



## VISION

Project VOYCE envisions a world with representative leadership for a more just and equitable society.

## MISSION

Project VOYCE develops transformational leaders in underrepresented communities by training, employing, and organizing youth to address root causes of inequity.

## APPROACH

Community Youth Development  
Social Justice Youth Development\*  
Youth Organizing  
Critical Youth Empowerment

\*SJYD principles : Analyzes power in social relationships, makes identity central, promotes systemic social change, encourages collective action, embraces youth culture.

Board of Directors:  
Rebecca Lavezzary  
Giselle Cummings  
Mike Shoemaker  
Harbandna Singh  
Vanessa Quintana

## CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS LEVELS



### SELF AWARENESS

Critique of stereotypes, active engagement in identity development



### SOCIAL AWARENESS

Community organizing, political education, youth exercising power in community institutions, innovative solutions to community and social problems



### GLOBAL AWARENESS

Connection to others' struggles, optimism about social change.



CANDI  
CDEBACA

CO-FOUNDER  
& CO-EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

Project VOYCE was catalyzed by community need and our existence has proven our agility in being able to always bend with whatever our communities need and desire. This beauty was symbolically highlighted for me personally during a coalition retreat that I attended this year in Buffalo Creek, Colorado where we met an elder of the Ute tribe. She shared the sacred wisdom of Ute prayer trees with our group and re-affirmed for me the importance of shaping the world as we need it to be shaped with grace, patience, respect and purpose. Members of the Ute tribe took the natural forces of nature-- the vertical growth of trees-- and modified the trees to bend horizontally to mark areas for prayer or directions along a trail. Such modifications did not destroy the plant's life nor did it change it's primary contribution to the world, it simply took an identified need of the community and it incorporated the needs for survival of the plant and established something new, lasting, beautiful and functional.

A little over two and a half years ago I returned to Denver from a 6 year hiatus in Washington, DC and assumed the Executive Directorship of Project VOYCE, an organization I co-founded as a college student twelve years ago. As a college student the forming of Project VOYCE was a labor of love for community. As a trusted organization in our community, it has been truly an honor to be tasked with meeting even deeper and broader needs of our unjustly overburdened but extremely resilient community. I like to see our organization as a tool for the community much like the trees were to the Ute. We exist to serve and bend as needed by those who are willing to work with us to create everlasting intention and change for our people.

We were privileged this year to be a small piece of a growing movement for justice and representation in Denver and this country. We have trained our largest cohort of Block Captains, sent students on a record number of out of state trainings, developed our deepest community partnerships, and had the most catalytic impact on transforming the policies being shaped in our school, local, and state communities. Our success lies not only in our programmatic accomplishments but in the hearts of youth who have been involved with PV and have long since moved on but have been activated to pursue long-term careers dedicated to justice and social change. I have learned patience, perseverance and trust as we give our hearts, time and love to causes that do not always immediately reward us but rather build on ancestral legacies that will always remind us of how far we have come and how far we have left to go. Thank you to every supporter who has found the nexus of your liberation with ours!

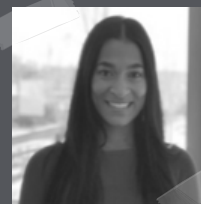


BREA  
ZEISE

CO-EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

When I first started with Project VOYCE as an AmeriCorps VISTA in 2015, I had no clue the impact PV would have on me and the youth we work with. Since our program model transition in 2016, this year is the first year our pipeline has come full circle: participants started with youth training, moved to youth employment, and went on to begin organizing youth and adults in their schools and communities to create social change.

What our youth have been able to accomplish in one year is nothing short of astonishing. This year, we piloted our first-ever participatory budgeting module for youth leaders - a process that directly places decision-making power hands of community members to decide how to spend budgets. Our youth have lead workshops across the country ranging from topics about high quality youth policy arguments to using digital storytelling as a tool for research and resistance. Under our organizing arm, youth signed up to be Block Captains, where youth from across Denver have come together on a monthly basis to form a youth coalition that addresses community challenges together. It has been a true honor to learn and grow alongside our youth, and together we will continue to build a movement for positive social change.



ANGELA  
MORAN

ENGAGEMENT  
DIRECTOR

The past year at Project VOYCE has brought on continued growth both personally and professionally; I have been incorporating my passion for youth development while collaborating with the community.

Specifically, while developing and implementing a sustainable program for Youth Block Captains, aimed at activating students as social change agents, has allowed youth-adult partnerships to flourish while addressing inequities. One of the many highlights during the last year is to have watched youth from various programs work together to research, create, and deliver policy presentations with a call-to-action. Project VOYCE youth continue to display growth to learn more about the issues important to them, and crave more hands-on experience to combat the spaces without youth presence that effect their daily lives.

The VOYCE Academy is a 5-week, Train-the-Trainer program including a retreat and five curriculum topics designed to engage underrepresented youth in relevant and rigorous lessons about social change and inequality. The Academy takes youth through a full action civics cycle, which enables youth to work with peers to address public issues that are relevant to their lives; allowing students to gain practice navigating complex systems and developing evidence-based arguments to influence policy.



