

# Culture-Shifting Narrative to Reclaim Our Cities & Democracy



## MISSION

The East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE) advances economic, racial, and social justice by building a just economy in the East Bay based on good jobs and healthy communities. We address the root causes of economic injustice by developing strategic alliances among community, labor, and people of faith to build power and create change with low-income workers and communities of color.

## VISION

A sense of belonging. At the very core of human nature is the desire to be valued, to feel at home, and to have community. Our jobs, our homes, and our neighborhoods should be sanctuaries. Places where everyone's work and contribution is valued. Places where people come together to eat, to love, and to share in life's celebrations and heartaches. And places that embrace our rich cultural, racial, and economic diversity.

## THE CHALLENGE/EBASE'S ROLE

Instead of feeling valued, 2017 was a year in which low-income workers, people of color, women, immigrants, and queer folks were under increased attack by the Right. However, we did not buy into the scarcity mentality that there are not enough good jobs, affordable homes, or places of safety for us. The greatest defense has been offense, and EBASE has led our communities to not only resist, but advance local policies that begin to reclaim our cities and our democracy.

We are heartened by EBASE's local victories on good jobs, sanctuary cities and workplaces, and racial justice in 2017. Additionally, the electoral wins across the country in which people of color people organized to show a very different side of America than the current Right wing government – an America we can get behind. These victories are a reminder of what is possible.

In 2018, EBASE will continue our work grow the Bay Area's economic abundance and create safe, healthy communities that embrace the humanity of all people – honoring our full experience and developing our brilliant minds, compassionate hearts, and divine spirits.

To accomplish this, EBASE takes a bold, transformational approach to organizing. We move beyond policy wins to create strong solidarity among people of color, women, immigrants, queer folks, and other oppressed communities. That solidarity nourishes our sustained fight to create a just economy and democracy.

Join EBASE in 2018 to make it transformational, watershed year for Progressive values in which we prioritize the needs and voices of communities of color, women, immigrants, and queer folks. Together, we will create a sense of belonging for all.

## **EBASE'S GOALS**

Our primary objective is to create economic, racial, and gender justice in our workplaces, communities, and government.

- **EBASE is changing our expectation of work** – particularly for low-wage jobs held primarily by people of color and women. All work is valuable, and everyone's contributions are necessary to make our economy run smoothly. All working people should have dignity in the workplace and be paid enough to succeed and flourish.
- **EBASE is fighting for homes and a right to stay.** Whether you are a black family who has lived in the area for generations, a recent immigrant, or a queer couple, we all have the right to decide where we live. For that we need equitable development so there is more affordable housing and stronger renters' rights to ensure there is no displacement of low-income families and communities of color.
- **EBASE is standing up for immigrants' right to sanctuary** in our homes, our workplaces, and our cities. Immigrants should be able to live and work peacefully – free from fear of deportation and being separated from our families and homes. As the same time, EBASE is creating greater opportunity for immigrant contributions to our economy.
- **EBASE is dismantling systemic economic racism** that holds so many of us down. By breaking down racism and racial barriers to employment, housing, education, etc., we create equal opportunities for people to succeed and to participate fully in our economy. Our vision is a Bay Area where our racial and cultural diversity is truly embraced.
- **EBASE is breaking through gender inequities.** We are lifting up women and gender nonconforming people up to break down pay inequities and gender-based violence. Women – particularly women of color – disproportionately hold low-wage jobs. We should have enough to raise our families with dignity and feel safe at work and in our communities.
- **EBASE is empowering grassroots leadership within low-income communities of color.** To create an equitable economy on the state and national level, leadership needs to be grown locally and bubble upward so that there is true representation and movement towards more just policies.
- **EBASE is tearing down the myth of scarcity.** There should be no losers when we are surrounded by so much abundance in this country and particularly in the Bay Area. If we invest our resources fairly, everyone should have a good job, a thriving neighborhood, and robust public services like education and health care.

