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OUR MISSION

Local Progress and the Local Progress Impact Lab work collectively to advance a racial and economic justice agenda through all levels of government. **Local Progress** is a movement of more than 1,500 local elected officials advancing a racial and economic justice agenda through all levels of local government.

The **Local Progress Impact Lab** brings together local leaders, partners, and experts to build the knowledge, skills, and leadership needed to advance racial and economic justice at the local level



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2024 has been a year of many things. Transformative wins and heartbreaking losses. Incredible breakthroughs and frustrating setbacks. Lasting joy and clarity amongst immense devastation and uncertainty. And yet, all of it has affirmed what I already knew to be true: **local matters.** Plain and simple.

At Local Progress and the Local Progress Impact Lab, we know that building and effectively exercising governing power requires all of us; and we see our role as helping elected officials develop and practice a fundamentally different culture and approach to governing.

And so as we prepare to enter a second Trump administration, our mission and vision remain the same. We know that the incoming administration has laid out policies that harm our communities and undo progress we have made toward a truly multi-racial democracy. We can expect that they will operate with far greater competence and discipline than they did during Trump's first term. But our work to build a better future has never depended solely on who occupies the White House.

Organizing at the local level will continue to be where we have the greatest opportunity to build power. Local is where we create new realities and seed the ground for the impossible. Local is where we are most responsive to the needs of our communities, and where new ideas are formed, tested, and scaled.

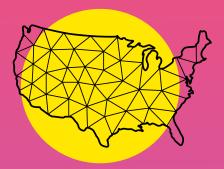
We will continue to work together to not only reimagine a better future but prove that a multi-racial democracy is possible. We will hold this administration to account, and do everything within our power to protect our communities from harm. We will never stop fighting for what we know is right.

That's why we are proud to share the impact of our work from this past year in this 2024 Year in Review.

As we move forward, your support is more critical than ever. The strides we've made were only possible because of the collective effort and contributions from people like you. But there's more to be done, and we can't do it alone. Together, we will meet this moment.

Sí se puede, Ivan Luevanos-Elms

AT A GLANCE



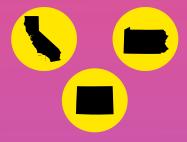
1,539 members in 48 states and DC



More than 197 new members in 2024



4 state chapters: MN, NC, NY, TX



Deep state organizing in: CA, CO, PA



3 identity caucuses: Black Caucus, Women's Caucus, and Nuestro Caucus



3 member-led steering committees: Public Safety, Housing, School Boards



653 of state and local elected officials trained through the Progressive Governance Academy in 2024.



More than 420 elected officials, partners, and allies attended this year's national convening in Oakland, CA!



27 organizing calls, policy webinars, and strategy briefings in which members shared and learn about best practices in local policy and designed local strategies to advance our agenda



10.7k followers on Twitter and more than 1400 followers on our Instagram!



More than **50** national and local press hits that lift the work of local leaders into the national narrative.

OUR IMPACT We advance a racial and economic justice agenda grounded in our four strategic pillars:

Racial justice as the beacon of iustice for all

Elected officials as an organized force

Collaborative governing

Adaptive change from the ground up

Here are some highlights of the work we're most proud of:

Changing the Narrative on How We Build Real Safety



Transforming public safety means sharing a vision for what real safety looks like. Across the country, localities have been doing exactly that by creating community responder programs: teams of trained, unarmed civilians respond to concerns like mental health emergencies, noise complaints, wellness checks and more. And we are already seeing the results. In August, we released a popular education video highlighting programs like these in three localities - Durham, Oakland, and Albuquerque. The video serves as both an organizing tool that local electeds are using to start and advance conversations about community responder programs in their communities, and a contribution to the much-needed diversification of visuals depicting safety (which are largely of policing and incarceration). Building off our work in previous years around community responders and messaging best practices, this narrative project

marks an exciting new phase in our broader public safety work emphasizing community-led safety solutions that build real safety.



- Rossana Rodriguez, Chicago Alderperson



- Alex Vitale, Author of The End of Policing.

Fighting for Housing Justice by Rejecting Criminalization, Stopping Corporate Price-Fixing, and Advancing Real Solutions.