CIVIC  
LEADERSHIP



COMMUNITY ORGANIZING  
& ADVOCACY



PARTICIPATORY  
ACTION RESEARCH



YOUTH-ADULT  
PARTNERSHIPS



PARTICIPATORY  
BUDGETING

IN 2017 **18** ACADEMY GRADUATES  
COMPLETED OVER **185** HOURS  
**93%** of youth increased knowledge of issues facing communities of color.  
(**94%** youth of color & youth living in poverty)



### YOUTH EXPERIENCED THE ACADEMY AS:

- 1 Supportive of their deeper learning in ways that enabled them to feel capable of making a change.
- 2 An environment that allowed them to express their voice and develop in meaningful ways.
- 3 Distinct from school, in that they felt more engaged, empowered, and involved in their learning.



The VOYCE Alliance offers employment opportunities for youth trainers who are certified through the VOYCE Academy to practices skills gained, and to continue developing their civic leadership skills by co-creating and co-facilitating fee-for-service workshops, trainings, and speaking engagements.

## WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

### YOUTH POLICY PRESENTATIONS: CO-CREATING, COLLABORATING, AND INTER-GENERATIONAL LEARNING AS AN APPROACH TO ACTION CIVICS.



#### PRESENTED AT

Deeper Learning Conference  
San Diego, California

University Council for Educational  
Administration Convention  
Denver, Colorado

#### CO-CREATED & FACILITATED BY

Anayah Tora  
'16 VOYCE Academy Graduate

Julyce Jones  
'17 VOYCE Academy Graduate

Nyna Moore  
'16 VOYCE Academy Graduate

### CONTROLLING THE NARRATIVE: DIGITAL STORYTELLING AS A TOOL FOR RESEARCH AND RESISTANCE

#### PRESENTED AT

Free Minds, Free People Conference  
Baltimore, Maryland

#### CO-CREATED & FACILITATED BY

Savion Harris  
'16 VOYCE Academy Graduate

Nancy Palacios  
'17 VOYCE Coalition Participant

Jericha Thomas  
'17 VOYCE Coalition Participant



# VOYCE COALITION: YOUTH ORGANIZING FOR POWER

The VOYCE Coalition is a group that defends and extends youth rights while supporting and strengthening youth, and their communities. Youth from VOYCE Academy put their advocacy and organizing skills into action through participation in the Coalition through the creation of campaigns and initiation of projects. VOYCE Coalition members participate in General Body meetings, trainings, crafting legislative priorities, initiating action alerts for community.

47

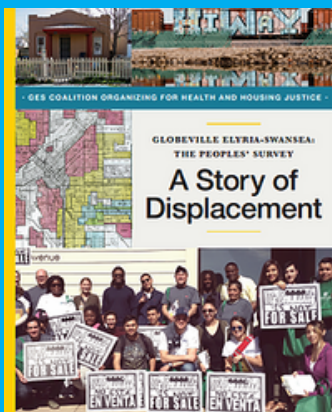
YOUTH BLOCK  
CAPTAINS

5

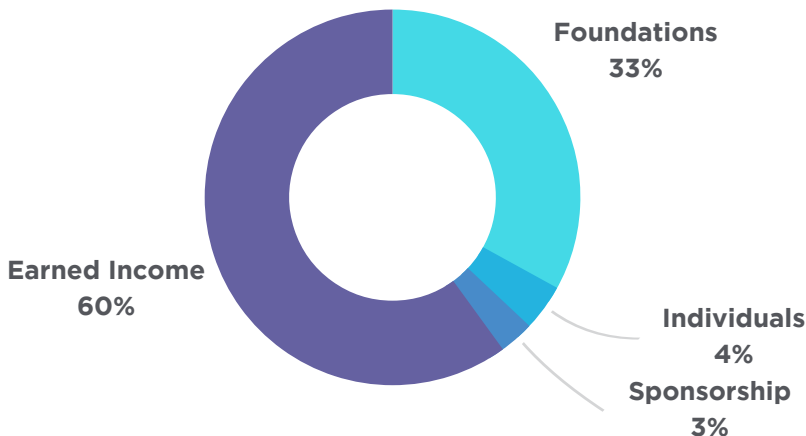
CAMPAIGNS

500+

HOUSEHOLDS  
CANVASSED



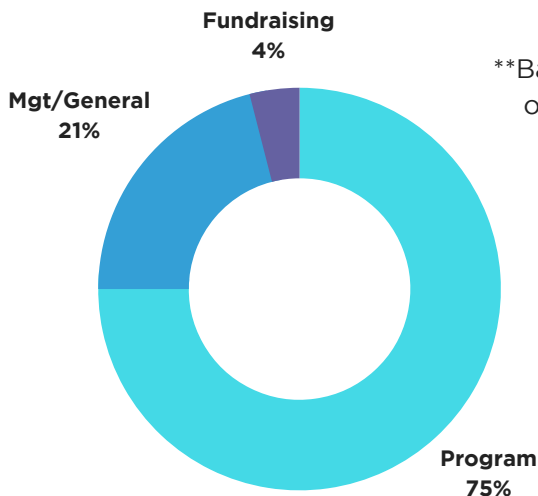
**\$442,100**  
TOTAL REVENUE



**208**  
INDIVIDUAL  
DONORS

**124**  
FIRST-TIME  
DONORS

ArtPlace America | The Buck Foundation | Campbell Foundation Fund  
Carson Foundation | Chinook Fund | The Colorado Health Foundation  
The Colorado Trust | The Denver Foundation | Grit and Grace Fund  
Latinas LEAD | Mile High Connects | Mile High United Way | Office of  
Children Affairs | University of Colorado | Zeppelin Family Foundation



\*\*Based on standalone  
operation starting  
8/1/2017\*\*

