



# ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2017



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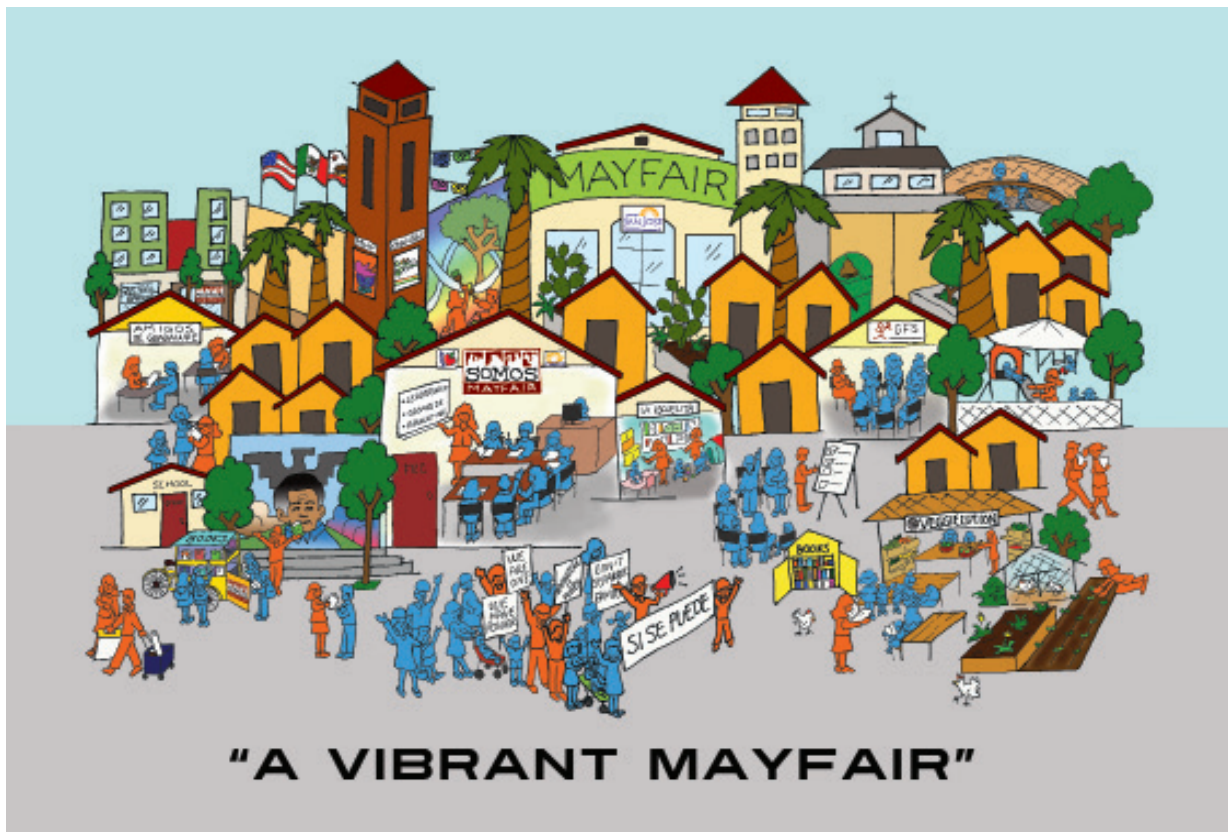
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# WHAT WE ARE ROOTED IN:

## OUR MISSION

SOMOS Mayfair supports children, organizes families and connects neighbors to uplift the dreams, power and leadership of community and address systemic inequities.



# OUR PAST. OUR PRESENT. OUR FUTURE.

For many years a duality has existed in Mayfair: a deeply-rooted, culturally-based set of community assets confronted by ongoing, evolving neighborhood challenges. To change our community conditions, SOMOS Mayfair has worked over the last 20 years to uplift our greatest community asset—**the power of the Mayfair people themselves.**



**M**ayfair families are and have always been hard-working, resilient, and tenacious. The parents engaged with SOMOS Mayfair want greater opportunities not just for their own children, but for all Mayfair children. Many of them are immigrants who came here for a better life. And these parents are contributing their time, energy and talents in making a collective vision of equity, opportunity and mutual support the new reality for this neighborhood.

Since inception as the Mayfair Improvement Initiative in 1997, our organization has supported our neighbors in raising their voices, demonstrating leadership and taking action. For two decades we have helped the residents of Mayfair work towards their dreams of great schools, safe streets and parks, a fair chance at economic opportunity,

and now finding ways to ensure the people who live here, do not get displaced in Silicon Valley's latest boom.

When the "In Our Hands" effort was launched in 2012, we aimed to build on that legacy in a new and different way. Our residents themselves wanted to pursue a new focused target: close the achievement gap for students at Cesar Chavez Elementary School, by increasing rates of kindergarten readiness and third grade reading proficiency.

The only thing we knew for sure about achieving these outcomes, was that everyday ordinary people -- Mayfair parents and community members -- would be the agents of change. So, standing on the shoulders of the leaders came before us, our team took risks, and developed and tested new strategies, all in the hands of our community.

We have carried out a robust, multi-faceted approach. An approach where we meet individual families where they are, and at the same time, we work to address systems change through reforms in policies, practices and norms. We weave grassroots, home-grown solutions with promising, evidence-based practices. And, we work with children, youth, parents, grandparents, schools, nonprofit partners and institutions.

This approach has paid off. Our formula is working. Since we launched the initiative, across our programs, children have increased their kindergarten readiness skills; early grade students have increased their literacy skills; and parents are taking action to improve our neighborhood schools and community.