St. Louis Alderwoman Gives Impassioned Speech From Supreme Court Steps

Alisha Sonnier traveled to D.C. to share her perspective as justices weigh ban on sleeping outside $$\operatorname{\textsc{By}}$$ Kallie Cox

Apr 22, 2024 at 3:44 pm



Housing is a basic human need. Despite harmful setbacks at the state and federal level this year, local leaders organized and won important fights to advance housing justice for all:

In June, the Supreme Court of the United States swung the door wide open on criminalizing homelessness in the landmark case Grants Pass v. Johnson by ruling that localities can punish unhoused people for sleeping outside - even if they have nowhere else to go. As the case was being heard in April, more than 1,000 organizations and public leaders filed 40+ amicus briefs in support of Gloria Johnson and the rights of people experiencing homelessness. We are proud to be one of them, with 156 current and former local elected officials signed on to the brief telling SCOTUS that what local governments need is more support to provide housing and resources that meet people's needs. LP Member and St. Louis Alderwoman Alisha Sonnier represented the network at a rally outside of the Supreme Court building during the case's opening remarks.

Despite and in response to the ruling, LP members

doubled down on Housing
First policies – continuing
to fight for permanent
housing to bring people
out of homelessness, and
preventative measures like
rent stabilization and tenant
protections to prevent people
from becoming homeless in
the first place.

In **Pennsylvania**, the
Philadelphia City Council
made the city's Eviction
Diversion Program
permanent. The <u>program</u> –
hailed as a <u>national model</u>
for keeping people in their
homes – connects landlords
and tenants to mediation and

financial support before an eviction is filed in court.

LP Board member and Councilmember At-Large
Kendra Brooks and Councilmember Jamie Gauthier
launched the initiative in 2020 with previous LP
Board co-chair and former Councilmember Helen
Gym, who authored a powerful case study to share
lessons learned with other local electeds looking to
create similar programs. The program has prevented
ten thousand evictions a year. Nearly half of landlordtenant pairs are able to resolve their issues outside
of court, avoiding costly legal fees and life-altering
eviction filings.



Kendra Brooks, Philadelphia City Councilmember
 At-Large & LP Board Member

Local officials push state for passage of Good Cause Eviction law



In **New York**, Local Progress New York and Housing Justice for All launched a <u>statewide campaign</u> to get Good Cause eviction protections guaranteed in dozens of localities. In addition to organizing and strategy support, the campaign provides a 'gold standard' sample resolution that can be used in any locality to opt into the state's Good Cause protections. In June, Albany became the first city in the state to opt-in. By October, eight cities passed legislation locally – ensuring that hundreds of thousands of New York renters have safeguards that guarantee most tenants a new lease, significantly limit rent increase, and stop unjust eviction.

Rigged: Corporate behemoths are using junk fees and technology to keep prices high

The need for these types of tenant protections is even clearer when we understand how corporate greed is driving our housing crisis and exploiting renters in our communities. As explained in our policy memo on rent-setting software algorithms published with our partners at the American Economic Liberties Project, corporate landlords and RealPages are using algorithm software to artificially constrain housing supply and drive up rents – a scheme that helps them maximize their own profits off the backs of families, seniors, and students. The solution? Local governments step up to stop this kind of corporate price-fixing. In July, San Francisco became the first city in the nation to ban automated rent-fixing software.

EXACERBATED OUR RENT CRISIS

AND EMPOWERED CORPORATE LANDLORDS TO
INTENTIONALLY KEEP UNITS VACANT. SO WE'RE
TAKING ACTION LOCALLY TO ENSURE OUR WORKING
RENTERS CAN AFFORD TO LIVE HERE."

LP Member and SF Board of Supervisors
 President Aaron Peskin



Not only did the ordinance take the first step at leveling the playing field in the rental market, it resulted in immediate corporate policy change. Two days after the ban was passed, Real Page <u>changed its software</u> to allow landlords to opt-out of its core anticompetitive feature. Several localities have already followed San Francisco's lead. With Local Progress providing technical assistance and communications support, <u>Philadelphia</u> became the second city to ban the software. San Diego, San Jose, and Chicago have introduced or are exploring similar legislation.

