How would you describe the past ten months? Tense? Scary? Unsettling? Indeed, many of us have experienced these emotions since the November presidential election. This administration’s sexist and racist rhetoric, mixed with attempts to reverse hard fought movement victories and construct harmful policies, has our emotions working in overdrive. Yet, each week, progressive individuals and organizations fight back to reverse the flow of oppression.

While responding to these moments is crucial, we also need something larger to combat what is happening. Although it may appear that these are momentary attacks on undocumented immigrants, women, the LGBTQ community, or people of color, they are actually well-coordinated movements to systemically strip away civil liberties and disenfranchise people based on race, class, ableism, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity. We cannot fight this administration’s reprehensible platform on merely a moment-by-moment basis.

Over the past 35 years, Crossroads Fund has proven to be adept in supporting both moments and movements—an important combination. From the grants that we give—including the Critical Response Fund, which provides rapid response funding to organizations working on issues relevant to the current political moment—to our long-term relationships with dedicated grantees, Crossroads Fund is a fundamental part of Chicago’s grassroots movement for change.

We need (and thankfully have) a movement of our own. Young people are imagining a different world, and using new methods to tackle old problems, as demonstrated by the Youth Fund for Social Change grantees listed inside this edition. This year the Youth Fund for Social Change grantmaking committee, a group of young activists, gave out more in grants than any previous year. Overall, Crossroads Fund gave out $95,825 through the Youth Fund for Social Change. This is also the fund’s tenth anniversary, which shows our ongoing commitment to organizing lead by youth in Chicago.

We also know that this moment requires us to step up as individuals, and people are rising to the challenge. Our Giving Project demonstrates this. In January, days after the Presidential Inauguration, we invited a group of 18 people across race, across class, and with a multiplicity of identities to fundraise, participate in political education, and give out grants. Over the course of six months, our third Giving Project cohort engaged more than 260 new donors and raised over $60,000 to support our Seed Fund cycle.

Both the new mobilizations and, especially, the long years of organizing and movement work surrounding racial, social, and economic justice continue to pay off. Progress has come out of years of struggle, but those currently in power would like nothing better than to turn back the clock and reverse the gains that have been made. Never forget that it takes both moments of resistance and long-term social movements to change the story. At Crossroads Fund, we will continue to support groups fighting on the front lines to create a better world for all of us through both moments and movements.
Earlier this year, following the realization that the elections had shifted our political terrain in a fundamental way, we sent out a message quoting Kendrick Lamar “we gon’ be alright” as our solidarity anthem. Since then we’ve seen an embodied white supremacist movement re-emerge, devastating loss of life in Charlottesville and Las Vegas, and the effects of climate change with hurricanes, floods, fires, and earthquakes disproportionately impacting poor people and people of color.

And yet, we know that the only way to “be alright” is to continue to fight, to love and care for each other, and to find liberation in the process. And we see our grantees doing just that.

As the Crossroads Fund community, we are acutely aware that the system is not “broken” but in need of repair. Over the years we have challenged the system, dismantled parts of it, asserted our humanity and built a community that understands that all oppressions are indeed linked. We re-launched our Critical Response Fund to address the urgency of the moment in a timely and nimble way. We moved $73,500 to grantees from January to June 2017, a very significant amount for Crossroads Fund. Below is a sample of organizations that have received funding:

Arab American Action Network (AANAA)—When the first Executive Order barring individuals from seven majority Muslim countries from entering the United States was issued, we collectively moved $683,105 to 92 powerful grantee organizations. We hope this list provides a critical educational resource.

Blocks Together is part of the national New Poor People’s Campaign—a campaign fashioned after Martin Luther King Jr.’s Poor People’s Campaign, being led by Rev. William Barber of North Carolina. The focus is to unite poor people, poor-people-based organizations, and faith-based organizations to defeat the penalizing local budget crisis and current economic injustice practices that continue to increase and maintain poverty in Chicago and across the country.

Illinois Women March on Springfield brought together 2,000 individuals, representing over 100 organizations, to Springfield for a fight and for progressive legislation that was being proposed in the spring session of the Illinois Legislature.

