

# A BRIGHT LIGHT IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Successful coalition building and data-driven approaches in Arizona advance immigrant rights in divisive political landscape.



*This Executive Brief accompanies the release of the One Arizona Evaluation Study, conducted by Shiree Teng and Professor Tom K. Wong, Ph.D. and commissioned by Unbound Philanthropy and the Four Freedoms Fund. The evaluation's primary audience is funders of immigrant rights, immigrant integration, and civic engagement; it also has valuable findings and insights for pro-immigrant advocates who are interested in learning from the successful civic engagement model that One Arizona has developed.*

*In 2010, Arizona was ground-zero for anti-immigrant sentiment and legislation, particularly following the passage of the SB 1070 "show me your papers law." Ten organizations banded together to form One Arizona, aimed at promoting full electoral participation of Latino citizens, particularly among infrequent and first-time voters. The evaluation demonstrates how One Arizona's voter engagement efforts have consistently increased turnout, are changing the way Latino and other citizens view democracy and take part in it, and are nurturing a new generation of collaborative activist leaders.*

## THERE IS HOPE.

At a time when an extraordinary rhetoric of hate and intolerance defines our political climate, a narrative of fear towards newcomers threatens to divide us, and the Supreme Court is deadlocked on moving forward President Obama's Executive Actions on immigration, we are deeply moved and lifted up by the story of One Arizona. This is a story of a standout coalition of community partners that is transforming Arizona into a model for Latino civic engagement and political empowerment. Against the heated debate of building more walls along the southern border, One Arizona is a bright light and a reason for hope.

Through a combination of passion, perseverance, and grit, One Arizona has contradicted the status quo that immigrants cannot change incredibly divisive political situations. It has shown that a group of organizations working for the same goals can move from competition to alignment, and that they are stronger together.

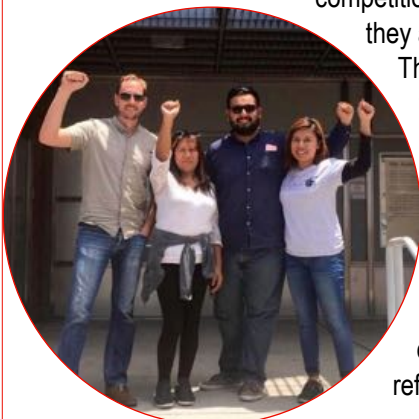
This evaluation also tells us that effective, data-driven strategies, along with targeted capacity-building support, provided the soil in which the coalition could thrive. While the struggle for the rights and dignity of migrants and refugees is a long, complex,

and at times discouraging process, One Arizona has created significant, measurable changes in Arizona.

After five years of continued funding, One Arizona's two leading funders—Unbound Philanthropy and the Four Freedoms Fund—commissioned this study and evaluation, seeking to document its accomplishments, assess the partnership's impact on the state's pro-immigrant movement, and reflect on lessons learned from the One Arizona experience to inform future philanthropic investments and strengthen the effectiveness of its future activities.

The evaluation was conducted by Shiree Teng, who brings 30+ years of experience as a social and racial justice practitioner to her work as an evaluator, and Professor Tom K. Wong, Ph.D., assistant professor of political science at the University of California, San Diego, whose research has been used by policymakers both in the U.S. and in Mexico, as well as by organizations that serve immigrant communities.

The evaluators conducted 28 structured one-on-one interviews with One Arizona's key stakeholders, executive committee, and staff; facilitated a focus group with a dozen participants; and analyzed all relevant voter tactic and turnout data from 7 election cycles. This Executive Brief summarizes the key learnings of the evaluation: 1) Background and political context of One Arizona's formation; 2) Tactics that have allowed One Arizona to endure and remain effective; and 3) Necessary next steps for continued success.



## 100+ YEARS OF DISCRIMINATION IN THE MAKING

The current discriminatory climate for Latinos in Arizona has deep roots, stretching back to the Mexican-American War when the border was established between the two nations, ceding to the United States one-third of Mexico's territory. The timeline on the right chronicles key chapters of the repressive history that followed.