Helping School Boards Advance CRE in Their Districts

Across the country, educators and school board leaders are working to bring culturally responsive education (CRE) to their classrooms. Our latest toolkit – <u>Advancing Culturally Responsive Curriculum</u> – is a step-by-step guide to integrate cultural understanding

into any classroom. Developed in partnership with HEAL Together and NYU Metro Center, the toolkit provides a roadmap for ensuring teaching practices speak to the unique needs of their student body.

Supporting Local Leaders to Be the Voices We Need in Welcoming New Arrivals

We're fighting for a country that honors all families by protecting undocumented communities and ensuring they have access to the resources they need. In March, we published a comprehensive messaging guide to help local elected officials speak publicly and proactively about welcoming and supporting new arrivals in their communities. The messaging guide includes framing principles, topline messages, 'how to

respond when' scenarios, policies to choose welcome, and tactics and resources to leverage your voice to shift the narrative. In the lead up to the presidential election, we added additional talking points and best practices to call out bad actors and misinformation. The guide will also serve as a foundation for more narrative work in this area next year.

Developing the Leadership of Elected Officials Through the Progressive Governance Academy (PGA)



A joint project between the State Innovation Exchange, Local Progress Impact Lab, and re:power, the <u>PGA</u> supports progressive elected officials to build power in partnership with their peers and with local progressive movement actors, while strengthening their skills in governance for a lifelong career in public leadership. Over the last two years, we trained more than 650 state and local elected officials, including



in Washington, Pennsylvania, Texas, Tennessee, Baltimore, Denver, and the Northeast. Sixty-eight percent of those we trained were Black, Indigenous, and people of color, and 68% were women. At a moment where local governance is more important than ever, the PGA is critical to ensuring leaders have what they need to govern effectively and champion transformative change.

Demanding an End to the Violence in Gaza

In January, more than 350 local elected officials across the country released an <u>open letter</u> to the Biden-Harris administration and Congress calling for a ceasefire. Recognizing that we are a diverse set of elected officials representing widely ranging points of view, the letter offers a way for local electeds to be in public solidarity with one another and join our voices

to the chorus across the country calling for peace. We know that what happens across the world has a deep impact on our work locally and we have seen that in how our communities have grappled with the pain and mourning stemming from this conflict. We will continue supporting local leaders everywhere as they navigate how this conflict impacts their communities at home.

Protecting Local Democracy in Texas Continues

Opinion: One Year Later, Local Leaders Must Be Bold Despite "Death Star" Law

A San Marcos city council member urges localities to push back on anti-democratic forces and address their communities' urgent needs

BY ALYSSA GARZA, FRI., JULY 5, 2024

Effective local government is critical for building thriving communities. That's why local leaders in Texas are not backing down in their fight to protect

local democracy. In February, nearly 60 local electeds from across the state banded together to once again tell the courts that they will NOT stand for the Death Star Law or any of the state legislature's efforts to undermine local democracy. In an amicus brief, Local Progress Texas emphasized that, "In enacting HB 2127, the Legislature seeks to effectively repeal Texas cities' constitutionally protected Home Rule authority and eviscerate localities' ability to effectively govern on behalf of their constituents."

Supporting Localities to Use Federal Funding to Invest in Equity

I'm the Mayor of St. Paul. Here's How Our City Is Erasing \$100 Million in Medical Debt.

Op-ed: More and more local governments are using federal funds to relieve residents' medical debt. It's a simple, straightforward way to meet our communities' needs.



March 11 marked the three-year anniversary of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which has provided crucial support to families, businesses, and communities – particularly those most affected by the pandemic. Across the country, localities have been investing ARPA funds in solutions that build equity and address both immediate and long-term needs. In Las Cruces, NM, LP Member Leader Johana Bencomo helped dedicate federal funds to workforce development programs and a guaranteed basic income program. In St. Louis, MO, LP member Lisa Clancy led a charge to raise pay for child care workers, and in St. Paul, MN, Mayor Melvin Carter

proposed and the city council allocated \$1.1 million to <u>forgive medical debt</u>. Localities have also used ARPA dollars to create new programs – like <u>co-op / non-profit grocery stores</u> in Austin, TX – and bolster existing ones, like the <u>community crisis response team</u> in Antioch, CA that **LP member Monica Wilson** helped spearhead.