Neighbors for Affordable Housing in Jefferson Park’s (NFAH in JP) current program is for a new affordable housing development in Jefferson Park. This development has faced racist backlash and there has been recorded alt-right base building in the community. NFAH in JP are countering this by building an anti-racist opposition and pushing forward their affordable housing project.

As we collectively continue to disrupt the system we are encouraged by the words of Autumn Brown, a trainer with AORTA (The Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance) who was running a training for our grantees the day after the elections.

“I still think back on how lucky I was to be with your grantees in the days immediately after the election, how unfair and self-assured so many of them were in the face of what was happening. I count that day as one that has continued to help me to breathe over the year since.”

We are proud of all of our grantees, our donors, and the Chicago community of resistors. In 2017 we collectively moved $683,105 to 92 powerful grantee organizations. We hope this list provides you the same inspiration we feel when we look at it—we are so grateful to be part of a community that works to build a better world for all.
Parents 4 Teachers is an all-volunteer organization that brings together parents and teachers to fight for quality schools by organizing and advocating for policy improvements. They fight against racism, social and economic inequity, and corporate privatization of public education.

Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky is a sexual and reproductive health care provider and advocate. They work to improve women’s health and safety, prevent unintended pregnancies, and ensure reproductive freedom and access to abortion.

Governance and Accountability

The Prison Liberation Collective is a group of people who have experienced with solitary confinement and are working to end this practice in Illinois prisons. The Technical Assistance Fund supported their work with organizational start-up expenses and fundraising.

Project NIA is a prison abolition organization that offers an alternative to the violence of state and police crime and violence. They use the principles of participatory community justice to reduce the reliance on arrest, detention, and incarceration of youth by promoting the use of participatory and transformative practices. (Ron Sable Award for Activism)

Restore Justice Foundation advocates for fairness, humanity, and community restoration that will end the prison-industrial complex, focusing on a primary focus on youth serving extreme sentences. They create and support policies that allow those who are rehabilitated to go home, and ensure that those incarcerated, their families, and victims’ families have opportunities for healing and justice.

Southsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation (SOUL) is led by people of color on Chicago’s South Side working to build power and then subsequently leverage that power to fight for their own interest and liberation. They focus on criminal justice reform work and racial equity in the community.

Stop Solitary Coalition is a coalition of organizations and individuals working to end the practice of solitary confinement throughout Illinois. The Critical Response Fund supported their work to move legislation to end solitary confinement through the Illinois Legislature, host teach-ins on the issue to raise awareness, and build public pressure for change. (CRF)

Women’s All Points Bulletin (APB) is an independent reproductive health care provider and advocate. They work to protect reproductive rights, organize against the poor and people of color, and continue to fight for an elected Civilian Police Accountability Council in the city of Chicago.

Books to Women In Prison is an all-volunteer organization that provides paperback books to incarcerated women in the U.S. This grant supports their ongoing advocacy work.

The Chicago Alliance Against Racial and Political Repression (CAAPP) works to build a movement that provides education on the role of bond in the criminal legal system, and advocates for the abolition of money bond and other forms of pre-trial punishment.

The Chicago Torture Justice Center (CTJC) was established to address the traumas of institutionalized racism through the implementation of the historic reparations work that the torture survivors of former Chicago Police Department Commander Jon Burge. (SF, TA, GRAM)

Citizen Advocacy Center utilizes community lawyers to engage residents in the City of Chicago, particularly children, in action through community organizing, coalition building, legal advocacy, civic education, and peaceful resolution of disputes. The Technical Assistance Fund supported their software upgrade.

First Defense Legal Aid works in neighborhoods with high police presence to provide free legal counsel to individuals in police custody. In addition, they provide a hotline, “Know Your Rights” training workshops, and adversarial representation. The Technical Response Fund supported their organizing a series of teach-ins on “What’s at Stake” for youth, children, parents, with mental illness, the LGBTQ community, and survivors of police violence.