Whether creating mobile mini-libraries, developing culturally-rooted, family-friendly summer programs, bringing Pre-K readiness programs to multiple neighborhood schools, or forming parent organizing committees -- caring adults in our neighborhood have accelerated community change. Their collective action has created a neighborhood-wide culture that promotes and supports educational success. This has resulted in greater investments in translation and interpretation services, the addition of community liaisons, opening community use of school district space, and support for our school district staff in conducting authentic parent engagement. Reminding us that deep and lasting community change is most effective when partners are aligned.

Going forward into 2021, we commit to keep core programs grounded in support of our Mayfair neighborhood schools. We will complement those efforts with development of a new Promotor Network to serve as a community engagement resource for institutions and local organizations across Santa Clara County -- allowing us to support economic opportunities for community members, especially those who are often marginalized and go without access.

Building on our recent work and launching in new directions will propel our organizational mission forward. This vision and goals explained in the ensuing pages of this Strategic Plan are daunting. But, without risk, comes no reward. In holding up the hopes and dreams of the Mayfair community and beyond, and the abundance of assets and partnerships within our reach, we believe this is exactly how to approach our future.

**To be intentional and bold.**

**To take calculated risks.**

**To hold a greater vision for our neighborhoods.**

**To build dreams, leadership and power.**

**To be relentless in our commitment to strive for systemic change that profoundly affects our marginalized communities.**

All of us at SOMOS Mayfair look forward to being a part of this effort and having the opportunity to continue to advance deep, intentional and sometimes difficult community work. Building upon our successes, and together with our partners in this endeavor, we forge ahead.



Camille Llanes-Fontanilla  
Executive Director



David Ling  
Board Chair

# WHAT GUIDES US:

## FOR OUR CHILDREN

### EVERY CHILD IN MAYFAIR...

- Is prepared with the early learning and literacy skills needed to develop and thrive.
- Has access to equitable opportunities and resources to discover and develop their passion, talents, and gifts.
- Can analyze, read and question the world, contributing unique voice, perspective, and action.
- Is supported in developing a positive self-identity, with a deep connection to culture, heritage, and language.
- Is moved to thrive in college, in the workforce, and in life to be a leader in our community.

**...THE WHOLE CHILD IS CULTIVATED AND NURTURED.**

# OUR VISION

## FOR OUR FAMILIES

### EVERY FAMILY IN MAYFAIR...

- Has networks of mutual support and equitable opportunities and resources to achieve their personal visions.
- Has a deep connection to community and chooses to exercise their leadership in meaningful ways.

## FOR OUR COMMUNITY

### IN MAYFAIR...

- Our community is united, healthy, and safe, exercising our power.
- Our community has a strong analysis of systems of oppression and is ready to develop alternative systems and advocate for change.
- Our rich histories, migration journeys, cultures, and languages are uplifted and celebrated.
- Our sustainability as a community radiates from within through shared ownership and collective action.

# WHERE WE COME FROM: OUR HISTORY



The Mayfair neighborhood in East San Jose is home to approximately 13,000 residents. For nearly one hundred years it has attracted waves of newcomers, primarily immigrants, mostly from Mexico and other countries of Latin America. Mayfair is characterized as a community predominately populated by households with low-incomes (e.g. average household incomes are half of county-wide figures). Despite this economic factor, there are many families with deep multi-generational roots who provide a stable anchor to the community.

In 1996, the Mayfair Improvement Initiative (MII) was created to develop and grow the social capital of its residents. Beginning as a partnership between the mostly immigrant, working-class residents of the Mayfair neighborhood and allies from throughout Silicon Valley. We worked to make streets safer, build community gardens, and advocate for social services, education, affordable housing and economic development.

The Mayfair initiative's launch occurred during peak periods of the dot.com boom in Silicon Valley. Though the Valley had the attention of the world as the center of emerging global prosperity, those living in the Mayfair neighborhood were being left out. Even during one of capitalism's most effervescent bubbles, not everyone was benefiting. MII sought to address inequities that residents throughout the neighborhood were experiencing.

Central to the effort was a belief that those of us who live in Mayfair have the right, the capacity and the opportunity to be the leaders of community change in Mayfair. This belief has its roots in the legacy of community organizing and leadership development that has been a constant factor in Mayfair: Cesar Chavez, who organized here during the 1960's, is perhaps Mayfair's most famous son. Today, SOMOS Mayfair carries forward these values in new and innovative ways that remain a testament to the hopes, dreams, actions and activist spirit of previous generations of Mayfair residents.

Our priority has always been to engage residents and build local leadership to advocate for Mayfair and its people. While we are not alone among non-profits with a commitment to building community power, we are unique in utilizing cultural strengths to promote community leadership development and social justice. This is an organization based on a unique relationship with our community. We are both supporter and partner. Residents are not only the people we serve, but also our key allies in the work. Our efforts support people in developing their capabilities to tackle any number of challenges or issues in their lives. While known for addressing early education and community health, we do not define ourselves through any one issue area. Our name, SOMOS Mayfair (We are Mayfair) signifies that commitment to true collaboration for ourselves and for our community.



# WHERE WE ARE GOING: OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

Our programmatic and organizational work heading into 2021 will be guided by, and our team will be organized around, meeting five Board-approved goals. They are ambitious, and yet we believe they are attainable.

## 1 STRENGTHENED CORE COMPETENCIES

SOMOS Mayfair is a grassroots community organization known and respected for creating a structure to support community residents in their leadership development and community organizing to address any identified community issue or concern.

## 2 FINANCIALLY STRONG & SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL

We have analyzed our business model, understand its cost centers and have projected our return on investment. We have conducted scenario planning for various growth and replication ideas, and have an iterative fundraising plan that ensures a diverse mix of financial resources from private foundations and corporations, government, individual donors, events and fees for service contracts.

## 3 TRAINING AND CURRICULUM GOES TO SCALE

SOMOS Mayfair's well-developed leadership training and curriculum model allows us to scale our work in multiple neighborhoods, increasing our base of activated parents and community members, and sharing our practices in other communities. This model has fee structures that generate revenues supporting our core work in Mayfair, but it does not 'price out' any communities who are interested in learning from our work.