Over the course of the next 100 years, through economic displacement, racialization, and prejudice, Mexican-Americans in Arizona were divested of all political and economic influence, relegated to inferior status, and used as scapegoats for the massive unemployment and low wages during the Great Depression. This catalyzed a call to protect "white citizen workers" and Arizona unions and politicians pressured the U.S. Department of Labor to start a nationwide repatriation campaign during which some half million Mexican immigrants, and thousands of Mexican-Americans, were deported, planting the seeds for future discriminatory policies in Arizona and nationwide.

In 2004, Arizona voters passed Proposition 200, requiring individuals to produce proof of citizenship before registering to vote or applying for public benefits. In 2005, Arizona became the nation's epicenter of anti-immigrant rhetoric and policy when Maricopa County's Sheriff Arpaio—by now the national face of anti-immigrant sentiment—began loudly promoting his department's aggressive practices targeting suspected undocumented immigrants. The same year, a loose confederation of armed citizens calling themselves Minutemen drew attention by engaging in vigilante border patrols that called for "hunting down" migrants.

The climax came in April 2010, when Governor Jan Brewer signed SB 1070, at that time the country's strictest anti-immigration bill, which notoriously granted police officers power to detain anyone they suspected of illegally being in the country.

While vocal immigrant rights organizations had been working hard to respond to these attacks for decades, their isolated tactics and political disenfranchisement could not provide the platform they needed to fight back at the scale they needed. Anger fueled a new organizing strategy.

*"I started organizing professionally in 2003. For the next five years, we got our asses handed to us. In 2008, a handful of people sat back and said, 'We don't think we know how to fight this fight.'"*  
- One Arizona partner

### 1848

End of Mexican-American War establishes a new border between nations, ceding one-third of Mexico's territory to the US. Native Mexican population is slowly relegated to inferior status and divested of political and economic influence.

### RAILROADS + EXTRACTION

Mexican-Americans lose ranches and family farms throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the transcontinental railroad allows financial interests from the East Coast and Western Europe to convert and export the state's natural resources.

Railroads, copper companies, cotton farmers and ranchers dominate Arizona politics, pitting "Mexican" and "Anglo" workers against one another to break up unions and keep wages low.

### GREAT DEPRESSION + WORLD WARS

Scapegoating and racial exclusion continue as much of Arizona's Anglo population places blame of skyrocketing unemployment on "alien" Mexican workers.

### 1972

AZ Gov. Jack Williams signs bill barring farm workers from striking and boycotting during harvest season. "As far as I am concerned, these people don't exist."

### 1992

Maricopa County elects Joe Arpaio as sheriff, the self-declared "America's Toughest Sheriff", and he remains one of the most prominent political figures in the state.

### 2004

AZ voters pass Proposition 200, requiring individuals to produce proof of citizenship before registering to vote or applying for public benefits. Proof includes a state driver's license issued on or after October 1, 1996, the date from which Arizona licenses were required to contain social security numbers.

### 2005

Arizona becomes epicenter of anti-immigration rhetoric when Arpaio loudly promotes his department's aggressive practices targeting suspected undocumented immigrants and a loose confederation of armed citizens calling themselves Minutemen engage in vigilante border patrols that call for "hunting down" migrants.

### 2010

AZ Gov. Jan Brewer signs SB 1070, at that time the country's strictest anti-immigration bill, which grants police officers power to detain anyone they suspect of illegally being in the country. This is followed by a bill banning ethnic studies in state schools.

## ¡Ya basta! Enough is enough!



### ONE ARIZONA EMERGES

Ten community organizations come together, agreeing on a collaborative pact to increase civic engagement, power, and safety for Arizona's vulnerable Latino and immigrant communities.

## ONE ARIZONA EMERGES

The signing of SB 1070 sparked massive demonstrations across Arizona. The backlash had finally arrived: Arizona's history of being a bellwether for anti-immigration policies, laced with ugly rhetoric and policies, created a crisis that galvanized Latino and progressive communities—and helped birth an enduring activist infrastructure. Ten community organizations came together to form One Arizona, agreeing on a collaborative pact to ensure accountability and leverage the best from each community partner.