IMMIGRANT JUSTICE

Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment (AFIRE) is a grassroots community organization that builds the collective power of Filipinos and people of color to organize on issues of social, racial, and economic justice that affect undocumented immigrants, domestic workers, seniors, and youth. Their organizing was key to the passage of the Illinois Domestic Worker Bill of Rights. (SF, CRF)

The Arab American Action Network (AAAN) strives to strengthen the Arab community in the Chicago area by building its capacity to be politically strong. The Critical Response Fund supported rapid response organizing after the first Muslim Ban was implemented. (CRF, YF, Donald F. Erickson Synapses Award)

The Chicago Law and Education Fund (CLEF) provides direct access to legal services, resources, and education using an innovative model. The Critical Response Fund supported them in providing know-your-rights and legal support work to families facing deportation and experiencing fear around the increase in ICE raids. (SF, CRF)

Chicago Religious Leadership Network (CRLN) organizes and empowers people of faith through the use of political organizing, education, and political advocacy—to resist to injustices experienced by undocumented immigrants. They have been leading the work in Chicago around the concept of “sanctuary” in congregations, neighborhoods, and other institutions. (SF, TA)

Community Organizing for a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine is a volunteer-driven organization in DuPage County that is working on issues related to immigration, bilingual education, police accountability, workers struggles, and community organizing. (SF, TA)

No More Deaths is a human rights organization based in southern Arizona that works to reduce the number of deaths of migrants crossing the border. They are led by veterans of the immigration movement.

Northern Illinois Justice for our Neighbors (NIJON) provides free, high-quality immigration legal services, education, and advocacy in Aurora, Chicagoland, and the Rockford area. The Technical Assistance Fund supported them in supporting their financial procedures at the staff and board level. (SF, TA)

Organized Communities Against Deportation (OCAD) works with individuals, families, and communities in Chicago to overcome the system with practices through organizing, advocacy, and direct action. This is done through education, providing resources for immigrants facing deportation, offering legal resources, and working to elect officials to call for an end to raids on immigrant communities. The Critical Response Fund helped them host several know-your-rights training to prepare the community for the increase in ICE raids and deportations, as well as other emergency work. (SF, CRF, GRAM, Lynda J. Tipton Award)

CROSSROADS FUND 2017 GRANTEES

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Proyecto de Acción de los Suburbios del Oeste (PASO) serves west Cook County. They focus on immigration reform, immigrant gentrification in their communities, neighborhood organizing, community civic participation, and other local campaigns against crisis legislation. The Critical Response Fund supported them in advocating for passage of Village Code ordinances in the western suburbs, including Oak Park and Summit.

The Southwest Suburban Immigrant Project’s (SSIP) mission is to organize and mobilize their families in the southwest suburbs, to protect and promote their rights. They do this through a variety of initiatives, including education, civics engagement, and advocacy. (SF)

Chicago Community and Worker’s Rights (CCWR) is an organization led by workers for workers. They are dedicated to educating, building and organizing around the intersections of race, nationality, gender, and sexuality. (SF, SHI)

Affinity Community Services serves African-American lesbian, bisexual, genderqueer and trans people. They support social services and community-building with advocacy/activism, and focus on coalition building, civic engagement, immigration reform, and health and wellness, and leadership development. (SF)

The Broadway Youth Center is a youth leadership project and a basic needs program for LGBT youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability. They provide medical, social, and mental health care services, as well as community, for youth age 12-24. (SHI/100)

Nothing Without A Company produces innovative, thought provoking, quality art that encourages audiences to think outside the box. They provide queer artists with a safe and creative space in which to explore their voices and talents. (SHI/100)

Queer Square Collective is a network of queer artists of color who work for greater inclusion of marginalized artists in mainstream publications, performances and media. They produce community arts programs featuring queer artists of color. (SHI/100)

Pride Action Tank is a results-driven group that addresses challenges facing anti-oppression activists and organizers. They provide support for inquiry, advocacy, and action. Their work focuses on six overlapping areas: racial justice, housing, health, safety, financial security, youth, and aging. (SF)

Transitive Justice Law Project is a volunteer-run collective of lawyers, activists, and organizers committed to gender self-determination and liberation for all trans and gender non-conforming people. The Critical Response Fund assisted them in organizing the 2016 Trans Day of Remembrance, which occurred a few days after the 2016 presidential election. (SF, CRF)

Upswelling Advices uses an individualized, strengths-based approach to build skills and resilience in ways that strengthen and support the LGBTQ community and around Chicago. They provide goal-focused coaching services and offer training to professionals who are interested in working in conjunction with people who are LGBTQ. (SHI/100)