## 4 OPEN & WELCOMING COMMUNITY SPACE

Our positive presence in Mayfair in East San Jose, and beyond, allows us to garner the community and political support needed to have accessible alternative community spaces. Our spaces are active community hubs housing community-identified and community-led programs, activities and events. Locations enhance SOMOS Mayfair's role as an anchor organization for the neighborhood.

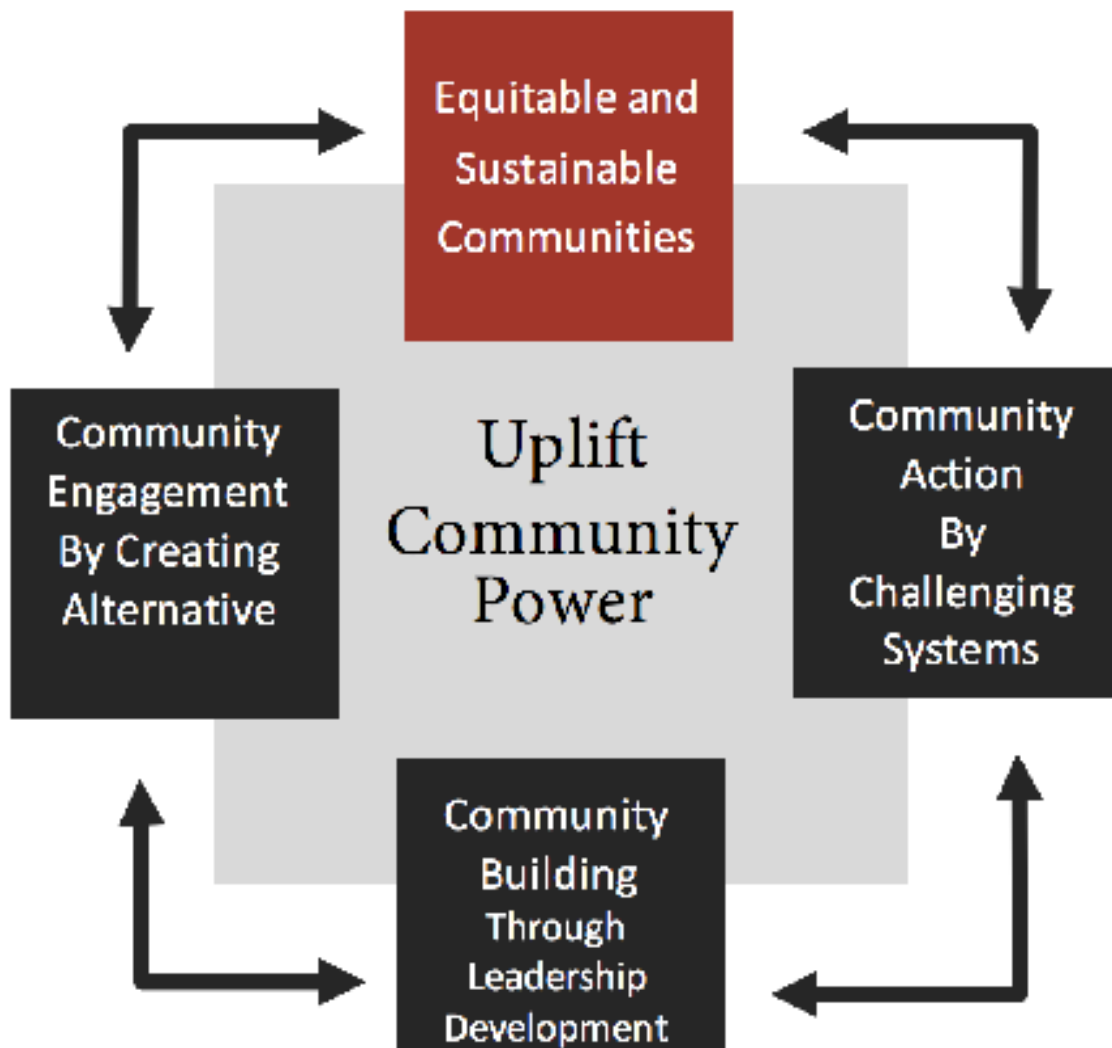
## 5 ROBUST MAYFAIR COLLABORATIVES

We are an active leader in the emerging Si Se Puede Collective, with Amigos de Guadalupe, Grail Family Services, the School of Arts and Culture at the Mexican Heritage Plaza (and other identified community-based partners), committed to interacting supportively, cohesively, and with strong integration to best serve and engage Mayfair residents. This results in a new and improved way of community-based organizations conducting work in Mayfair.

# WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

## THEORY OF CHANGE

BY ACTIVATING THE LEADERSHIP OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD, WE TAKE COLLECTIVE ACTION TO MAKE MEANINGFUL CHANGES IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND BUILD SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES.





## Research & Experience

Research and experience shows that families do better when residents – including community-based organizations, schools, and local businesses – are connected and responsive to each other’s needs. In short, place matters. As a result, SOMOS’ theory of change is centered on our core competency of cultivating leadership development and collective action to create a neighborhood-wide culture that promotes and supports children, families, and neighbors. Our current initiative is focused on educational success and related social determinants of health.

## The Need

Extensive research by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and others shows that 3rd grade marks a crucial milestone for educational success. A child that is not reading proficiently by the completion of 3rd grade is four times more likely to drop out of high school and not attend college than a child that is proficient in reading by that milestone. This risk increases by 1/4 for children overall growing up in low-income homes, and by 1/3 for low-income household Latino students. Failure to achieve academic literacy competency by this milestone marker is a key indicator for lower future earning potential.

