



BUILDING POWER
IN IMMIGRANT AND
REFUGEE COMMUNITIES



ANNUAL REPORT 2017





LETTER FROM

RICH STOLZ

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I remember the emergency call from Mergitu, our organizer in South King County. The aunt of one of our youth leaders, Yvette, was at the NW Detention Center. She didn't speak English, was seeking asylum, and was facing deportation. We talked through our options, and within hours our organizer connected this young woman to a trusted attorney. Staff and leaders provided emotional support to the family to make sure they knew they weren't alone, that they were part of a movement.

It's not the sort of thing that we spend a lot of time talking about publicly, but in many ways, the community of support we're building among our grassroots leaders and their families, especially now, is one of the most important things we do. And this was just one of the many calls we've received since Donald Trump took the White House.

Fortunately, Yvette's aunt wasn't deported and now lives with her family here in the United States, but the story didn't end there for Yvette. She quit her job as a medical assistant, turned her attention to activism, and eventually joined OneAmerica as an intern. An immigrant herself whose family fled from violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Yvette was there in Washington, DC representing OneAmerica when she and thousands of grassroots youth leaders from across the nation took over Senate office buildings demanding action on the DREAM Act. This was a critical peak moment in the push that led to the temporary shutdown of the federal government this spring.

I couldn't have felt more proud of Yvette, whose resilience and determination inspired me to stand firm in our advocacy when it seemed as if every institution was turning against us and our allies, asking us to be... reasonable. I was reminded yet again, that while the Trump Administration can try to demonize our families, take away our due process and our protections from deportation, that we alone can give away our dignity and humanity. Our voices will not be silenced.

Across Washington State community members are standing together through OneAmerica to defy attacks on immigrant and refugee communities and promote – through organizing, civic engagement and advocacy – a vision of a more just, inclusive and equitable world.

For so many of us, 2017 was a painful reminder of the backlash against immigrants and refugees that spurred the founding of OneAmerica (then called Hate Free Zone) in 2001. Last year, we were forced to re-set our priorities, re-center our work on organizing and leadership development, and fight like never before to protect our families and communities. Mindful of the level of fear in our communities, we were forced into a defensive posture. But we didn't stay there.

Through resilience and persistence, we created new opportunities to advance democracy and justice in Washington State, and by some measures the last 18 months have been our most impactful, productive and successful in the history of our organization.

In this new political context, we're just getting started. In the coming months and years, we must double down on our organizing, expand our base of leaders, and focus on building the capacity of our leaders and communities to drive campaigns to change the policies, institutions and practices that impact our families and lives. We must build powerful coalitions across race and across sectors capable of taking on the big fights in our state and our nation, and we must always stay grounded in the leadership of our base. In this project, we need your support, your energy and your commitment.

By returning to our roots, we're more powerful than ever, led by our resilient and courageous members, volunteers and staff. When we organize, we know we can make the impossible, possible. And we're only beginning to see what we can accomplish together.



Richard Stolz



OUR MISSION

OneAmerica advances the fundamental principles of democracy and justice at the local, state, and national levels by building power within immigrant communities in collaboration with key allies.

OUR VISION

OneAmerica envisions a peaceful world where every person's human rights and dignity are respected, where communities appreciate differences and stand together for justice and equality, and where each person contributes to the common good.

OUR FAMILY

OneAmerica is a family of organizations made up of OneAmerica (a 501c3), our political arm OneAmerica Votes (a 501c4), and our state political committee the OneAmerica Votes Justice Fund (a PAC). Our OneAmerica family works together to advance our mission and vision.

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CELEBRATING THE VICTORIES

WASHINGTON STATE VICTORIES

Secured \$1,000,000 to expand free naturalization support for immigrants working to become citizens through our Washington New American's Program, tripling prior funding levels.

Grew Dual Language Education funding for English Language Learners by \$1,000,000 with classes now reaching twelve schools, and launched an innovative campaign encouraging bilingualism called Speak Your Language.

LOCAL VICTORIES

Succeeded in pushing the Yakima City Council to fund streetlight and other safety improvements as a down payment on a broader equitable economic development campaign to address neglected infrastructure in Yakima's predominately Latinx East side neighborhoods.

Expanded access to lawyers and legal assistance by securing more than \$1.5 million for an immigrant defense fund from the City of Seattle and King County.

Defeated attempts to build a dirty oil terminal in Vancouver that would have shipped dangerous and combustible oil by train through immigrant communities.

Launched a leadership development strategy focused on cross cultural and racial organizing.





RECOLLECTION

FROM A **ONEAMERICA** COMMUNITY LEADER

Teresa wanted to save her family from crime and insecurity. When she moved to Washington as a mother, “It was a decision no one else could make for me.” Her journey has been one of self-discovery and now she takes great pride in her role as a mentor in her community.

She is committed to helping school systems make better decisions that engage immigrant families by using interpreters and mentors. She encourages parents to speak up and engage with their kids’ schools in spite of language and cultural barriers. She used to be quiet, but now she has the courage to lobby legislators in Olympia to do something about DACA.

A mother of two sons in college and a young daughter, Teresa went back to school. This has been a great example to her children who look up to her. “Others have guided me; now I want to guide others. It’s never too late to get a degree. We can do it – even if it’s difficult. As women, we are strong enough to do even more than we think we can.”