Cities, counties, and school districts also have a historic opportunity to advance climate justice thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The federal initiative is giving nearly unlimited funding to local governments and schools for clean energy projects through Direct Pay tax credits. Localities across the country are already investing in clean energy projects that could qualify. Seattle purchased an electric municipal fleet that will be partially reimbursed via the IRA Direct Pay tax credit. In collaboration with the Congressional Progressive Caucus Center, we're helping ensure that localities understand their eligibility and take advantage of this federal funding.

GROWING AND COHERING THE LP NETWORK

As our network grows, we've been intentional in building more structured spaces for alignment and community.

Generating State Power in California, Colorado, and Pennsylvania





Working together across all levels of local governments, LP members are organizing to build state power. This year, we deepened our state organizing in <u>California</u>, <u>Colorado</u>, and <u>Pennsylvania</u> and set the stage for the formation of official state chapters next year!

In California, we <u>worked</u> with labor friends to support grocery store workers fighting for a new contract that increased wages, guaranteed hours for part-time

workers, and ratified bonuses for all. In Colorado, we joined local partners to host a film screening and panel discussion to explore community solutions for safety. And in Pennsylvania, we held our very first Progressive Governance Academy training in Harrisburg with fifteen local electeds from across the state.

This state organizing is years in the making, driven by LP members (past and present) who have led the work and built partnerships in state.

Creating a Community of Learning for School Board Leaders

Public education is the bedrock of our democracy and school boards represent the community's voice in strengthening and maintaining it. That's why, at Local Progress, we know how important it is to organize school board members around a multi-issue policy agenda and create a community for progressive champions. In January, we ratified our School Board

Cohort Statement of Values. Created collectively through an iterative process over the last year led by our School Board Steering Committee, the statement guides our work together and articulates what it means to be a progressive school board member that is unapologetically fighting for a thriving public education system.

Building Governing Power Through Shared Identities: LP Caucuses



Local Progress organizes caucuses for members to do work together within shared identities. This year, we strengthened our Black Caucus, Women's Caucus, and Nuestro Caucus, and created the foundations for a new Pride Caucus to be formed next year.

The Women's Caucus dug deep on healing and restorative practices that can support women through the physical and emotional toll that holding elected office can have. And the Nuestro Caucus established its leadership committee and held space at the national convening to support Latinx members. The Black Caucus focused on supporting the unique needs, opportunities, and challenges that come with governing while Black. The caucus held its very first convening in Nashville in April and completed the piloting of the Governing While Black training module at the national convening in July. Developed as part of the PGA, the module was officially rolled out at a two-day workshop in August for a small group of Black local and state elected officials. The core curriculum

includes sessions on wellness, strategy, political education, and messaging – covering everything from personal security best practices and succession planning to code switching and finding your authentic voice.



OUR CAUCUS PROVIDES A PLATFORM FOR LOCAL ELECTEDS TO COME TOGETHER, SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES, AND ADVOCATE FOR POLICIES THAT UPLIFT AND EMPOWER THE LATINX POPULATION THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION."

Jonathan Guzman,
 Vice-Chair of Lawrence School Committee, MA.

The Leadership Collaborative: Building Power by Sharing It



Elected officials – like all people in our society – are more effective and powerful when they work together. By organizing together, we can share knowledge and strategies and build new ways of doing the work. This year we continued the **Leadership Collaborative** – a cross-organizational, multi-state, multi-issue, multi-racial space hosted as four convenings over the course of the next three years. Designed for LP members who hold leadership positions across the

network (including our <u>state organizing committees</u>, <u>program steering committees</u>, and <u>caucus leadership committees</u>), each convening will focus on one of the key pillars of our <u>strategic framework</u>. We held our second one in April of this year, bringing together more than 50 LP member leaders and partner organizations to discuss ways to organize within their councils or boards, across their states, and at the national level.