SOMOS’ approach to closing the opportunity gap is simple. We build the leadership skills of Promotores (primarily women and mothers) utilizing evidence-based strategies. They acquire best practice skills around early literacy and positive parenting, which they then take and teach at homes, schools, and alternate spaces throughout the Mayfair community so that more parents can be their children’s first and best teacher. This method means working with neighborhood residents as leaders, “owners” and implementers of neighborhood transformation efforts. This results in Mayfair becoming the kind of community that enables all children and families to succeed and thrive.

## Expected Outcomes

- Recruiting, training, and mentoring Promotores (peer educators) who effectively engage hundreds of families and children in activities that support literacy, school readiness, and systemic efforts to address school failure;
- Child participants demonstrate an increase in school readiness and reading skills;
- Adult participants demonstrate an increase in leadership by taking direct action for community change in areas important to them; and
- SOMOS codifies its Promotor Model and develops a process for sharing this approach with other organizations and communities

# HOW WE DO OUR WORK:

## OUR PROGRAMS



### Growing Parent Engagement

**Reading Circles/San Jose Public Library** | Parents have organized book drives to ensure access to bilingual books and stories, drive the mobile library across the neighborhood and promote key activities to encourage reading in the home and community. This year we will launch reading circles at three different schools and partner with the San Jose Public Library to conduct literacy programming at the Cesar Chavez FRC.



**Growing Together** | Parents and youth in the neighborhood determined the need for a space to do some root-cause analysis together and develop action plans and committees to move the community platform forward. Parents and youth will come together again this year to develop a one-week program that will establish a strong foundation to launch campaigns.

**La Escuelita/Early Learning** | While Mayfair parents participate in workshops or other programming, their children participate in an on-site quality child care program that is aligned with parenting workshops and engages them in age-appropriate, quality early learning activities. We are partnering with the director of early learning in Alum Rock Union School District to develop early learning framework aligned with state standards.



**Summer Bridge to Kinder Program** | A three-week, school readiness program for incoming kindergarteners – and their parents – who will attend eight local elementary schools at four sites (Adelante, McCollam, San Antonio and Arbuckle). Parents simultaneously engage in promotora-facilitated parent workshops to learn strategies for best supporting their children throughout their educational journeys.



**Raising A Reader/E-Readers** | This is an evidenced-based, nationally recognized program that will ensure all transitional-kinder (TK) and kindergarten classes have access to literacy materials at home through a weekly book bag rotation. As part of this work, staff will work with the school to deliver two fun literacy events! This year we will grow this program to three different schools for teachers who are interested in integrating into classroom curriculum. In partnership with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and Learning in Action, we also rotate kindles with RAR books to a TK classroom in Chavez to explore engagement with technology and reading.



**Collective Model** | SOMOS partners with organizations in Mayfair as well as ARUSD, FIRST 5, Kidango and the San Jose Public Library to align services/ programs, share data and evaluation tools, and provide and ensure quality early opportunities to collectively increase kinder readiness and third-grade proficiency. We do this by increasing individual self-worth and economic mobility across Mayfair; uplifting identity and culture; and increasing literacy programming, resources and access.

## Building Parent & Community Leadership

**FIRST 5 Parent Workshops Series** | Evidenced-based curriculums (SEEDS, Triple P, 24/7 DAD, and Abriendo Puertas) are developed specifically to increase literacy skills, developmental assets and positive parent engagement. The curriculums draw on participants' real-life experiences and cultural strengths.

**SOMOS Fuertes** | A South Bay Network of Promotores that certifies community members in facilitation, outreach and child care to advance a social justice agenda in institutions and increase access to economic opportunity for residents in Mayfair.

**Mayfair University** | Ongoing throughout the programmatic year, SOMOS Mayfair delivers trainings to certify resident leaders as Promotores and leaders to support the development of a volunteer and leadership pipeline.

## Igniting Parent Action

**Comite Empuje (Parent "Push" Committee)** | Chavez, Arbuckle, Russo and San Antonio Elementary and Lee Mathson parent and youth leaders participate in weekly leadership trainings and planning meetings to address school and district issues facing their students and families. Parents take the lead in identifying the issues and strategizing actions. Likely actions in the coming programmatic year include monitoring and organizing around the Local Control Funding Formula and Accountability Plan; demanding consistency, transparency and accountability in ARUSD; evaluating parent liaisons on our parent engagement model; evaluating programs funded by the Local Control Accountability Plan; and also participating in the Local Control Funding Formula coalition alongside People Acting in Community Together and Californians for Justice.

**Vecinos Activos/ House Meeting** | Community members (parents and youth) gather at house meetings and in schools in Mayfair to conduct root-cause analysis of our education system and neighborhood issues that impact the school success and advance Mayfair community platform. This past year, families came together to address affordable housing concerns via the Quetzal Gardens project.



## How SOMOS Will Measure Success

SOMOS looks to a number of factors to measure success. These include:

- Determining whether parents feel an increased sense of belonging, which is foundational to building connectedness, family resilience, self-worth and positive engagement in the community.
- Understanding whether parents know how to support their students' learning in and out of school. This speaks to family engagement and how parents engage in the students' everyday learning.
- Increasing access to economic opportunity to expand tangible supplemental income for families, since we know that this is another big priority and challenge in Mayfair.
- Prioritizing root-cause analysis to determine intersection of systems and increase the number of families taking action to drive our collective vision.
- Moving the needle in school readiness and literacy at our local schools collectively through our partnerships.



