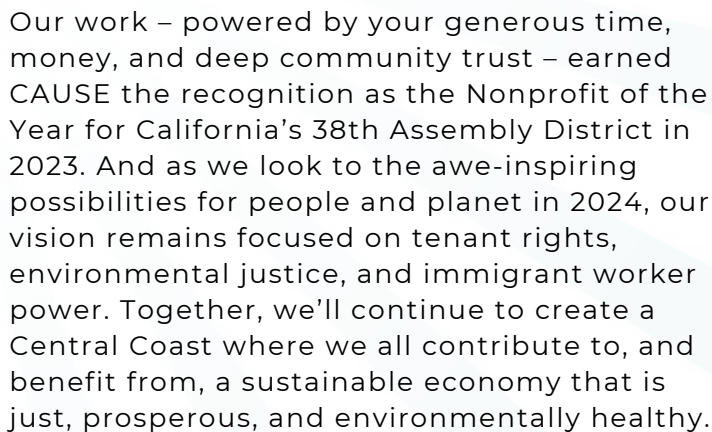




2023 marked exciting new beginnings for CAUSE. As we transitioned into our new leadership roles as Co-Executive Directors, we continued to build our team to position CAUSE to solve the challenging issues of today and prepare for the social justice battles of tomorrow.

We've got so much to celebrate from last year! We won the opening of a new farmworker resource center, stronger tenant protections against unfair evictions, rules to clean up diesel exhaust in neighborhoods near truck routes, and so much more. Through it all, we worked to transform the landscape of our communities – growing leaders to shift power on the Central Coast and investing in our local movement ecosystem. Despite some of the toughest challenges facing our base – working immigrant families and young people color – grassroots organizing builds our strength, resilience, and voice.





# BUILDING IMMIGRANT WORKER POWER

In 2023, CAUSE continued to build immigrant worker power on the Central Coast. Our years-long organizing for resources to support workers facing labor violations came to fruition with the opening of the new Farmworker Resource Program in Santa Barbara County. The mobile resource center will help thousands of farmworkers access public services, and help ensure their labor rights are protected. CAUSE's worker education efforts in 2023 also included our Dar a Luz program and monthly wage clinics in Santa Maria with California's Labor Commissioner, Lilia Gracia-Bower. Throughout the year, CAUSE informed over 1,300 community members on pregnant and postpartum farmworker paid leave to avoid pesticide exposure. We also hosted clinics in partnership with the Labor Commissioner for workers to avoid wage theft that is painfully common in immigrant communities.

CAUSE and MICOP also continued to convene Alianza Campesina, a coalition formed during the COVID-19 pandemic to support farmworkers organizing and striking for livable wages. In response to the collective community mourning following the workplace deaths of two Central Coast farmworkers, CAUSE came together with MICOP to plan a vigil and provide a space of healing and joy at an event named *La Cultura Cura*. The event brought together over 100 Santa Maria community members to honor and celebrate farmworker families.



# ORGANIZING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Our movement for climate resilience and environmental justice in the most impacted neighborhoods activated youth throughout the region. In a historic victory, CAUSE youth leaders from Oxnard were part of a years-long, statewide effort to pass the Advanced Clean Fleets Rule. The new rule will begin transitioning cancer-causing diesel trucks to zero-emission alternatives meaning families living near ports and warehouses will live longer, healthier lives. In Santa Paula, youth leaders successfully advocated for funds to make their high school more resilient to climate change.

One of CAUSE's largest campaigns of 2023 was our effort to shut down the Ormond Beach power plant, which was scheduled to close in 2020 because of its environmental harm. CAUSE mobilized South Oxnard to demand state regulators keep their promise after years of failing to shut down the plant. We collected over 1,200 petition signatures and activated over 60 residents to share with state regulators their experience living near a polluting power plant. Although the Energy Commission chose to keep the plant open for three more years, the outpouring of community engagement and national news coverage kept the pressure on for the state to close the power plant in 2026. CAUSE's environmental justice campaigns of 2023 activated youth to stand up to polluters and fight for our communities' health.



## ADVOCATING FOR HOMES FOR ALL

CAUSE led the way for tenant rights and housing justice in 2023. Across the region, we organized for local solutions to the unprecedented housing crisis impacting working families. Through months-long efforts of organizing tenants to bravely share their stories, we won new protections at the city and county level of Santa Barbara from “renovictions”, bad-faith practices to evict tenants for cosmetic renovations. The new regulations closed loopholes that have allowed corporate landlords to buy and renovate buildings as an excuse to push families out of their homes. And we witnessed a positive ripple effect with local cities like Carpinteria and Goleta adopting policies we’ve won in neighboring cities. Last year, we also joined a statewide push to strengthen eviction protections across California through SB 567, which was successfully signed into law.

The housing justice movement grew rapidly across our region. Our renters town hall in Santa Paula brought together over 50 tenants to learn about their rights and support housing justice in the city. In Ventura, we worked to require developers to build more affordable homes in the city. CAUSE also launched the Ventura County Housing Coalition, a partnership of community organizations and affordable housing developers working to put a countywide housing bond on the ballot. In Oxnard, we followed up our historic win of rent control by providing “Know Your Rights” information to over 1,000 families so that newly enacted policies actually protect tenants.

## GROWING OUR MOVEMENT ECOSYSTEM

In 2023, CAUSE helped transform the landscape of our communities by shifting power on the Central Coast through growing leaders and investing in the infrastructure to civically engage communities who are often neglected. Last year, CAUSE expanded the longstanding Justice Leadership Institute – in coalition with FLA, MICOP, and the FUND – to prepare 25 local community leaders to serve in civic leadership positions and we connected those leaders with the coalition’s new Central Coast Civic Engagement Table. The table is an initiative to engage and mobilize the community to vote so that leadership is reflective of and accountable to our people. CAUSE also worked to make elections more accessible and locally representative. The city of Santa Paula became the final city where we organize to adopt district elections, giving a stronger voice to grassroots campaigns and underrepresented neighborhoods.

CAUSE also co-created a multi-day organizer training program for organizations throughout the region, developed 40 youth leaders through Camp CAUSE, and built up the skills of 16 leaders through a six-month intensive summer fellowship. CAUSE’s role remains as pivotal as ever in our movement ecosystem – an ecosystem that’s more resilient than ever despite some of the toughest challenges facing our base of working Latino families, immigrants, and communities of color.







# YOUR SUPPORT POWERS CAUSE

Help CAUSE organize for housing and environmental justice, and immigrant worker power by making a recurring or one-time tax-deductible donation at [causenow.org/donate](https://causenow.org/donate)

Additional Ways to Give:

- Donate gift of stock
- Leave a Lasting Legacy for Social Change by Joining our Seven Generations Giving Circle by including CAUSE in your planned giving and estate planning

Contact [Stanley@causenow.org](mailto:Stanley@causenow.org) for more information

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