Our 2024 National Convening: Rooted in Reshaping Our Future



Every year, our national convening is a space where our network comes together to learn, strategize, and find joy. This year was our largest and most exciting national convening to date - with more than 420 participants and 60 different strategy meetings, workshops, and site visits, covering everything from social housing and welcoming new arrivals, to zoning, transit-oriented development, community responder programs, and navigating the challenges and opportunities in local governance. We created ecosystems grounded in collaborative governance. We exchanged ideas and found inspiration. And we found the clarity and the renewed energy we were looking for to be rooted in transforming our future. We couldn't have asked for a more incredible time together. One thing is clear: when we are rooted in reshaping our future, nothing can stop us. We are planting the seeds of change today that will shade future generations for a lifetime.





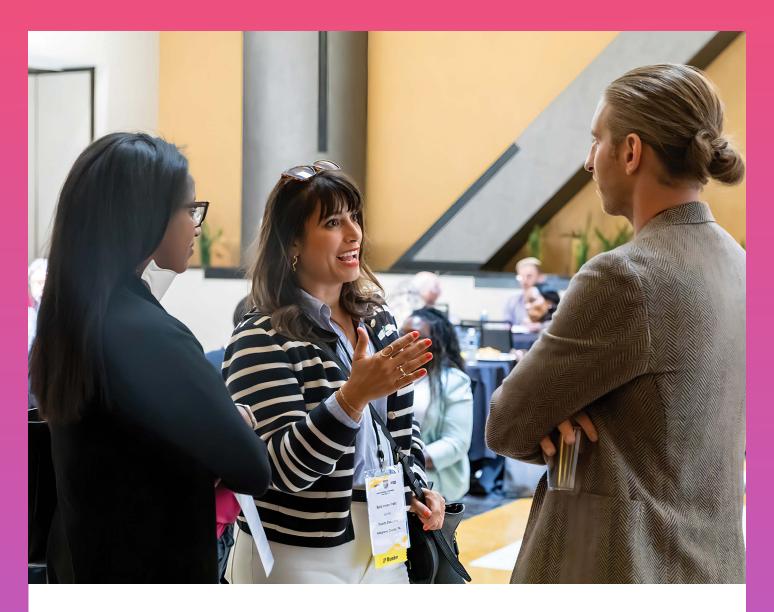
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT THIS QUESTION BUT THEN I REMEMBERED THAT I WAS COMING TO 'LOCAL PROGRESS' NOT 'LOCAL PERFECT' AND I APPRECIATE THAT THIS IS A SPACE WHERE WE CAN FIGURE THINGS OUT AND NOT HAVE THE PRESSURE OF BEING PERFECT ALL THE TIME."

Sara Innamorato,
 Allegheny County Executive.



EACH CONVERSATION WITH COURAGEOUS PRINCIPLED LEADERS GIVES ME HOPE FOR THE FUTURE AND INSPIRATION FOR THE WORK TOMORROW. EVERY MOMENT WAS MY FAVORITE MOMENT."

- 2024 National Convening participant



INTRODUCING OUR MUNICIPAL MEMBERSHIP

This year, we've expanded our membership through our <u>Municipal Membership</u> program. Now LP members can be both individual elected officials, as well as municipal governments. Municipal membership is open to any county and city government bodies with at least one LP member.

The LP network provides local governments with a platform to collaborate, share best practices, access resources, and enhance their capacity to serve their communities effectively and efficiently. Our staff work closely with municipal and jurisdiction members to maximize their access to these resources and develop customized plans that provide training and briefings on policy resources specific to each member

jurisdiction. Members get access to personalized support and tailored resources, timely communication about the latest policy issues and legislative developments, and advocacy support that helps local officials advance policies that address their unique community needs.

Does your city or county want to build power with your community, share bold ideas and policy among a network for local leaders, and fight to reshape what is possible in our localities all across the country? Then check out our municipal membership! By becoming a municipal member of Local Progress, your city or county can join the network as a governmental body!

IN THE NEWS

We continue to increase the visibility of work at the local level, push the national narrative on key issues, and uplift local elected officials as champions of progressive change. Here are some of our favorite moments:

Bloomberg

Gig Worker Protections Find Testing Ground in NYC, Seattle

THE AMERICAN PROSPECT

Pre-Preemption: How States Are Blocking Cities from Even Thinking About Legislating



Cities Want To Give Worker's Heat Breaks. States Are Stopping Them.