# PROMO PEER-TO-PEER



“ FROM WORKING WITH SOMOS MAYFAIR, I LEARNED ABOUT MY OWN TALENTS THAT I DID NOT KNOW I HAD. WHAT I DO COUNTS. MY GRAIN OF SALT COUNTS, AND IT IS VALUABLE. IT MULTIPLIES IN A BIG GROUP. I CAN BE A LEADER NOT ONLY IN MY FAMILY BUT IN MY COMMUNITY. ”

-GUADALUPE, SOMOS PROMOTORA

“ IT GIVES ME PRIDE THAT THE WORK OF ENGAGING MAYFAIR RESIDENTS IS NOW IN OUR HANDS. I FEEL THAT WE, AS PROMOTORES, HAVE THE POWER TO PASS ON TO OTHER MAYFAIR RESIDENTS EVERYTHING THAT WE HAVE LEARNED AT SOMOS MAYFAIR SO THAT THEY ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY AND DESIRE TO MOVE FORWARD. ”

-NELLY BLAS, SOMOS PROMOTORA



# TORES

## EDUCATORS



Each year, SOMOS recruits, trains, and mentors over 100 neighborhood residents to serve as early childhood education Promotores (peer mentors).



Trained in SOMOS' Leadership Development Model, Promotores impart lessons and support families to adopt practices that foster successful students and healthy families. This work is done in people's homes, in parks, at the community center, in church halls...anywhere people gather in Mayfair.



By taking the "classroom" into traditional and non-traditional spaces, our Promotores do their work in a very public and visible fashion. This is intentional. In order to turn our work into a neighborhood movement, the work must enter the consciousness of the community, and must be perceived as a cultural norm and practice of Mayfair.



# DISRUPTING BUSINESS AS USUAL: CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR PROMOTORES

Our vision is to create a vibrant network of well-trained, highly-skilled peer educators; community workers across South Bay that increase access to economic opportunity for the workers, and serve as a bridge between institutions and local people supporting the transformation of communities in which they work. The mission is to bring civic-minded institutions closer to their stakeholders with insight and knowledge on issues and trends through the engagement of community members via trusted relationships with Promotores.

The team at SOMOS Mayfair has successfully centered all of its work on the Promotor Model: engaging and building the capacity of residents to take ownership of their neighborhoods to catalyze significant gains in parent engagement, advocacy, facilitation, healthy habits, and literacy skills. SOMOS' proven curriculum incorporates: learning and instruction, mentorship and hands-on practice, and opportunities for professional development.

Given this expertise, SOMOS will provide two services:

- *Deployment of Promotores:* Organizations beyond Mayfair would have access to a network of well-trained, highly skilled Promotores that are placed to carry out short-term projects. Through a combination of temporary employees and a worker-owned cooperative structure, SOMOS will recruit and train community workers for placement at other organizations. The work will be community engagement, education, outreach, translation, on-site childcare, etc. with workers being compensated at a living wage rate to supplement their household income.
- *Coaching and Consulting Services:* Organizations ready to embed the Promotor Model into their program structure have access to our expertise and training curricula for their staff and volunteers.

The successful implementation of this project has potential for a “triple bottom line” benefit. First, like many non-profit organizations, SOMOS is examining ways to smartly disrupt its core business model. Should it be a feasible, revenue generating opportunity in new business model and product design, SOMOS will further diversify its funding to sustain its core work.

The second aim of such a project would be to address the outreach and peer education needs of public, private and nonprofit organizations and institutions. More and more organizations are embedding a community worker component into their programming – in part due to a growing expectation from funders. However, for many organizations not specialized in peer leadership development, implementing the Promotor Model has proven to be difficult. The day-to-day function of managing community workers and the payment structures is often fluid and haphazard. Many organizations lack the capacity or expertise to completely embed Promotor Models into their business structures, have an ongoing need for such skills, and/or provide continuous training and mentorship of these community workers.

Lastly, by systematizing opportunities for work across the County in non-profits, as well as public and private institutions, this effort would aim to meet the needs of local residents looking for greater economic opportunity. Currently, community workers have limited access to opportunities, with varying hours and wages. Through a streamlined leadership and workforce development training program, job matching, and ongoing mentorship and support, SOMOS will activate a strong network of community workers with the expertise and skills needed to advance their own economic sustainability.



# POTENTIAL BENEFITS

## *Benefit to Customers*

- Provide efficient, effective access for public institutions, nonprofit organizations and private sector entities to conduct engagement activities resulting in better understanding of and accountability to the communities in which they operate.
- Serve as a collaborative thought-partner strengthening the capacity of institutions and organizations to enhance their relationships with stakeholders.

