs help Black trans women and gender non-conforming femmes obtain the skills and financial and programmatic resources to advocate for an end to violence against all trans people. Before the coronavirus pandemic, MPJI was acutely aware that the unemployment rate for trans people was more than three times the national average. In response to increased economic insecurity of Black trans women during the pandemic, MPJI launched its own COVID-19

Direct Relief Grant Program. MPJI has provided \$500 unrestricted grants to more than 200 Black transgender and non-binary individuals, prioritizing Black trans women, specifically sex workers, formerly incarcerated people, and people living with disabilities. MPJI's goal is to disperse 1,000 grants during the pandemic to respond to community needs and build its base. During a summer shaped by uprisings for Black liberation, MPJI was thrust into the international spotlight as a result of its organizing. Partnering with other Black trans organizations, MPJI co-led a massive rally for Black trans Lives called Brooklyn Liberation that spoke to the deaths of Dominique Fells, Riah Milton, and so many others. An estimated 15,000 people attended the rally and silent march for Black trans lives on June 14, 2020—the largest transgender justice protest in history. In early 2020, MPJI unveiled the Marsha P. Johnson Safety & Wellness Act (MPJSWA), a vision and plan for model policy, laws, legislation, and practice recommendations to address the needs of trans people of color at the local, state, and federal levels, written by directly impacted communities and individuals. In 2021, MPJI's Freedom Beyond Imagination Coalition (FBIC), a national coalition of regional and local Black and Brown trans organizations seeking to build alignment, will advance the MPJSWA. Freedom Beyond Imagination Coalition will encompass base-building, policy, and advocacy organizations in four cities: New York, NY; Columbus, OH; Washington, DC; and Dallas, TX. FBIC will solicit feedback from stakeholders in each target city to inform both the policy recommendations and an advocacy guide centering Black trans women. Additionally, FBIC will build sustained partnerships with local and state elected officials, affirming church/spiritual leaders, healers, educators, and other key community leaders.

## **Movement For Black Lives (M4BL)**

---

**\$100,000**

**National**

**[www.m4bl.org](http://www.m4bl.org)**

A national formation of 150+ organizations founded in the aftermath of the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, in late 2014, M4BL creates a space for Black organizations and communities across the nation to learn from one another, and develop and advance an aligned, movement-wide strategy to win key policy, cultural, political victories, and, ultimately, liberation. M4BL also develops leadership, both organizational and individual, and offers opportunities

for convenings and mutual support. In 2016, M4BL introduced its Vision for Black Lives, a platform/policy agenda rooted in freedom and liberation that grounds all its campaigns and programs. Local M4BL-affiliated organizations are fighting for and winning important victories, such as removing police from schools or closing jails and building alliances with other communities of color. This year, M4BL supported and trained two cohorts of 200+ Freedom Summer fellows in nine locales in the South and Midwest; these fellows are working with local organizations to advance policy and program and build long-term power. After the police murders of many Black community members, M4BL drafted the federal BREATHE Act, which would divest federal resources from incarceration and policing and invest those resources in new approaches to community safety and sustainability. The Act was introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives in July. In late August 2020, M4BL hosted a virtual Black Political Convention broadcast live via Facebook, inspired by the first Black National Convention held in Gary, IN, in 1972. The 2020 Convention's 500+ delegates from 22 states ratified a 2020 policy agenda that included defunding the police; increased investment in housing, health care, and education; and combatting environmental racism and climate change, and kicked off efforts to bring four million Black voters to the polls in November. Over the next year, M4BL will continue to advance its agenda, working locally and nationally; train new Freedom Summer Fellows; hold elected officials at every level accountable to Black communities; and use digital, mainstream, and social media to lift up Black leaders and its vision of liberation.