Decades of grassroots organizing had been carried out mostly in silos. One Arizona was able to help groups coalesce and

*“Good work was happening, but not enough strategy or coordination was happening behind the resources, and resentment was growing across different relationships and organizations, most of it centered on the lack of accountability. We knew we were doing things sloppily and couldn't measure the impact any of us was having in the electoral front... One Arizona offered us a space to leverage collectively for more resources and training, offering a route for clear accountability across organizations.”*

- One Arizona founding partner

move from what was described as “a toxic culture of in-fighting, competition, stepping on each other's toes,” toward a more aligned, collaborative, and united movement focused on increasing Latino voter engagement, turnout, power, and safety for Arizona's vulnerable Latino and immigrant communities. Additionally, One Arizona's work has helped encourage, train, and develop a broad number of young activists, creating a new, committed generation of leadership.

## FUNDING STRATEGIES CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS

One Arizona represented the first coordinated effort to align advocacy organizations' vision and strategies. The Four Freedoms Fund (FFF) offered critical seed funding at the very beginning for the project to develop in its first two years. FFF listened for, identified, and then invested in three shared areas of capacity building for One Arizona—communications, organizing, and voter engagement training—that lessened the burden on individual organizations. Unbound Philanthropy made its first grant to One Arizona in 2012 and these two funders have been One Arizona's mainstay funding sources.

The following pages highlight One Arizona's successes to date, including nonpartisan year-round voter engagement and changing the way targeted citizens view democracy itself. Reflection and guidance is also offered on what enabled One Arizona to form, endure, and remain effective, and the next steps that are critical to support the coalition's effectiveness in the future.

## CURRENT ONE ARIZONA MEMBERS



NEIGHBORHOOD  
MINISTRIES



# ONE ARIZONA FIGHTS BACK.

## ONE ARIZONA DEPLOYED 3 FOCUSED STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE VOTERS AND INCREASE TURNOUT:

- 1 Target low-propensity Latinos—those who are eligible but haven't registered, or are registered but don't vote.
- 2 Sign up low-propensity Latinos and New American Majority voters for Permanent Early Voter List (PEVL)\* so they can more easily vote by mail.
- 3 Employ door-to-door canvassing and phone banks to encourage those registered to go vote.



## One Arizona's voter engagement efforts have consistently increased voter turnout, particularly among low-propensity Latino voters.

*\*One Arizona focused on getting low-propensity voters onto the Permanent Early Voter List (PEVL) which is widely recognized as an effective way to overcome some of the barriers for low-income voters and voters of color.*

## 2010-2015

### VOTER ENGAGEMENT AND TURNOUT RESULTS

EVEN-YEAR FEDERAL ELECTIONS	DATE	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE IN ALL TARGETED VOTER TURNOUT	INCREASE IN LATINO VOTER TURNOUT	NOTES
2010	November 2	General	10.1%	19.9%	<i>Increase reflects impact of One Arizona strategies. See full report for analysis on voter turnout.</i>
2012	November 6	General	13.6%	19.6%	
2014	November 4	General	6.1%	13.2%	
<hr/>					
ODD-YEAR MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS					
2011	August 30	Phoenix Primary	0.5% to 0.6%	6.4% to 6.6%	<i>Statistics for even-year federal elections focus on low-propensity voters.</i>  <i>The range for 2011 municipal elections reflects results when including robocalls, and when excluding robocalls. 2011 was the only year One Arizona relied heavily on robocalls.</i>
2011	November 8	Phoenix General	-1.2% to -0.8%	4.9% to 6.3%	
2013	August 27	Phoenix Primary	8.5%	12.1%	
2013	November 5	Phoenix General	Ns	6.5%	
2015	August 25	Phoenix Primary	11.1%	17.1%	

*Ns = not statistically significant.*



**3 million**  
ATTEMPTED VOTER ENGAGEMENTS<sup>1</sup>

**1 million**  
SUCCESSFUL VOTER CONTACTS<sup>2</sup>

**126,000**  
UNIQUE VOTERS ENGAGED<sup>3</sup>

**50,000**  
SIGNED UP FOR PERMANENT EARLY VOTING LIST

*See full document for in-depth data analysis of voter tactics and turnout.*

<sup>1</sup> Efforts made to engage a voter (door-to-door canvassing, live phone banking, and mailers)

<sup>2</sup> Numbers of doors opened, phones answered, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Accounts for multiple contact points