## *Benefit to South Bay Communities*

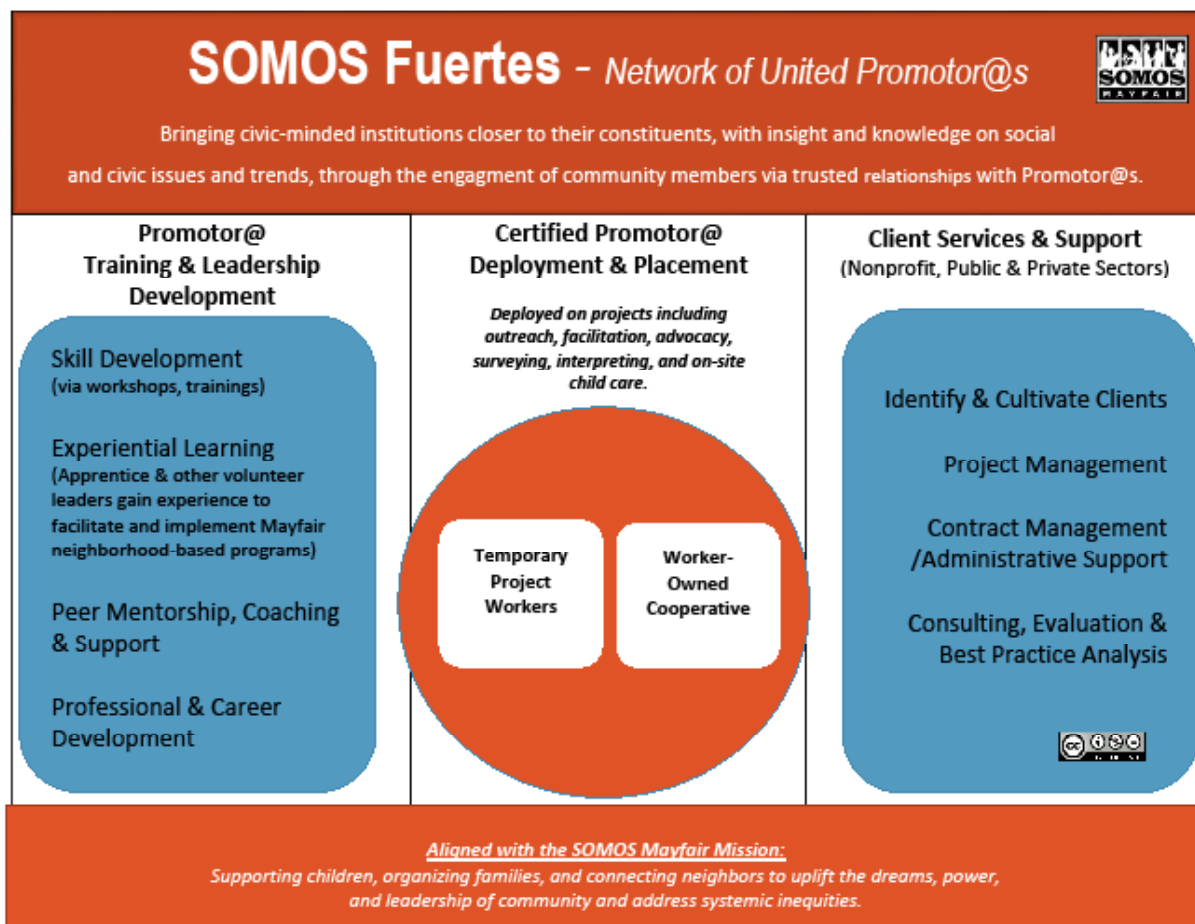
- Advance social justice by seeing engagement activity findings utilized in ways that result in improved policies, practices, and/or other positive changes in community conditions.