WORKERS RIGHTS

Centro de Trabajadores Unidos (CTU) is an immigrant-run organization on the southeast side of Chicago that educates workers on their rights, develops leadership within the immigrant community, and participates in broader economic, racial, and environmental justice struggles against racism, poverty, debt, wage theft and immigration. The Technical Assistance Fund helped them to revitalize their mission statement and to develop more inclusive language reflecting the growing number of growing immigrant community. (SF, GRAM)

Circles and Ciphers is a youth-led group that fuses restorative justice practices and principles with hip-hop arts and culture. Through school-based programs and community organizing, they develop organizing tools and collective strategies of resistance against racial bias, economic abuse, and other forms of oppression. They provide emergency support for workers’ in crisis, and self-determination of workers. The Critical Response Fund supported them in providing additional community-based know-your-rights trainings to immigrant workers. (SF, CRF)

Healing to Action advances a worker-led movement to fight gender violence in Chicago and beyond. They engage a diverse community of caregivers with a give low-wage worker a collective healing space and organizing support to ignite solutions to fight gender violence in the workplace and beyond. (SF, YF, G1M)

The Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) – Chicago is an all-volunteer organization that supports the rights of sex workers and their communities; works to end violence through education, advocacy, and peer support; and strives to eliminate the stigma surrounding sex work. (SF)

The Street Vendors Association organizes street vendors to ensure that they have access to safe and dignified rights that allow them to work. They successfully advocated and won an ordinance that legalizes street vending and are now working to construct a cooperative kitchen where vendors can share resources. (SF)

United Taxi Drivers Community Council (UTCC), with a mostly immigrant membership base, organizes taxi drivers to fight against lease overcharges, excessive police ticketing, and unequal immigration regulation by strengthening their collective rights. The Technical Assistance Fund supported them in strengthening their financial management systems. (TA)

YOUTH

A Long Walk Home uses art therapy, visual, and performing arts to engage young girls in campaigns to end sexual violence/harassment against women and girls, both in their schools and communities. (YF, Cathy Cohen)

Asata’s Daughters is a grassroots, intergenerational collective of radical Black women who provide monitoring and weekly programs for sex workers. Their work focuses on history and ancestry, self-care and mindfulness, the environment, grassroots organizing, resistance, and activism. They also help connect members to the current Movement for Black Lives. (YP)

Dei Se3 Youth Rising (CDSY) is a summer leadership program for youth who trace their heritage to South Asia and the diaspora. They focus on developing leadership, engagement building for community resilience and youth empowerment. (TA)

Chicago Freedom School works to create a new generation of young people engaged in social justice through leadership development, the arts, and organizing. The Chicago Freedom School Youth Fund supported Project HealUs, which activates and prepares young people to imagine and act on the world they want to build and expand the work of the reproductive justice movement within their communities. (YF)

The Chicago SNCC History Project works to document the history of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Chicago and related social movements. The Critical Response Fund supported Project HealUs, which activates and prepares young people to imagine and act on the world they want to build and expand the work of the reproductive justice movement within their communities. (YF)

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The Warehouse Project and Gallery inspires students in the suburbs of Chicago to become social justice leaders in their communities locally and globally via music, especially hip-hop. (YF)

Youth Empowerment Performance Project (YEPP) seeks a safe environment in which LGBTQ youth of color experience healthy and positive outlets for expression. They meet youth at their place of work to address their struggles, and celebrate their strengths through theatrical performance pieces. (SF, YF, Venetta Gray)

Becoming the Arc is a community organizing initiative that supported them in sending staff to the Fundraising Professionals International Conference. (SF, YF, TA)

CROSSROADS FUND 2017 GRANTEES

CHICAGO YOUTH STORAGE INITIATIVE (CYSI)

The Chicago Youth Storage Initiative (CYSI) was founded by the Pierce Family Foundation, Knight Family Foundation, Polk Bros. Foundation, and Windy City Times. The project is housed under the auspices of the Crossroads Fund. Several additional foundations contribute to CYSI’s funding base. They provide educational, youth, shelter, and mental health care services, as well as community, for youth age 12-24. (CYSI)

Covenant House is the largest privately funded agency in the Americas that provides shelter, food, immediate crisis care, and an array of other services to homeless and runaway youth. They serve over 46,000 young people every year (CYSI)