New Tools Help Governments Tap Clean Energy Windfall



Advocates Blast the Supreme Court for Ruling That Criminalizes Homelessness

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Is this European city a model for Philadelphia's affordable housing? One council member thinks so

TALLAHASSEE REPORTS

Local Progress" Promotes
Progressive Policy Positions
to Local Leaders

COSMOPOLITAN

Gen Z Isn't Here for Elected Women's Low Salaries and Dangerous Jobs



When States and Localities Disagree On Worker Protections, What's the Way Forward?

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Big Cities Take Up Fight Against Algorithm-Based Rents



WHAT'S AHEAD

Here are a few projects we're excited to share with you in 2025:

- Activating local electeds into collective action on the most urgent issues facing communities under the new presidential administration.
- Developing a regional organizing framework in the Midwest and Deep South
- Launching our fourth identity caucus: the Pride Caucus!
- Building capacity and providing in-depth technical support through our Comms Cohort and Community Responder Cohort.
- Continuing to produce new narrative projects
 that help change the public perception of what
 is possible at the local level, especially around
 housing, public safety, and immigrant justice.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Team

- Faisal Alam, Director of Finance & Operations (he/him)
- Elizabeth Alcantar, California Coordinator (she/her)
- Tannya Benavides, Texas Chapter Manager (she/her)
- Melissa Carrera-Solano, New York Chapter Manager (she/ella)
- LiJia Gong, Policy and Legal Director (she/they)
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- Jessy Lancaster, Membership Data Manager (they/them)
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- Grace Thorsvilson, Colorado Coordinator (she/her)
- Michael Whitesides, Deputy Communications Director (they/ them)

We also thank those who helped anchor so much of this work while on staff:

- Joshua Acevedo, Campaigns
 Organizer (he/him) until February
 2024
- Kara Sheehan, Membership Organizer (she/her) until April 2024

LP Board

- Kristerfer Burnett, Baltimore City Councilmember, Co-Chair (he/him)
- Marcelia Nicholson, Milwaukee County Board Chairwoman, Co-Chair (she/her)
- Alexsandra Annello, Former El Paso City Representative (she/her)
- Dr. Dorcey Applyrs, Albany's Chief City Auditor (she/her)
- Kendra Brooks, Philadelphia City Councilmember At-Large (she/her)
- Tiffany Cabán, New York City Councilmember (she/her)
- Ashley Dwire, Director of State & Local Programs, SEIU (she/her)

- Megan Ellyia Green, St. Louis Board President (she/her)
- Maria Hadden, Chicago Alderwoman (she/her)
- Jillian Johnson, Southern
 Regional Director at Movement
 Voter Project (she/her)
- Dr. Kelly Kent, Culver City Unified School District Governing Board (she/her)
- Jerry Maldonado, PolicyLink Vice President of Programs (he/him)
- Eddy Morales, Gresham City Council President (he/him)
- Stephanie Morales, Portsmouth

Commonwealth's Attorney (she/her)

- Teresa Mosqueda, King County Councilmember (she/her)
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 Detroit City Councilmember (she/her)
- Thomas Walker, Assistant to the Vice-President at Communications Workers of America (he/him)

Donors & Supporters

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American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

Akonadi Foundation

California Donor Table

California Endowment

California Wellness Foundation

Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies

CWA

Democracy Fund

Denver Foundation

Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund

Ford Foundation

Four Freedoms Fund

Green Advocacy Project

Heinz Endowments

HouseUS

Inatai Foundation

Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation

JPB Foundation

Local Solutions Support Center

McKnight Foundation

Mission Telecom

Movement Voter Fund

Nathan Cummings Foundation

Neighborhood Funders Group

Omidyar Network

Open Society Foundation

Open Society Policy Center

Planned Parenthood

PolicyLink

Raikes Foundation

Robert Sterling Clark Foundation

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Rural Democracy Initiative

San Francisco Foundation

Scherman Foundation

Service Employees International

Union (SEIU)

Surdna Foundation

Tides Foundation

UNITE HERE

United Teachers Los Angeles

Weingart Foundation

Working Families Party

LOCALPROGRESS

LOCALPROGRESS IMPACT LAB