Special thanks to Shew Design, Johnny Mac Studios, Allison Roberts and partners at 21Progress and the Washington Dream Coalition

COMMUNITY LEADERS

OneAmerica's mission is to build power within immigrant communities, and our community is at the core of that mission. We recognize and thank the leaders listed below for their significant commitment, bravery, intelligence, compassion and resilience.

UBAH ADEN

MARIA DE ALBA

ALI ALI

LISABETH ANDALUZ

JESUS ANDRADE

KONGO BAMANAY

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DANI SALAZAR

GUADALUPE SANCHEZ

NASIR TURA

KARISHAMA VAHORA

JEY VARGA

CECILIA VIZCAINO

PAULA ZAMBRANO

KAREN ZAMORA

“ Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love. ”

Martin Luther King Jr.

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Thank you to all our funders, business supporters, and organizational allies that help fund our work for justice and build power for immigrant and refugee communities.

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Washington State Association for Justice
Washington State Labor Council
Yakima Valley Community Foundation

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Thank you to the individuals supporting our work at every level. You are helping build a powerful movement for justice, and we're proud to have you as a part of the OneAmerica family.

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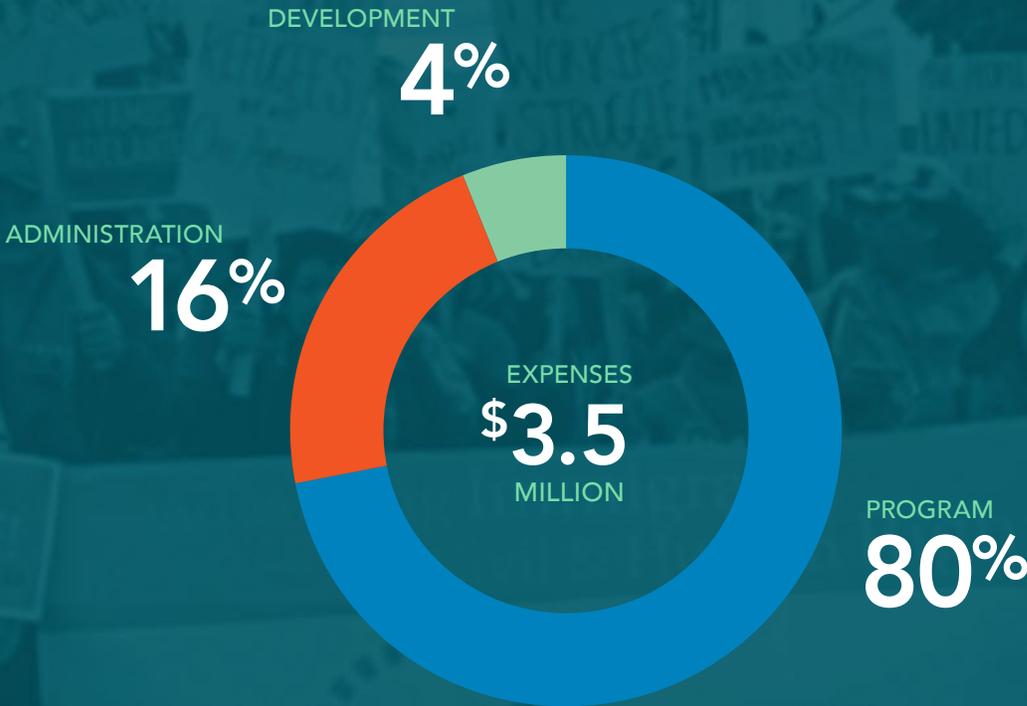
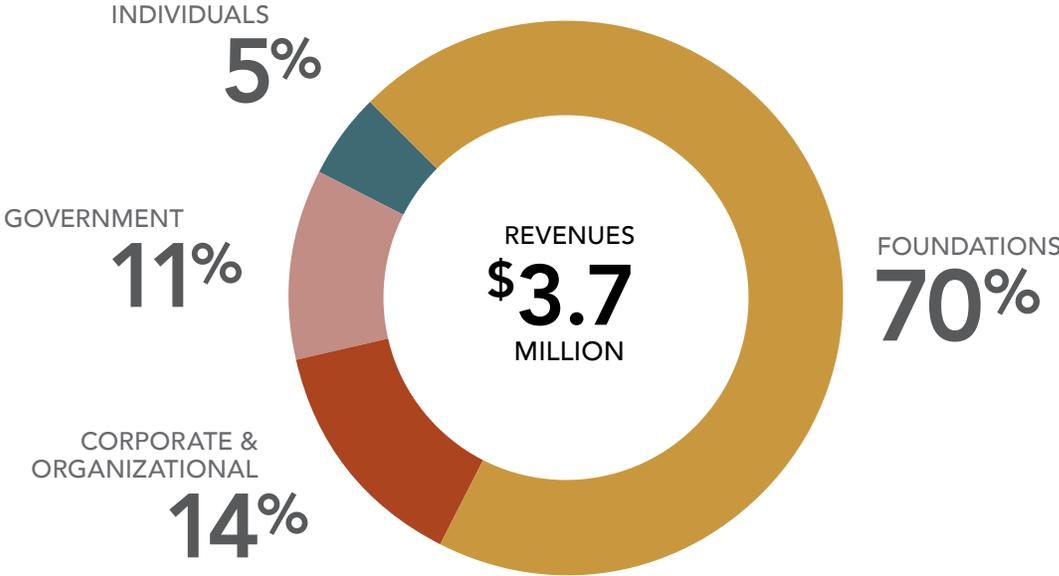
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