## **Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA)**

---

**\$100,000**

**Local: San Francisco, CA**

**[www.mujeresunidas.net](http://www.mujeresunidas.net)**

A 30-year-old, membership-based Latina immigrant organization, MUA has a dual mission: promoting personal transformation and building community power for social and economic justice. MUA trains member-leaders in seven cities, including San Francisco and Oakland; provides mutual support; offers trainings to build economic security and leadership; and leads organizing campaigns to win immigrants', workers', and women's rights. In 2019, MUA's persistent advocacy resulted in the establishment of a \$5 million Education and Outreach Program to enforce California's pioneering Domestic Workers Bill of Rights





## Native Movement

and, in early 2020, MUA won a \$3 million contract with the state to create and implement the program. The pandemic and challenges working with the state slowed the launch, but the program is finally moving forward. COVID-19 hit MUA hard, since most of its work occurs in three different drop-in centers around the Bay Area, which had to be closed. Further, since many in its community members did not have access to technology, the pivot to digital and virtual was difficult. MUA invested \$40,000 to provide computers, internet service, apps, and other technological necessities to its staff and leaders. MUA was also able to create a set of virtual outreach opportunities to engage its community members by providing them with health, legal, and financial information, and other forms of support, and establishing ongoing membership meetings via Zoom. It also created a COVID-19 Resource Guide in English and Spanish, and provided direct cash assistance to 1,000+ families. MUA's pivot has been so successful that it increased its membership by 600 people in one month. During the summer uprisings for Black liberation, MUA issued statements of support and continues to educate its community about anti-Black racism and in support of abolition, including abolishing ICE. MUA continued its leadership development programs, serving more than 100 women, and its ongoing voter engagement work, including get-out-the-vote virtual phone banking. Moving into 2021, MUA faces a set of challenges with its physical locations; one, based in a public-school building, was shut down permanently because of COVID-19 concerns and the

remaining two do not have adequate ventilation or space for post-pandemic operations. However, it will continue its organizing, base building, and leadership development programs; its member-led state and local advocacy for immigrant women workers; and implementation of the state program to ensure that domestic workers in California know their rights and that those rights are enforced.

## Native Movement

**\$75,000**

**Statewide: Alaska**

**[www.nativemovement.org](http://www.nativemovement.org)**

Based in Fairbanks, AK, Native Movement builds grassroots power through the frameworks of Indigenous place-based knowledge, decolonization, and Just Transition.<sup>1</sup> These frameworks build an understanding of the historical and current impacts of colonization and offer a regenerative vision of the future, while outlining a practical path for how to get there. Native Movement plays a key role in uplifting Indigenous leadership in the fight to protect Native land, the environment, and the safety of Indigenous womxn, girls, and Two Spirit, and trans people, while filling critical gaps in grassroots organizing capacity across the state. Early in COVID-19, Native Movement, along with local femme, women, and non-binary executive directors, coordinated mental health calls to discuss pandemic-related shifts and to support one another. These calls morphed into coordinating strategy, messaging, and tactics when the

[1] Just Transition is a vision-led, unifying, and place-based set of principles, processes, and practices that builds economic and political power to shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy. Learn more at <https://climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition/>.





**Southerners On New Ground**

groups faced various threats, including heightened police brutality. Additionally, Native Movement moved \$150,000 in COVID-19 relief to the groups it fiscally sponsors and other local allies. Native Movement also launched a four-week leadership development curriculum, rooted in Indigenous wisdom and movement building, to strengthen its base and organizing work. Weekly themes included deepening understanding of colonization, using a Just Transition framework, healing-based organizing, and taking action. More than 300 community members participated. On the campaign front, Native Movement collaborated with Alaska Community Action on Toxics, a Catalyst Fund grantee, to train community members on air quality monitoring and organizing. They focused their training on the Nuiqsut community in northern Alaska, where a huge Conoco Phillips oil field and pipeline, and related dynamiting and flaring, has created significant health problems for the Nuiqsut people, a majority of whom are on medication for breathing and other health issues. This year, the organization supported the creation of Indigenous Data Sovereignty, now the largest incubator of data for missing Indigenous womxn, girls, Two Spirit, and trans people in Alaska. Native Movement will continue moving towards its long-term vision of creating a grassroots base in support of the MMIWG2S Coalition to end violence against Native women, girls, Two Spirit, and trans people and to support Indigenous families in pursuit of justice. In 2020, one of Native Movement's long-term dreams became reality with the purchase of a building, and in 2021, the organization will continue its ongoing projects and programs, while launching a new initiative to incubate regenerative economy pilot projects that promote community self-determination.

