



# FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION

NEWSLETTER

## BUILDING A NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Committed advocates from 31 cities and counties in 10 states gathered in San Antonio in the first week of October to continue building a movement for voter-approved children and youth funds. This was the fourth national Children's Funding Institute sponsored by Funding the Next Generation and our partner and sponsor, the Children's Funding Project.



### The Power of In-Person

Ten places in California were represented – teams planning local measures and faculty who were veterans of successful measures. It was a chance to share what everyone has learned, brainstorm future plans together, and build the next generation of activists for children and youth. And it was a lesson in the power of in-person connections as evidenced by the picture above of **Nicole Derse**, speaker and consultant to children's funding movement and principal at 50+1 Strategies; **Jim Keddy** founder of Youth Forward in Sacramento; **Monica Mares**, community organizer of Youth Forward; and **Christina Gilbert**, Coordinator of the San Joaquin Children's Alliance. [Link to information from the conference.](#)



**TEAMS FROM FLORIDA, TO WISCONSIN, TO OKLAHOMA, TO CALIFORNIA CITIES AND COUNTIES FILLED THE ROOM**

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY DELEGATION AT TABLE IN FRONT OF THE PICTURE ABOVE.** Says David Fleischman, ED of Child Care Coordinating Council of San Mateo, "The National Conference was helpful on so many levels! For San Mateo County, it provided tools, information, and perspective that are exactly what we need at this point in our planning. We built a stronger sense of cohesion as a team and made connections with the broader community of seekers of public funding for early care and education and other issues affecting children and youth."



**Sandra Taylor** shared her experience managing the Oakland Fund for Children and Youth, collaborating with multiple other funding streams and agencies, and describing the six ballot measures passed in Oakland that support children and youth. The six measures



**Angie Garling**, VP for Early Care of the Low Income Investment Fund, and **Jesus Sanchez**, Founder and Director of Gente Organizada, were

raise approximately \$135 M every year for children and youth. They included: parcel taxes, garage taxes, soda taxes, sales taxes, and budget set-asides.

Some of the lessons learned that were featured in the workshop on Oakland were:

- > A single fund and a single winning campaign are not the final answer to securing adequate funding. Ongoing efforts are not only needed, but are actually possible when a city creates a culture of prioritizing children and youth.
- > Funding measures that originate with community prioritizing an unmet need lead to accountability and transparency demanded by the community after they pass.

Everyone at the conference received the book on Oakland's measures: [A City that Votes for Children and Youth.](#)

featured describing what they did to craft their ballot measures. Angie told of the 100+ stakeholder meetings held in Alameda County to get input on their measure for early care.

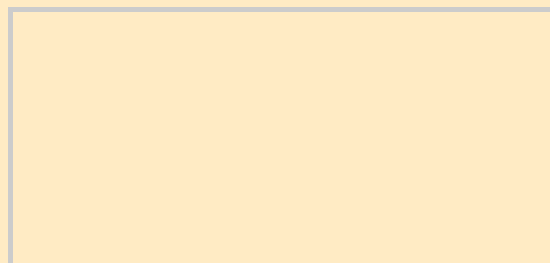
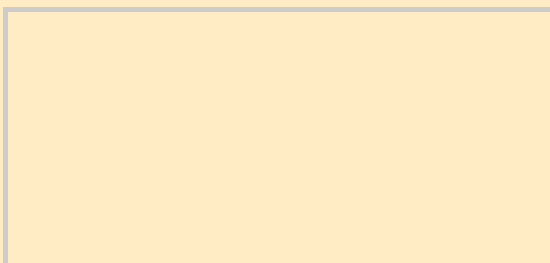
Jesus described how the Pomona measure would combat the legacy and damaging effects of systemic racism. One of the goals explicitly written into the measure: *To ensure young people, and especially Latinx, Black, Indigenous, and youth of color, queer, transgender, and non-binary youth, and youth with physical, mental, intellectual and/or sensory disabilities are provided with gender responsive, trauma-informed, population-specific and culturally-competent services.*

Link to - [Pomona Kids First](#) initiative.



