

FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER

communityworks
JUSTICE DEMANDS HUMANITY

Seasonal stories and ways to engage

COMMUNITY WORKS & OAKLAND UNITED BEERWORKS

Pour It Forward!



One dollar will be donated to Community Works for every drink sold, all day at Oakland United Beerworks!

FRIDAY, 11/20

262 2nd Street, Oakland CA



Hang with the Community Works Team and join the raffle from 4:30pm-till!







Hope Is Local: Giving Season Is Almost Here!

When the world feels overwhelming, it's easy to wonder how one person can make a difference. But meaningful change often starts right here in our own communities, with people coming together to care for one another.

This year, Community Works is launching a **$30,000 year-end giving campaign to provide healthy food for young people, families, and survivors of harm** participating in our programs. A nutritious meal or snack can make a real difference, creating space for connection, healing, and growth.

And this year, we're doing things a little differently. **We don't just want your donations. We want your friends!** We're inviting our supporters to help grow the circle of people who believe in the power of community. Give what you can, bring a friend (or ten!), and help us spread the word.

Stay tuned for more details as we kick off the giving season. Together, we can turn hope into action, one connection and one meal at a time.

Hope is local. And so is your impact.

THE POWER OF ADVOCACY:
TURNING COMMUNITY VOICES INTO LASTING CHANGE



Staff Spotlight: Katarina Sayally, CW Advocacy and Organizing Manager (far left in photo, with other fellows from the Solis Policy Institute), brings over 13 years of experience advancing transformative policy at the local, state, and federal levels to improve the lives of system-impacted youth. She has helped lead key legislative victories such as the Placement Stability Bill, the closure of California's Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and revisions to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights. Katarina holds a Bachelor's degree from Mills College and a Master's in Social Welfare from UC Berkeley. Her deepest education, however, comes from lived experience growing up in group homes and juvenile detention, which shaped her political awakening and lifelong commitment to justice.

This is the **legislative round-up** covering the results of the 2026 session, particularly those that CW sponsored or otherwise played an active role in advocating for (noted by **).

Wrapping up this legislative session, we have many victories to celebrate and build upon.

The following bills were signed into law by Governor Newsom:

- AB 1645 (González) Humanizing and Uniting Generations Safely Act- strengthens visitation for people incarcerated in state prison, including protecting the ability of incarcerated people to hug their loved ones
- ** AB 1646 (Bryan) Juvenile Facilities: Visitation- protects the right of youth in juvenile facilities to hug their family
- ** AB 1886 (Ramos) Wards: Probation- extends end endless probation protections to foster youth
- AB 1932 (Ransom) C.R.I.S.E.S. Grant Pilot Program 2.0- expands grants supporting community-based organizations that provide non-law-enforcement crisis response and violence-prevention services

- ** AB 2318 (Elhawary) Law Enforcement: Facilitating Medical Care- prohibits officers from denying, delaying, or obstructing appropriate care
- ** AB 2428 (Kalra) Criminal Fees- eliminates specified criminal legal system fees and outstanding debt
- SB 1285 (Wahab) Juvenile Court: Procedure- helps prevent dismissed cases from continuing to affect young people
- SB 1342 (Wahab) Criminal Records: Relief- expands automatic relief, making it easier for eligible people to clear their records

A couple of bills we were tracking died during the legislative process:

- ** AB 1922 (Lowenthal) The Do No Harm Act- would have protected medically vulnerable incarcerated patients and juveniles from the risks of shackling
- AB 2064 (Sharp Collins) Discrimination: Criminal History- would have added criminal history/incarceration as protected status under civil rights discrimination laws for housing and employment
- AB 2095 (Lee) Employment Discrimination- would have strengthened existing fair chance employment laws
- SB 498 (Becker) CDCR Phone Call Time Limits and Messaging Costs- would have prevented tablet removal or restriction for phone calls over the time limit and made messaging free

The following bills made it through the legislative process but were vetoed by Governor Newsom mostly for financial reasons:

- AB 464 (Aguiar-Curry) Sexual Assault in Prison- would have extended the statute of limitation for civil claims
- ** AB 2122 (Kalra) Infractions, Warrants, and Penalties- would have limited use of bench warrants reducing the possibility of jail time for low level offenses/inability to pay
- AB 2247 (Elhawary) T.H.R.I.V.E. Act- would have created a pilot program providing mental health support to young survivors of gun violence

All of these losses point us towards more work to advance these important causes in the next legislative cycle. Lessons learned! We believe that we will win! And we are busy brainstorming new bill ideas that center Community Works values, participants, and vision.

WELLNESS, THEIR WAY:
A YOUTH-INSPIRED SUMMER OF HEALING

In their first summer with us, each PW youth starts their healing journey by completing a narrative piece regarding their experience of being children whose parents were/are incarcerated/detained/or deported, or themselves being incarcerated, as well as learning how to be better advocates for others who share their experiences. PW youth advocated for having more programming during this Summer and thus the PW Wellness series was born by Laura Rubio, LCSW. In order to show that healing is an ongoing journey and that there is no one “right” way of healing, PW youth were introduced to a variety of healing modalities such as equine therapy, art therapy, yoga, soundbaths and reiki, and mindful eating. All healing facilitators were mindfully vetted due to their experiences with working with teens and TAY, with carceral-system impacted folks, as well as being representatives of the Bay Area and BIPOC community.

Throughout the summer, PW youth took pictures of their experiences through donated Instax Cameras and used these images as they explored the mindfulness practice of junk journaling to reflect on their summer experiences. At the end of Summer, 100% youth participants surveyed shared they would participate in the summer wellness program should it be offered again!










Coming Full Circle
Ansar's Journey from Participant to Facilitator

At Community Works, we believe that meaningful and lasting change begins with recognizing the lived experiences, strengths, and cultural perspectives of the people we serve. By honoring participants' expertise and investing in their growth, we help create pathways from surviving to thriving—building individual capacity, strengthening community connections, and empowering people to become leaders and advocates for change. Ansar El Muhammad's story brings this commitment to life.

Ansar El Muhammad's journey is a powerful example of personal transformation and the ongoing process of change. In 2017, Ansar began as an in-custody participant in the RSVP program. Through his dedication and commitment, he progressed to an intern and eventually became a full-time Certified Domestic Violence Facilitator, serving participants in RSVP at County Jail #3 as well as in community-based classes.

Following his release, Ansar took important steps toward rebuilding his life, including entering substance abuse treatment. He continued his journey by volunteering with various organizations throughout the San Francisco Bay Area including Full picture Justice and leading Restorative Justice Circles, finding meaningful ways to give back and support his community.

Ansar exemplifies what it means to remain committed to the process of change. His journey reflects the importance of accountability, continued personal growth, and staying connected to a strong support system. Through his ongoing relationships with the RSVP MANALIVE crew and other community organizations throughout the Bay Area, Ansar demonstrates that transformation does not end upon release—it is a lifelong commitment.

His story is a testament to the power of second chances, community support, and turning lived experience into an opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of others.



Your Support Creates Space for Healing

Every day, Community Works brings people together to build connections, foster healing, and create pathways to a brighter future. Your generosity helps make this work possible. Make a gift today and join us in building a future where justice heals.

DONATE NOW