## BEYOND THE NUMBERS

**Organizations in the table understood we are much stronger together.**

- One Arizona founding partner

**“The training One Arizona provides is not just how to knock on doors but education on what it means to be a leader and an organizer. They’re **building these young people’s organizational and leadership skills**, cultivating a generation of leaders involved in something larger than themselves. Lots of them are undocumented and can’t even vote and here they are participating in the American democratic process! I haven’t seen that since the farmworker movement and Cesar Chavez.”**

- Elected official

**“There are many individuals who are Dreamers, in the process of fixing their papers, and they’re knocking on doors in 110-degree temperatures, educating people on the right to vote, encouraging them to vote, getting their family members and neighbors to vote: I am here to encourage you as an American citizen to register to vote, to respect the laws of this great country, to **know the important civic engagement of voting.**”**

- One Arizona partner

**“I would not be working in this movement if it weren’t for One Arizona. I was fresh out of the Marine Corps when SB 1070 passed, and I was angry and went to the Capitol. I went from a volunteer to an executive director in less than four years. In helping to transition community members to community leaders, **One Arizona has made social justice a viable career path for young people** who might work for a small grassroots organization and build skills that are relevant and valuable.”**

- One Arizona partner

**“Phoenix is now 40 percent Latino. Eight years ago, before I ran for office, there wasn’t one Latino on the council; we didn’t have a seat at the table. Once I got in, there came two others. **The sleeping giant is growing in numbers—and voting numbers.**”**

- Elected official

**“For me, it moved people from fear to hope, from desperation to intentionality, from despair to courage.”**

- One Arizona partner

## KEY TACTICS SUPPORTING ONE ARIZONA'S SUCCESS

Interviews with key stakeholders and rich data analysis highlight the core ingredients that allowed One Arizona to form, endure, and remain effective, from nonpartisan year-round voter engagement and clear accountability mechanisms to coordinating with groups that had clear advocacy agenda strategies and changing the way targeted citizens view democracy itself. Perhaps most important: One Arizona has effectively supported new and young volunteers to become organizers and assume organizational and movement leadership, by providing a purposeful agenda, skills training, and space to build community.

The strategies shared below are useful for funders and on-the-ground advocates alike.



*"I give a lot of credit to the funders for believing in the possibility to begin with. That risk has paid off. Very quickly we learned there's a path—not just protests and marches, but including a civic engagement path—to engage people in change. Organizations in the table understood we're much stronger together."*

- One Arizona founding partner



## TACTICAL TOOLBOX

### One Arizona's Strategies for Success

#### 1 Implementing nonpartisan year-round voter engagement strategies

In targeting voter registration, early voting, turnout, and voter protection, One Arizona looks to boost the voter share of Latinos and the New American Majority electorate—a “Latino Plus” universe that includes unmarried women, young people, and people of color more broadly—not particular candidates or political parties. For One Arizona, winning elections is not the end—it's the means.

#### 2 Staying focused on expanding the Latino electorate and increasing Latino power

One Arizona formed with a core mission to expand the Latino electorate. As the coalition matured, it expanded to include the New American Majority.

#### 3 Serving as a neutral space where different roles and strategies are respected

The table comprises a range of organizations that utilize strategies ranging from civic engagement to service provision. One Arizona provides a neutral, safe space where partners can discuss campaigns, goals, desired outcomes, and who's doing what.

#### 4 Establishing clear accountability mechanisms that bring order and structure

From its inception, the collaborative created a pact to ensure accountability and leverage the best from each community partner to increase civic engagement, power, and safety for the state's vulnerable Latino and immigrant communities.

#### 5 Having funder partnerships that add value beyond grant dollars, including brokering timely, high-quality, and strategic capacity-building support

From the start, the Four Freedoms Fund and Unbound Philanthropy offered critical seed funding, brokering relationships with key partners to build up One Arizona's hard skills to run an effective field program. Funders listened for, identified, and then invested in shared resources—communications, organizing, and voter engagement training—that lessened the burden on individual organizations. One Arizona received field program expertise to develop a voter engagement and tracking system, as well as support in communications and messaging for the Spanish-speaking community.