## *Benefit to Residents*

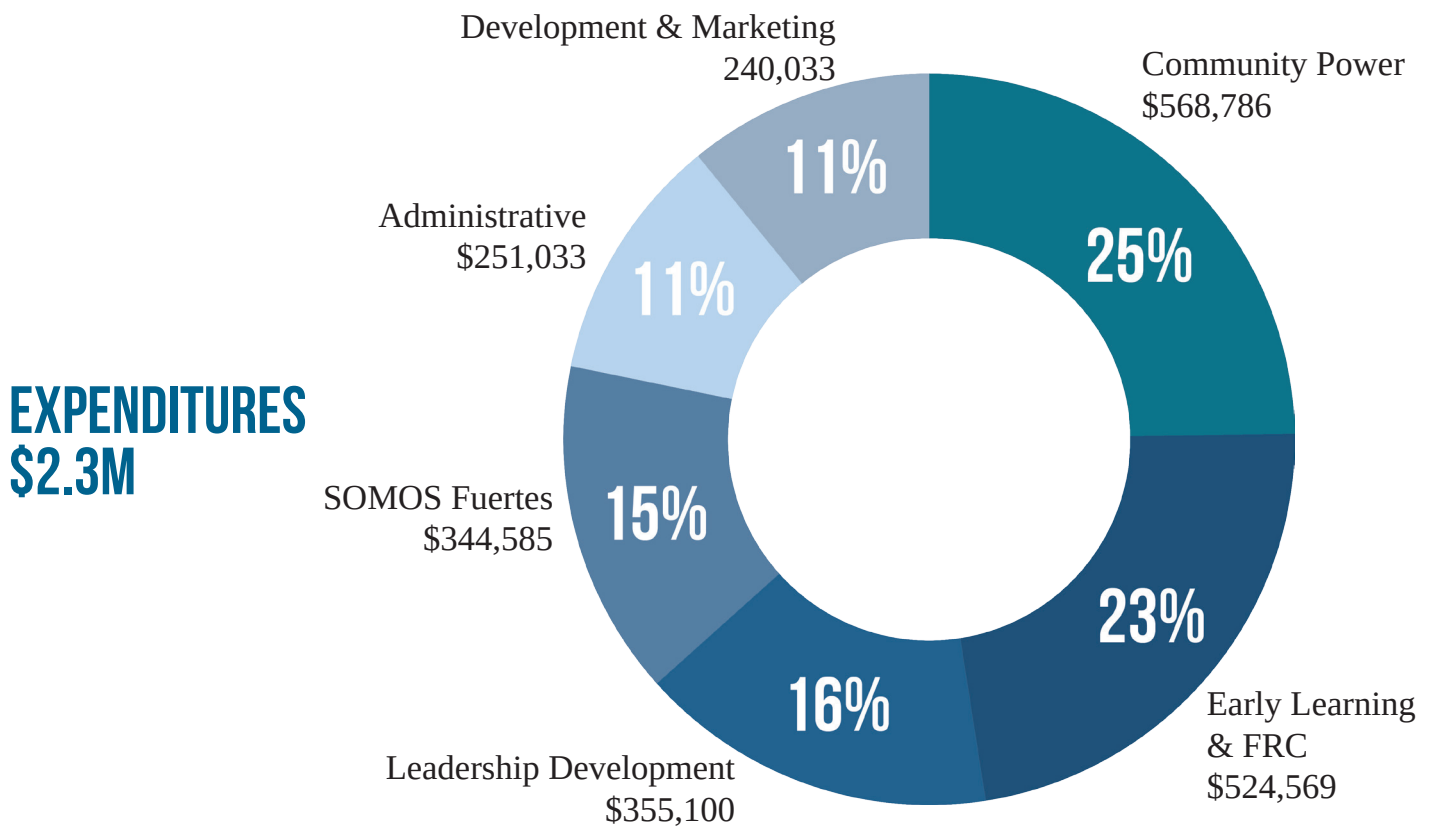
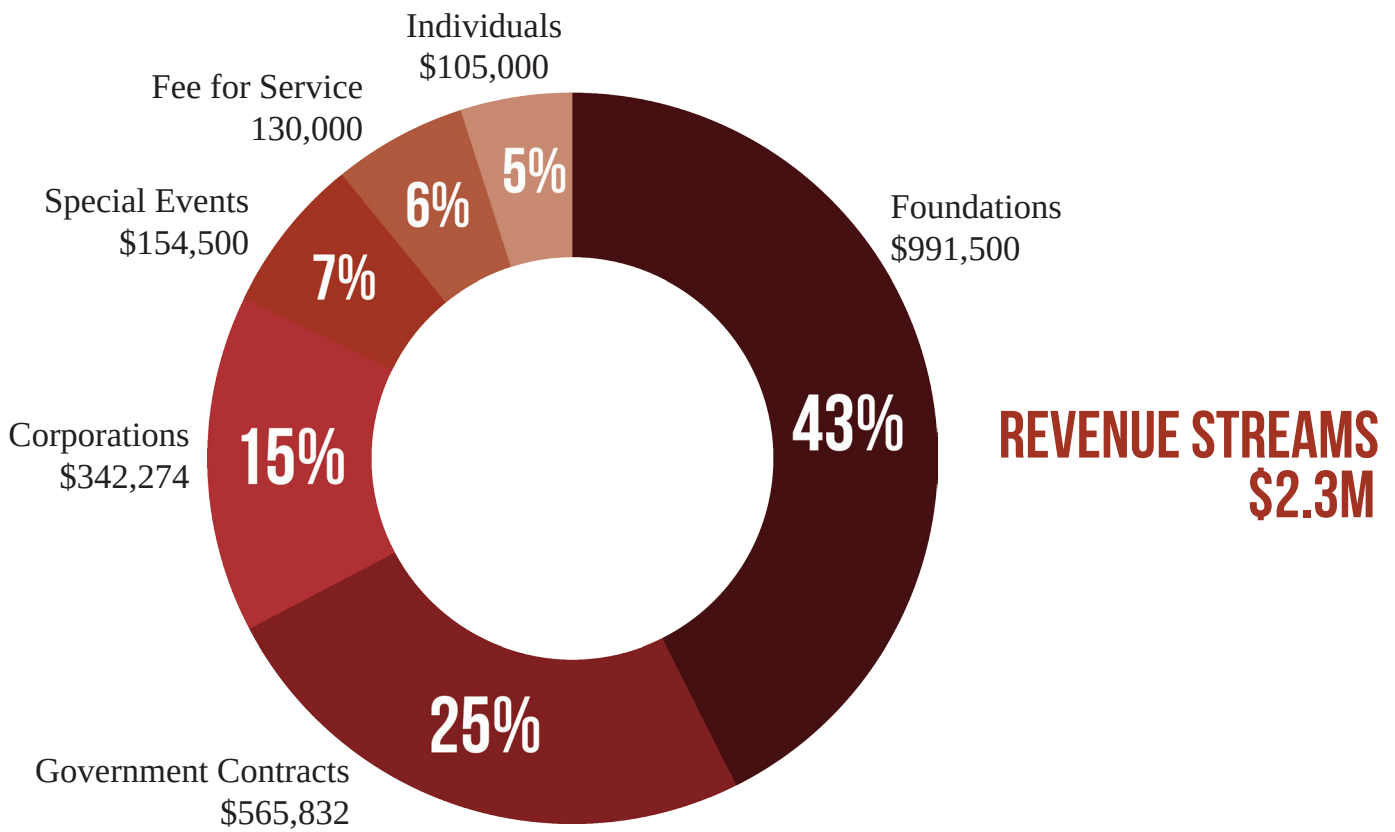
- By exchanging ideas on civic and community matters of importance to them, stakeholders exercise their personal power and take steps to support their own family's success.

