

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Sustainable
Economies
Law Center

LEGAL SERVICES

Provided cooperative training to over **80 Latinx cooperators** through our *Cafecitos Legales* program this year, with participants hailing from Oakland to Arizona to Colombia.

Responded to the pandemic by moving our legal cafes online, thereby reaching **350+ coops, mutual aid groups, nonprofits, land trusts, and other social enterprises**.

Hosted 32 legal cafes and hosted our first ever national legal cafe with the Cooperative Professionals Guild.

Shared legal **strategies for worker control** during the pandemic.

Provided movement-based legal support for **land justice, reparations-based, and land rematriation projects** across the country.

Served clients like the **San Francisco Bay View National Black Newspaper** to help them transition from a corporate model to a cooperative model.



NEW STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS



Hasmik Geghamyan

Board Secretary



Deseree Fontenot

Board Member



Alejandra Cruz

Staff Attorney



Dorian Payán

Co-Director of
Radical Real Estate
Law School



adélàjà simon

Co-Director of
Radical Real Estate
Law School



Hope Williams

Co-Director of
Radical Real Estate
Law School



Christine Hernandez

Co-Director of Radical
Real Estate Law
School



Mwende Hinojosa

Director of
Communications and
Strategic Storytelling



Itzel Nuño

Workplace
Democracy Project
Coordinator

RADICALIZING THE LEGAL PROFESSION

Launched the **Radical Real Estate Law School** and **recruited 4 awesome apprentices** who now co-direct the program. They hosted the 3-day **Teachgiving Series** with collaborators from POOR Magazine, The Homefulness Project, activists, and policy makers. Check out press coverage of the Radical Real Estate Law School in **The Mercury News**, **The Oaklandside**, and **Next City**.



5 solidarity economy lawyers joined our 28 Legal Fellows, expanding legal support for co-ops into OR, VT and MA. Fellows convene regularly, took a 3-day deep-dive to sharpen their co-op lawyering skills, and accessed funds to work directly with workers launching co-ops in Portland, Chicago, Boise, Atlanta, and SoCal.

290 legal professionals joined our Law4EconomicDemocracy.org platform to learn, teach, share and support each other to serve the movement for economic democracy.

Hosted the **Black Capital Matters Interview Series with Elizabeth L. Carter and Law4EconomicDemocracy**, a series about "democratizing business capital" through a spotlight on people within the Black capital formation space.

Hosted 9 summer interns who hosted teach-ins on the how to pool resources and the history of mutual aid.

RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Published the **Mutual Aid Legal Toolkit** after hosting four teach-ins and Q&A sessions with mutual aid groups around the country.

Published the **Legal Toolkit for Commercial Tenants** with Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Organized **#RadicalRealEstateWeek**, engaging hundreds of lawyers and community members interested in radical homeownership, fighting land grabs, and eliminating implicit bias in land law.

Trained 45 volunteer lawyers, law students, and apprentices by allowing them to shadow legal cafe consultations.

Launched our monthly **Legal Beehives for Legal Cafe Volunteers** in April to foster sharing, collaboration, and mentorship, by collecting and chewing on the rich array of legal issues and questions that come up at our Legal Cafes.

Updated and/or published **seven bite-sized legal guides**: How to File Taxes as an LLC in California; How to Obtain a Seller's Permit in California; 10 Things to Consider When Starting a Fiscally Sponsored Project with a Partner; How to Exit a Fiscal Sponsorship; What to do if Cooperative Members are Employees; How to Comply with AB5; and How to Have Employees.

Added **three CLE courses** to our online collection.

POLICY & ADVOCACY

Helped draft and pass SB 1079 to prioritize housing for communities over corporate interests.

Coordinated the formation of the **Worker-Owned Recovery Coalition** to ensure that worker-owned businesses are included in California's economic recovery efforts.

Hosted two Policy Cafes (modeled after our Legal Cafes): How to Write a Ballot Initiative; and Direct Action for Community Control.



Organized an **impromptu meeting** with NoBAWC at the beginning of the pandemic to help worker coops in California know how to access local, state, and federal resources to keep their shops going.

Worked with **Initiative for Energy Justice** to develop policy resources for a just transition to an equitable and renewable energy economy.

INCUBATED PROJECTS

The California Alliance for Community Composting, which we incubated to support the growth and diversification of community-based composting, has left the nest and is now administering a \$1 million grant program for compost enterprises!

Collective Action and Land Liberation Initiative is an institutional launching pad and educational platform for building out Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities' capacity for community self governance and neighborhood development.

Cooperative Professionals Guild advances cooperative legal and accounting expertise by creating a national peer support network, convening educational conferences, maintaining an online resource library, and fostering ongoing networking and training among cooperative professionals

East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative is a new multi-stakeholder cooperative model to transform land and housing.



INCUBATED PROJECTS

People Power Solar Cooperative is piloting, learning from, and educating communities about a model of solar development that actively engages everyday people in building and owning solar projects.

Repaired Nations educates, organizes, and empowers low-income Black youth in the Bay Area to launch co-ops for sustainable economic security through shared ownership and control of housing and businesses.

Minnow acquires farmland to make it available and affordable to farmers of color by building cooperative farming enterprises, thereby advancing a social, economic, and agroecological transformation of California agriculture to promote social justice and climate resilience.

The Next Egg creates educational resources, financial tools, and communities of practice that help people transform how they plan for economic security and invest their retirement assets in projects that make our communities resilient.



PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS

Our legal work would be meaningless without our partners and collaborators that keep us plugged in to the movement. Below are only some of the organizations that have helped us host teach-ins, create legal resources, advocate for policies, and build relationships.