#### 6 Using data to inform and adjust field strategies

Thanks to a sharp focus on hard data, which is embedded in the collaborative, organizing efforts are numbers-driven. This has made it possible to project and measure impact and better design campaign strategy. One Arizona community partners began tracking how they talked to individuals, and became experts at data management, seeing what worked and didn't work in messaging to the Latino population.

#### 7 Building long-term sustainable political power

As a result of One Arizona's efforts, elected officials and governing bodies are now increasingly aware of the significance of Latino voters' concerns. Officeholders must now be more responsive to a broader segment of Arizona's voting population than they were before, translating into real systems change and a transformed political landscape.

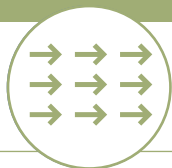
## THE FUTURE OF ONE ARIZONA

Racially charged legislation such as SB 1070 has made Latinos (regardless of citizenship status) feel under attack, mobilizing anger, creating solidarities, and empowering communities. Additionally, the state's changing demographics are creating new and unprecedented opportunities to transform antagonistic rhetoric and policies into a more hopeful and democratic future for the majority of Arizona's people. It is predicted that in several years, people of color will have majority-minority status; voter turnout is the key to leveraging this new power of voice and numbers.

One Arizona's experience acknowledges that promoting democratic civic engagement within communities that have experienced widespread discrimination and disenfranchisement is challenging, but is possible. Stakeholder interviews point to key considerations in preparing for the next leg of One Arizona's future and shaping its impact.

*"I see the vision getting bigger and bigger every year so that we can change things around 2020...2020 will be huge for us to show the muscle we have as Latinos at the polls. Given the adversity we have faced politically, the whole country will say: If Arizona can do it, then we can too."*

- One Arizona founding partner



## NEXT STEPS FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS

### Learn and Support One Arizona

- 1 Strengthen and fund One Arizona**

A key next step to strengthening One Arizona is increasing and diversifying its funding base. Crucial to the success of One Arizona has been solid and consistent funding. As One Arizona increases its electoral power and influence, the more organizations and community members expect it to do.
- 2 Continue to expand the Latino electorate while growing to include a New American Majority**

One Arizona needs to be deliberate about how it grows and deepens existing civic engagement work in Latino and immigrant communities as it expands its reach to engage students, women, and other constituencies.
- 3 Test a proactive policy agenda**

Despite the political landscape in Arizona remaining adversarial to Latino and immigrant communities, stakeholders see the logical outcome of One Arizona's growth trajectory to be a shift from a necessary reactive position to a more proactive position.
- 4 Regenerate excitement by being more creative in engaging voters**

As One Arizona sits on the verge of expansion, stakeholders want to see the table get creative in reaching and engaging the electorate to evolve its established tactics.
- 5 Methodically expand to other parts of the state**

By expanding geographically and through partnering with allied communities, One Arizona has a real opportunity to replicate its current success to have major state-wide effects.
- 6 Deepen an intentional leadership-development ladder**

Stakeholders maintain that developing young leaders through One Arizona's infrastructure is one of its biggest accomplishments, and that developing leadership is both an ingrained cultural practice in the collaborative and the key to its future. Stakeholders want to see this work measured to more accurately capture and understand success in this area.
- 7 Pay attention to building the capacity of partner organizations, especially those more nascent**

Some younger or more specialized member organizations have less ability to bring in votes but are nevertheless valuable partners, doing meaningful work. The entire table will be stronger when each individual partner is strengthened.
- 8 Fortify strategic partnerships to advance civic engagement in schools**

One Arizona's partnership with Arizona Student Vote Coalition has demonstrated great success and offers future opportunities with voters who can be activated in schools, and the young people and families who can be reached in this way.



## LEARN MORE. TAKE ACTION.

### 1 READ

The full One Arizona evaluation study and full data results can be found at: [www.unboundphilanthropy.org](http://www.unboundphilanthropy.org)

### 2 MODEL

Learn from One Arizona's successes and challenges and its unique civic engagement model that could be applied in other parts of the country.

### 3 SHARE

We need more success stories. Share this learning with others in the immigrant rights space.

### 4 LEARN MORE

To learn how to get involved, contact:  
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UNBOUND



*Many thanks to Diego Lozano for the photos on pages 7 and 8 in this Executive Brief. All other photos are used with permission by One Arizona.*