El Besate’s Translational Living Program at the Puerto Rican Cultural Center is a community-based, grassroots, educational, health, and cultural services organization that provides culturally appropriate, identity-affirming housing for homeless LGBTQ youth age 18-24. (CYSI)

La Casa Norte meets youth and families experiencing homelessness where they’re at and helps them move along to increased stability. They provide access to stable housing and deliver comprehensive social services that act as a catalyst to transform lives and communities. (CYSI)

The LYFE Collective is the future home of the Chicago Youth Storage Initiative and is a community center for youth experiencing poverty and homelessness. The Technical Assistance Fund supported them in building the LYFE Center. (CYSI)

The Night Ministry is a Chicago-based organization that works to provide housing, health care, and human connection to community members struggling with poverty or homelessness. (CYSI)

Northwest Community Development Corporation (NCD) serves low-income northwest suburbs. They provide emergency services, education, and empowerment to people who are vulnerable or in crisis. (CYSI)

Teens Living Programs focuses exclusively on 14-24 year-olds who are experiencing homelessness in Chicago’s south side, and they provide comprehensive, year-round support services to clients that address education, employment, housing, and operate a youth center. (CYSI)

Unity Parenting & Counseling, Inc. has been providing housing and social services to Chicago’s most vulnerable children, youth, and adults for over 30 years. They offer a range of services including substance abuse, domestic violence, foster and kinship care, violence prevention and parenting training, housing for homeless youth and families, and emergency shelter. (CYSI)
BECOME A PARTNER IN CREATING SOCIAL CHANGE

When you give to Crossroads Fund, your gift is pooled with others and becomes a significant resource to foster social change in Chicago and beyond.

Here are some ways you can give to Crossroads Fund:

JOIN THE GIVING PROJECT
and organize with other community members across race and class to raise funds and do grantmaking.

ATTEND OUR ANNUAL BENEFIT
and bring friends!

WRITE A CHECK
and return it in the enclosed remittance envelope. Find out if your employer matches contributions—that is an easy way to make your gift go much further.

BECOME A SUSTAINER
and have your contribution deducted from your credit card monthly or quarterly. As a sustainer, you can take pride in knowing that you are one of our most reliable sources of support.

CONTRIBUTE ONLINE
via our secure service. It’s quick, convenient, and safe—just log on to www.crossroadsfund.org.

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HONOR OR REMEMBER SOMEONE SPECIAL
with a gift in their name.

CO-HOST A HOUSE PARTY
and help us spread the word about the good work of Crossroads Fund to your colleagues, friends, and family.

REMEMBER CROSSROADS FUND IN YOUR WILL, INSURANCES AND RETIREMENT PLAN
and all three are easy ways to have a lasting impact for social justice.

OPEN A DONOR ADVISED FUND
and partner with us to have an impact on social justice issues.

ESTABLISH A CHARITABLE TRUST
to benefit Crossroads Fund and reduce your tax burden.

For more information, please contact Emmanuel Garcia, Development and Communications Manager, at 773.227.7676 or emmanuel@crossroadsfund.org.

THANK YOU CROSSROADS FUND VISIONARIES

These dedicated individuals have included Crossroads Fund in their will or estate plan, ensuring the long-term strength and stability of the fund and leaving a legacy of their values and vision.

Anonymous (3)
Bill Barclay & Peg Strobel
Henry T. Chandler, Jr.*
Ferd Eggan*
Sandy & Mark Ehler
Susan K. Eleuterio & Tom Sourlis
Ruth & Dale Fast
Maggie Gibbs*
Linda Harlan
Neena Hemmady
Barbara Kemmis
Jeanne Kracher & Laura Mc Alpine
Nora Kyger
Nancy Fleck Myers
Susan Nussbaum
Patricia O’Brien
Sheila O’Donnell & Nora Gallagher
Jill Rohde*
Rachel Wallis & Alex Rocklin
Bob Weissbourd
Tom Wilson
Iris Young*
Jaquelyn Zevin

For more information, please contact Jeanne Kracher, Executive Director, at 773.227.7676 or jeanne@crossroadsfund.org.

*in memory

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Seeds of Change
Save the date: April 6, 2018