## **Southerners On New Ground (SONG)**

**\$100,000**

**Regional: U.S. South**

**[www.southernersonnewground.org](http://www.southernersonnewground.org)**

Founded in 1993, SONG is a political home for LGBTQ liberation across lines of race, class, abilities, age, culture, gender, and sexuality in the southern U.S. To sharpen the impact of its training, leadership development, education, advocacy, and organizing, SONG launched a 501(c)4, SONG Power, in early 2020. Also, in 2020, successfully pivoting its strategies and programs to digital and virtual in response to the pandemic, SONG continued its #EndMoneyBail and #MeltIce campaigns, which encompass cities, small towns, and rural areas across the South, to end pretrial, wealth-based detention, and demand that municipalities divest from cages, courts, and police and invest in community-based solutions. The campaigns expanded into six new cities, with SONG helping to drive mainstream and social media communications strategy, while launching local organizing efforts in two additional cities, and organizing to ensure that 2,000 incarcerated people in Atlanta, Durham, Columbus, and Nashville were registered to vote. Through trainings, technical assistance, and a fellowship cohort, SONG also built the leadership of youth, women, LGBTQ people, Black people, immigrants, and other people of color in the fights for criminal justice reform, immigrant rights, and policy change in the South, and increased its formal membership by nearly 1,000 people. To increase the power of Southern and LGBTQ leaders in strategic racial, gender, and economic justice coalitions and initiatives, SONG strengthened relationships with





#### Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex Justice Project

people of color-led organizations in eight cities, and ensured that Southern perspectives informed the National Bailout Collective and grounded Mijente's Abolish ICE campaign in the region. Thanks to its leadership in the Georgia Movement for Black Lives, SONG was on the ground in Atlanta during the uprisings. In 2021, SONG will continue its #EndMoneyBail and #MeltIce campaigns in 11 new cities and towns, engaging at least 300 members in each and winning an end to money bail in five localities. It will continue to add new members and develop at least 125 new member-leaders, train another cohort of ten Southern LGBTQ Fellows, and, through its Lorde's Werq program, train another 35 Black trans and queer organizers, moving most of them into leadership roles in organizations and campaigns across the South. Finally, SONG will continue its powerful use of cultural organizing, training at least 50 members in cultural organizing strategies and tactics, and leveraging those tactics in all of its on-the-ground organizing and political theatre in at least five communities.

### Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP)

**\$75,000**

**Local: San Francisco, CA**

**[www.tgijp.org](http://www.tgijp.org)**

TGIJP is one of the first and only legal advocacy and support organizations led by formerly incarcerated Black trans women. Its goal is to end human rights abuses committed against transgender, gender variant, and intersex (TGI) people in California prisons, jails, detention centers, and elsewhere by decreasing the number of

incarcerated TGI people. TGIJP programs are aimed at reducing recidivism; easing re-entry through access to housing; providing leadership opportunities in social justice movements for TGI people who have been incarcerated; and ending the criminalization of TGI people. COVID-19 hit the Black homeless transgender community hard. TGIJP served as housing first responders, finding safe short-term shelter for both chronically homeless and recently released re-entering Black transgender and gender non-conforming community members at the outset of the pandemic. Navigating discrimination at hotels and motels, and managing the emotional impact of quarantine isolation, TGIJP staff became case workers, securing housing for 30 members and staying connected weekly to ensure their basic needs were met, such as groceries, medication, and cell phone access. A significant portion of the people who were housed when the pandemic first hit is now moving toward self-sufficiency and paying their own rent. Empowering members and creating a space for them to be human is key to TGIJP's work and success. TGIJP's effective local organizing in San Francisco during COVID-19 and the Black liberation uprisings built on its commitment to abolition. In September, the No New Jail Coalition, of which TGIJP is a member, celebrated the closing of a San Francisco County Jail. Defund Police efforts, led by a diverse, Black-led coalition of which TGIJP is a part, resulted in Mayor London Breed announcing the redirection of \$120 million in police and sheriff funding from law enforcement to addressing disparities in the Black community. Another big 2020 win for TGIJP and another Liberation Fund grantee, TransLatin@ Coalition, is a new law requiring the California Department of Corrections



TransLatin@ Coalition

and Rehabilitation (CDCR) house transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex people according to their own sense of where they will be safest. This new law will require CDCR to record the individual's self-reported gender identity and gender pronouns, and honor them throughout an incarcerated person's term. In 2021, TGIJP and coalition partners will continue to hold local lawmakers accountable to their promises to defund police; offer re-entry services, including creating an arts and cultural hub for folks returning home; advocate and address chronic homelessness of San Francisco's Black TGNC community; expand its programs in Florida and Alabama; and introduce a bill in the Florida State Legislature to end solitary confinement, which disproportionately impacts transgender people who are incarcerated.

## TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)

**\$100,000**

**Local: Los Angeles, CA + National**  
[www.translatinacoalition.org](http://www.translatinacoalition.org)

Founded in 2009 by trans immigrant women in cities across the country, TLC uses a hybrid model of direct service delivery, grassroots organizing, and policy advocacy to improve the quality of life of trans Latin@ immigrants. Headquartered in Los Angeles, TLC has chapters in Arizona, California, D.C., Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland,

Minnesota, New York, Texas, Washington, and Virginia. As the pandemic grew, TLC supported members with PPE, food, and rent payment assistance, providing \$220,000 to the undocumented trans community. TLC is part of the People's Budget Los Angeles, a coalition convened by Black Lives Matter LA to demand that the Mayor and City Council prioritize care, not cops. It has been active in the fight against the construction of a new jail, organizing socially distant community forums and successfully pushing the LA County Board of Supervisors to place Measure J on the ballot. Measure J passed overwhelmingly and will shift \$110 million from the Sheriff's budget to housing, mental health, youth development, and criminal justice diversion programs. In 2020, TLC was also part of a coalition advocating for state policies to improve the lives of trans people in California. With coalition partners, TLC helped win a new Transgender Wellness and Equity Fund within the California Department of Public Health in order to fund holistic health services for transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex (TGI) people across the state, and the Transgender Respect and Dignity Act, which allows transgender people to be housed where they feel safest and record their self-identified gender, name, and pronouns, and requires public agency staff to address trans people by their stated name and pronouns in written and verbal communication. In 2021, TLC will continue to use its policy agenda as a map to build economic and political power, including budget advocacy to ensure the successful implementation of its legislative wins.

**To learn more about Groundswell's Liberation Fund,  
 please contact Cecilia Sáenz Becerra at [csaenzbecerra@groundswellfund.org](mailto:csaenzbecerra@groundswellfund.org)**

COVER PHOTO: City Life / Vida Urbana (CL/VU)



# 2020 LIBERATION FUND GRANTEES



## ALABAMA

Southerners On New Ground (SONG)

## ALASKA

Native Movement

## ARIZONA

TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## CALIFORNIA

Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA)  
Transgender, Gender Variant,  
and Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP)  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## FLORIDA

Dream Defenders Education (DDE)  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## GEORGIA

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*  
Southerners On New Ground (SONG)  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## ILLINOIS

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## LOUISIANA

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*  
Southerners On New Ground (SONG)

## MARYLAND

TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## MASSACHUSETTS

City Life / Vida Urbana (CL/VU)

## MICHIGAN

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*

## MINNESOTA

TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## MISSISSIPPI

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*

## NEW YORK

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*  
CAAAY Organizing Asian  
Communities  
Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)  
Marsha P. Johnson Institute (MPJI)\*  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## NORTH CAROLINA

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*  
Southerners On New Ground (SONG)

## OHIO

Marsha P. Johnson Institute (MPJI)\*

## SOUTH CAROLINA

Southerners On New Ground (SONG)

## TENNESSEE

Southerners On New Ground (SONG)

## TEXAS

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*  
Marsha P. Johnson Institute (MPJI)\*  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## VIRGINIA

Southerners On New Ground (SONG)  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## WASHINGTON

Got Green  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)\*

## WISCONSIN

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund\*

## NATIONAL

Black Youth Project 100 Education Fund  
Marsha P. Johnson Institute (MPJI)  
Movement For Black Lives (M4BL)  
TransLatin@ Coalition (TLC)



# GROUNDSWELL FUND

Groundswell Fund strengthens U.S. movements  
for reproductive and social justice by resourcing intersectional  
grassroots organizing and centering  
the leadership of women of color—particularly those  
who are Black, Indigenous, and Transgender.

**[www.groundswellfund.org](http://www.groundswellfund.org)**