## *Benefit to Workers/Cooperative Owners*

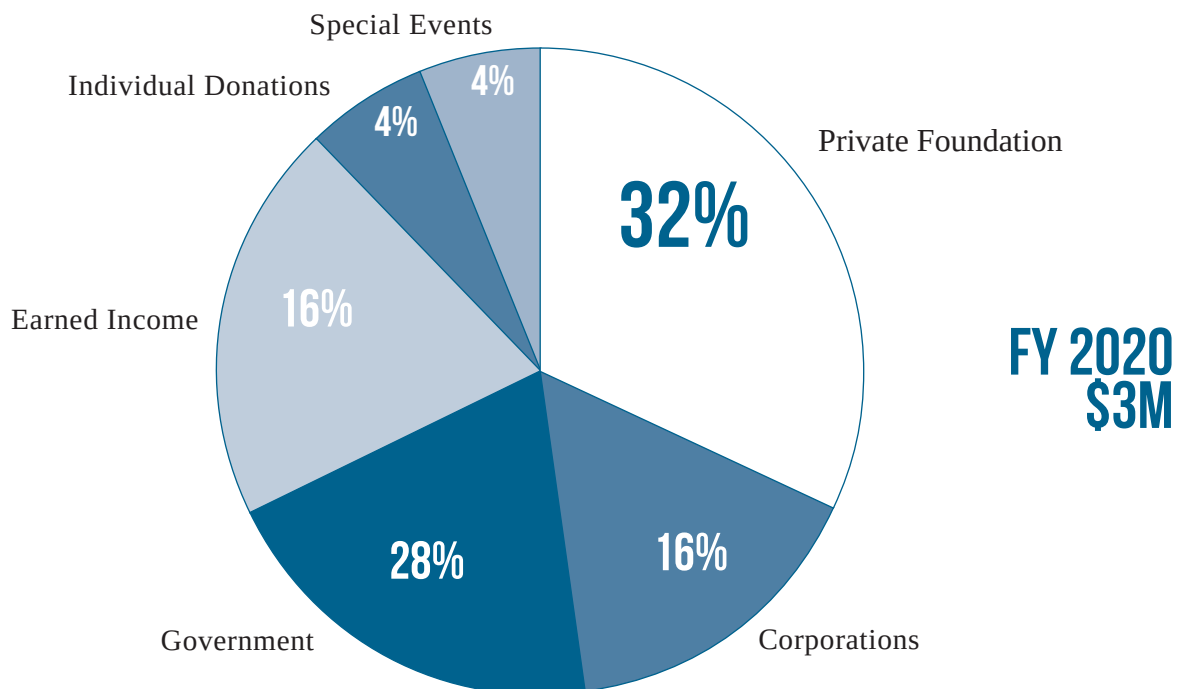
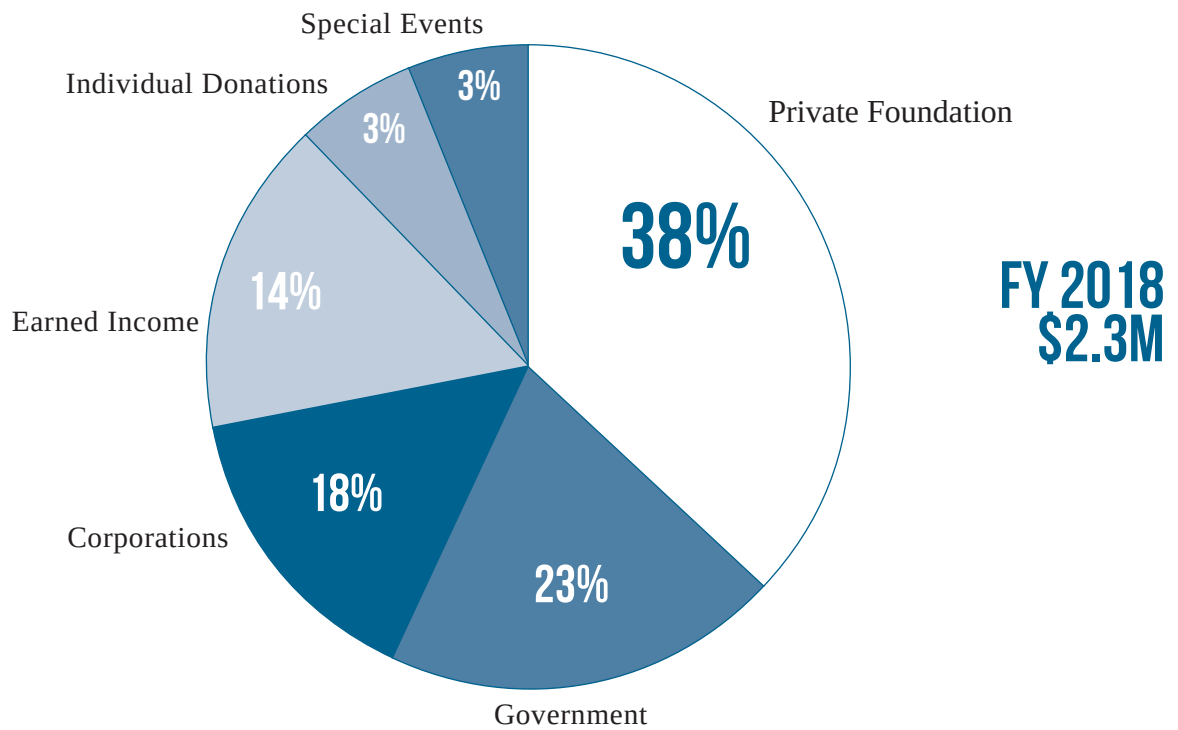
- Provide fair compensation at a living-wage level to Promotores for their work as a means to supplement to their household income. Provide a business ownership stake for immigrants of many backgrounds through a democratically-governed cooperative.



# FY17 ACTUALS



# FINANCIAL OUTLOOK



# OUR TEAM



## EXECUTIVE TEAM

Camille Llanes-Fontanilla, Executive Director  
 Kathy Ericksen, Finance and Operations Director  
 Jessica Paz-Cedillos, Director of Resource Development  
 Saul Ramos, Director of Programs  
 Zelica Rodriguez-Deams, Associate Director

## ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Angelica Lujano, Family Resource Center Manager  
 Brenda Andrade, Fund Development Associate  
 Chelsey Cartwright, Marketing & Comm. Coordinator  
 Patrick Soricone, Manager of Strategic Partnerships  
 Victor Vasquez, Organizing Manager  
 Viridiana Reyes, Office Manager

## MAYFAIR PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Amelia Post  
 Ana Vargas Lau  
 Dilza Gonzalez

Gabriel Hernandez  
 Maria Martinez  
 Maria Urquiza

Nayeli Sedano  
 Victor Vazquez

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Ling  
 Quency Phillips  
 Tali Levy  
 Alisha Rodrigues

Erika Rivera  
 Norma Alvarez  
 Rocio Luna  
 Ruben Navarro

# OUR SUPPORTERS



Bank of America



CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

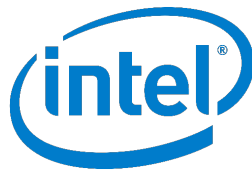
Department of Housing



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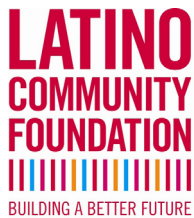


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## **ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS**

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San Jose, CA 95116

## **CESAR CHAVEZ FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER**

Located on the  
Cesar Chavez Elementary School Campus  
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San Jose, CA 95116

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