



ADELANTE

One Step Teens mobilized to advance social justice for working families in the Santa Clara River Valley.

The generous investment from the McCune and Weingart Foundation made it possible for **One Step A La Vez** to build its capacity to organize and helped reignite its commitment to advance social justice. The ability to hire Maria Robles, as our Community Organizer was key to building our Adelante program, which created a training ground that empowered our teens to find their voice and address issues impacting their lives. Our teens unlocked advocacy and community organizing skills and are on the path to becoming community change-makers.



Adelante Program Impact
11 Adelante Meetings
20 Teens Participated
242 Hours of Training

Successful youth outcomes include:

- Increased Civic Engagement and Political Participation
- Enhanced Leadership and Organizational Skills
- Development of Empathy and Cultural Competency
- Improved Confidence & Social and Emotional Skills
- Stronger Sense of Identity and Purpose
- Improved Academic Achievement
- Access to Career Pathways and Skill Development



**CREATING CHANGE
ONE STEP A TIME**

CAPACITY-BUILDING



- Created a dedicated space at One Step A La Vez for advocacy, organizing, and social justice work. Teens are working on the creation of a logo that will appear in a new mural in front of our Social Justice hub.
- Last Spring we were able to host a site visit with Congresswoman Julia Brownley. This was the first time that she visited One Step A La Vez and met with our teens to learn more about our organization and its impact in the community.
- Last summer, we sent five youth to the Future Leaders of America Camp where they learned leadership and organizing skills.
- Our youth organizer attended the Non-Profit Town Hall meeting and met both Assembly Member Steve Bennett and State Senator Monique Limon. Currently, the teens are currently working with their staff to set up face-to-face meetings. Their staff has attended and participated in our activities which demonstrates interest and support of our work.
- To promote One Step A La Vez and their impact in the community, our Adelante youth attended the Santa Paula Latino Town Hall Awards where they met McCune Executive Director Claudia Armann. Building relationships and making contacts with other community stakeholders is essential to building grassroots support for issues that impact us all. This led to the creation of a database to house contact information of elected officials, government agencies, education and community partners. To date we have 123 contacts and are continuously growing our list which will be used for strategic communications.
- By utilizing our database, Adelante has played a vital role by mobilizing community resources at public events hosted at One Step A La Vez. This is essential to strengthening the trust we have with the community, which is a strategy that will propel our organizing efforts moving forward. For example, at our Farmworker Appreciation Day, we had information and resources provided by the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, Community Action Ventura County, El Concilio Family Services, Farmworker Resource Program - Ventura County Human Services Agency, FoodShare, Friends of Fieldworkers, House Farm Workers!, MICOP, United Farm Workers Foundation. We have continued this strategy to engage community partners at our Back to School Drive, Fall Festival and the Santa Clara River Valley Pride.
- One Step Staff and Teens attended the Cesar Chavez March and Community Resource Fair in Oxnard to honor Cesar E. Chavez and the continuous work to advance social justice for farmworker communities.
- Last summer, our Community Organizer and teens attended the CAUSE General Assembly at UCSB to train and inspire community organizing efforts and build relationships with other key community stakeholders.
- To continue its commitment to supporting LGBTQ+ Equality, Adelante teens attended Santa Clara River Valley Pride.
- To promote Adelante and the social justice work being conducted by our teens, four teens performed community outreach at the Dia De Los Muertos events in Fillmore.
- To learn about government structures six teens served as election observers during the 2024 Presidential Election and received education around the importance of voting and creating change in our democracy through civic engagement.
- One Step Staff and teens attended the Gathering for Justice Conference in Oxnard to learn about the values championed by the civil rights movement in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- To learn more about the resources available to the community, especially those requiring assistance with tackling immigration issues, four Adelante youth attended Swap Meet Justice held at Oxnard College. Co-founder Vanessa Frank was able to provide a personal tour which was helpful in learning more about the services being provided. This is helpful as teens begin to plan and organize an Immigration "Know Your Rights" Forum for the community in February at One Step A La Vez.
- We have been participating with the 805UnDocuFund and ICE Out of Ventura County to join the coalition that's working together to protect and support our immigrant communities in response to Trump Administration Policies on Immigration and mass deportations.

SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Racial & Social Justice

- Teens organized a grassroots campaign against the closing of the Maternity and Intensive Care Units at Santa Paula Hospital which is the only full-service medical facility in the Santa Clara River Valley. The community was caught off guard by the actions from the Board of Supervisors on the closure of these critical units. These closures are devastating for communities of color who are disproportionately impacted by major health disparities that require timely access to medical treatment. One Step teens mobilized and collected petitions from local community members where data showed that 97.8% of respondents were against such a closure.
- Eight Adelante youth mobilized and spoke at their local City Council meeting about the implementation of AB1955 which requires the State Department of Education to develop resources or, as appropriate, update existing resources for in-service training on school site and community resources for the support of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) pupils, and strategies to increase support for LGBTQ pupils, as specified in the bill signed by Governor Newsom. Even though the City Council has no jurisdiction, conservative Council Members used this issue to invoke public outcry as a political stunt to affect the outcome of the 2024 Presidential Election cycle.
- To ensure the voice of the underserved communities of Fillmore, Piru and Santa Paula were heard, Adelante teens launched an advocacy campaign to increase to community participation in the 2025 Ventura County Community Health Survey which will set public health funding priorities to meet community needs.
- Adelante teens mobilized more than 60+ community to participate in the Mental Health Service Act presentation outlining the changes impacting critical funding sources due to the Passage of CA Proposition 1.
- To better inform our community about social justice issues, we launched Llegó Acción, our email communication action alerts which was sent to 1,326 community members with 49.7% open rate.

Environmental Justice

- Our youth organizer along with our teens have been conducting research as to the effects that climate change is having on our farmworker population. Teens were able to gain education and understanding by conducting interviews to learn more about the conditions impacting their lives and wellbeing.
- Marisol Gonzalez, founder of the Fillmore Youth Conservation Corps, has provided 33 hours of training and technical assistance to eight youth.
- Fabiola Gomez from the National Wildlife Federation provided education and training to 12 teens on environmental justice issues. Teens gained knowledge on issues that affect the farmworker community such as heat, pesticides, fires, and other extreme weather conditions.
- Two teens attended a Public Climate Change Forum at the County of Ventura, where they learned about what our county is doing to deal with climate change as it relates to the impact of extreme weather conditions like fire and wind.
- Six teens met with local policy makers to address the need to develop a Climate Action Plan and the impact that extreme weather conditions are having in the community. On December 19th, Adelante hosted face-to-face meetings with Mayor Christina Villaseñor and Council Member John Garnica from the Fillmore City Council. Teens advocated for the urgent need to adopt a Climate Action Plan and to begin mitigation planning for extreme weather emergencies that are happening right now.
- Adelante teens organized a successful Environmental Justice Forum on Monday, January 27th at One Step A La Vez with 30+ participants in attendance. Teens had breakout tables to discuss climate challenges. The outcome of this forum will lead to enact policy changes at the local level.
- We take great care to protect the socio-emotional needs of our teens as they navigate complex social issues that are sometimes controversial and might invoke unruly behavior. With that said, Adelante youth took a moment to support mental wellness by volunteering at the Santa Clara River Conservancy. Teens took time to build a Mini Nature Reserve at One Step A La Vez and will expand by incorporating a butterfly garden this March.
- Six teens will be attending the 2025 EarthEcho Youth Leadership Summit on February 8th at the Santa Barbara Zoo to expand their leadership skills around environmental issues.





Through careful planning, research, and clear communication, we have been able to build a strong foundation for our Adelante program at One Step A La Vez. Our staff has developed a system for tracking and monitoring our progress. We've built relationships with policymakers and have demonstrated our ability to advocate effectively by elevating the voices of our youth and their families. Our program activities showcase that we are building a grassroots movement to be effective change-makers in the community on issues that are impacting those that are marginalized, underrepresented and underserved.

The goal is aimed at power building by equipping our communities with the tools, resources, and collective strength they need to influence decisions, make lasting change, which includes challenging oppressive systems.

Stand with us as we work to advance justice for working families in the Santa Clara River Valley.



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



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