## **EBASE'S 2018 WORK TO RECLAIM OUR ECONOMY & OUR DEMOCRACY**

For 2018 to be a watershed year for economic, racial, and gender justice, we must collaborate. One of EBASE's greatest strengths is our ability to convene large-scale, multi-racial, multi-sector coalitions. The act of bringing together workers, community members, and people of faith in this movement creates a sense of belonging and a voice in our future. Our collective fate is shared, and we shall overcome through our solidarity.

Through our groundbreaking coalition work, EBASE is driving local campaigns that seed the ideas, policies, and grassroots leadership that will spread throughout the entire Bay Area region, and bubble up to the state of California and the nation. In 2018, we will continue to organize locally to have national impact in two key areas of work: addressing jobs throughout the Port of Oakland and its related industries, and suburban organizing in Contra Costa County.

## **PORT OF OAKLAND GOOD JOBS POLICY TO DRIVE EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The world of commerce is transforming from brick-and-mortar stores to delivery-to-our-doorsteps, and the Port of Oakland is at the hub, driving development in the area. To ensure this economic boom is as much a boon for Oakland's workers as it is for business, we must pass a Port-Wide Jobs Policy. The Port's seaport and airport rest on public land and should serve the public good with quality jobs. EBASE and its community coalition, Revive Oakland, have already won landmark agreements in discrete areas of the Port. A Port-Wide Jobs Policy would provide economic opportunity for tens of thousands of local residents and set the pace for region.

Given the Port's central role in commerce, establishing a floor for good jobs on its property would have a ripple effect to related industries throughout the region. The Port will attract new business, economic capital, land development, and talent, but it must serve existing residents. Workers construct the buildings, keep goods moving, and provide service all along this path:

- Construction: jobs to build warehouses, A's stadium, hotels, and the Bus Rapid Transit line
- Warehousing: packers, forklift drivers, labelers, lumpers, truck drivers
- Service: housekeepers, food service workers, stadium and airport concessions workers, airport baggage handlers, and janitors

### **A Good Jobs Policy to Benefit Oakland & the Region:**

EBASE and Revive Oakland's agreements in discrete areas of the Port can serve as a model for a Port-wide policy to raise standards for workers and level the playing field for business:

- Living Wages so people can support our families and stay in our homes
- Local Hire to ensure that Oaklanders benefit first from development
- Ban the Box to prevent recidivism and discrimination against formerly incarcerated workers
- Stable, Full-time Employment with restriction on temp agencies and inconsistent work
- Voice on the Job so that workers are freely able to form unions and collectively bargain
- Subcontractor Accountability so that the policy applies to ALL employers on Port property
- Training and Retention Support at the West Oakland Job Resource Center
- Community Oversight to ensure that the policy is being followed

## **ADVANCING MULTI-RACIAL ORGANIZING IN THE SUBURBS**

With thousands of low-income people of color are moving to Eastern Contra Costa County in search of affordable homes, EBASE has expanded our organizing to include suburbs. In 2017, EBASE and our community coalition Raise the Roof, won our first victory in Contra Costa County with the passage of an immigrant sanctuary-style policy in Concord. It marked not only the first legislative win, but groundbreaking multi-racial, multi-sector organizing in a more conservative suburb.

In 2018, EBASE and Raise the Roof will continue our organizing on multiple fronts: affordable housing, immigrant protections, good jobs to create a more equitable and inclusive Contra Costa County. We will also work to empower low-wage voters of color to create a democracy that better represents the shifting demographics of the County.

**Housing:** Our homes have become less secure as the Bay Area's housing crisis mushrooms eastward to the suburbs, and there is a proliferation of federal immigration raids and housing racism. Raise the Roof works to pass affordable housing, rent stabilization, and renter protection policies so that all Contra Costa residents have a safe, affordable place to call home.

**Immigration:** Raise the Roof works to pass and enforce sanctuary and "safe haven" policies to prevent vulnerable immigrant community members from being ripped away from our families and the lives we've built. We are doing this not only through Raise the Roof but the CIRA Coalition which brings together community and faith groups to focus exclusively on immigration.