**SANTA MARIA TEAM** writing why investing in kids is important to them. Team members from Future Leaders of America: Gloria Soto, Ivan Vega, Layhearn Tep, and Daniel Gonzalez. Says Ivan, "It was impressive seeing how dedicated everyone is, even those who weren't successful."

**Daphne Cummins** from Marin Promise Partnership said it all, "I loved the **CELEBRATION OF FAILING FORWARD**," noting most groups had failed first in their campaigns but went on to "learn deeply and then adapt and change."





**September Jarrett** from Heising-Simons Foundation "You are here. You have the beginning of the network and the knowledge and now's the time."

"I learned there are a lot of paths forward with these campaigns - it's like water on concrete - it flows and flows in many directions and you never know exactly where it is going to go," says **Christina Gilbert** of San Joaquin County.



**Courtney Baltiyskyy**, San Diego Children's First Collective and YMCA, with **Monica Ramos**, parent organizer from San Diego. Says Courtney, "We laughed, we learned, we're now rolling up our sleeves. The possibility of securing local, dedicated funding for children, youth, families, and child care providers was made real in the presentations and thought partnership at the Children's Funding Institute. Our San Diego team grew closer together and our shared vision for the San Diego region became a little clearer."

## NURTURING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

Pictured here: **Monica Mares**, Community Organizer from Youth Forward in Sacramento and **Margaret Brodtkin**, Founder/Director of Funding the Next Generation.



Monica, a rising star of the conference, addressed the group in the opening panel describing Sacramento's three tries at a ballot measure. She described a final winning campaign that showcased youth, utilized social media, and won endorsements through hard negotiations and some small compromises. Monica's words to the group, "Never, never give up."

**[Link to detailed power point of 4 campaign success stories and overview of national movement..](#)**



## GOOD NEWS AGAIN FROM STATE LEGISLATURE AND CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT

Last month we left you hanging on two issues with a profound impact on our ability to mount local campaigns for kids.

1.To recap: LA County passed a groundbreaking measure setting aside 10% of its local discretionary dollars for community investment; The Sheriff's union and others sued saying the measure was illegal and won in Superior Court; the advocates appealed the decision and won in the Court of Appeals. The unions then asked the California Supreme Court to review the case - AND the CA Supreme Court just declined. **So it is now settled law that voters in charter counties can direct their Boards of Supervisors on how to allocate local resources through set-asides of county budgets!**

2.Recap: Taxpayer associations placed a constitutional amendment on the 2024 California ballot that further constricts ways cities and counties can raise local revenues. In response, the California legislature has approved putting a [constitutional amendment](#) on the ballot that would make it much harder for the anti-democratic taxpayer measure to pass. The Legislature has come up with a brilliant idea - requiring that measures that increase the voter threshold pass by the same threshold the new measures propose.

In other words, if a constitutional amendment requires that all local taxes pass by 2/3, that amendment has to pass by 2/3. **Implications are very hopeful for our children and youth funding movement:** It is likely that we will continue to be able to collect signatures and place revenue measures on the ballot that will

only require a majority vote (instead of the 2/3 that the zealots in the taxpayer movement always strive for.)

**CONSIDER JOINING OUR BALLOT FORWARD GROUP** for community leaders and coalitions considering a ballot measure for funding for kids. The Ballot Forward group meets monthly to learn and share information about preparing for the ballot. The next meeting will be Friday December 8 from noon to 1:30 - [zoom at this link](#). Contact Margaret Brodkin if you are interested in joining and getting on the mailing list. [Here is the powerpoint](#) on early steps for a campaign, presented at previous meeting. The next meeting will be about local budgets and getting involved in local budget advocacy as a precursor to a ballot measure campaign. Most current members are considering a campaign for 2026.



**Funding the Next Generation** has now officially merged its work with **Children's Funding Project**, our new fiscal sponsor and partner. We are delighted to coordinate our work and build a stronger movement to fund opportunities for children and youth, in California and nationally.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions, ideas or requests for support - no matter how big or small. With a team of some of the best experts in the country, we provide free technical assistance on everything related to local revenue measures for kids and budget advocacy with your city or county.

**Margaret Brodkin, Founder Director, Funding the Next Generation**

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[Check out our website full of information.](#)

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