**Good Jobs:** Low-paying jobs are primarily held by people of color, women, and immigrants -- with many unable to make ends meet. This poverty comes at a great personal cost to people's health, our families' security, and our community's stability. Raise the Roof supports a good jobs agreement at the Naval Weapons Station redevelopment project -- the largest public development in Contra Costa County. There, we can set the economic pace for the County so that people to put food on the table, keep a roof over our heads, and pay for health care.

**Equitable Democracy:** To have an equitable and inclusive Contra Costa County, all communities need a voice in government. Communities of color make up a large portion of our population, yet 95% of our elected leaders are white. EBASE, Raise the Roof, and Lift Up Contra are partnering to level the playing field so that candidates of color and those with less financial resources can run competitive campaigns. Through Lift Up Contra Costa, EBASE is also increasing voter engagement in low-income communities of color to ensure we have input into policies which affect us.

## **MOVEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE TO BUILD OUR BASE**

While we are driving these two areas of work, EBASE is also strengthening movement infrastructure by playing a leadership role in key local and national coalitions. Working in coalition has taken on greater importance as the challenges facing low-income workers, people of color, women, and immigrants grow.

- **EBASE is at the center of The Resistance.** As one of the convening organizations of Bay Resistance, a large network of tens of thousands of individuals and organizations, we are safeguarding our people against the dangerous and draconian policies of the current Right Wing regime. We monitor and fight back in the streets, in congregations, and with our pocketbooks.
- **EBASE is at the center of faith-rooted organizing.** We lead the Faith Alliance for a Moral Economy (FAME), connecting clergy, lay leaders, and people of faith to the Movement for economic and racial justice. This creates a moral lens that cuts beyond policy and politics.
- **EBASE is deepening civic engagement in low-income communities.** As a key partner in Oakland Rising, Bay Rising, and Lift Up Contra Costa County, we are organizing voters in low-income neighborhoods to pass local policies that raise wages and fight displacement. This is critical at a time when federal policy ignores and even attacks our communities.

- **EBASE is a driving force in the local immigrant rights community.** We are a key convening partner in immigrant rights coalitions in both Alameda and Contra Costa counties. These coalitions are taking on greater importance as immigrants are facing unprecedented attacks, and families and communities are being ripped apart.
- **EBASE is connecting local issues to the national movement for economic justice.** We are one of 17 organizations that comprise the national Partnership for Working Families. We are working with our sister organizations across California to help pass legislation on the statewide level to counteract the federal Right-wing agenda. Having national coordination of campaigns also allows us to connect the dots on key issues surrounding jobs, immigrant rights, and racial justice.

## **EBASE’S APPROACH: TRANSFORMING OUR LIVES BEYOND VICTORY**

Through both our campaign and movement infrastructure work, EBASE supports the empowerment of grassroots leaders. We take a “whole worker” approach and recognize that working people are neighbors, friends, voters, congregants, faith leaders, parents, partners, activists, and volunteers, and we face a myriad of barriers to success, including systemic racism, gender discrimination, and the consolidation of resources at the top.

EBASE works at the intersections of economic, racial, and gender justice. The vast majority of low-wage jobs in the East Bay are held by people of color and women. By raising the floor on these jobs and creating pathways to higher earnings, particularly for those shut out of the economy such as formerly incarcerated and immigrant workers, we begin to break down racial barriers and gender inequities.

We have a more equitable society in which everyone can achieve success. That success allows people to take care of our families, stay in our homes, and maintain a higher quality of life. This leads to a sense of agency, dignity, pride, stability, and feeling positive that everyone’s contribution is valuable in our communities and our economy as a whole.

Finally, by taking a transformational approach to organizing, we educate, empower, and grow the leadership of people of color and women so we stand firmly at the center of EBASE’s campaigns and play a more active role in our democracy, leading to greater power at the ballot box. This sets the pace for the East Bay region and percolates upward.

**EBASE’s victories have far reaching impacts that go beyond policies. On the deepest level, by working to transform our world together, we create a sense of possibility and hope. A sense of inclusion and community. And a sense of belonging.**