



Annual Report 2017



A better Alabama for all!

Despite it all, we stand tall.

The last year has been difficult, but with your help, we survived and thrived. Arise always prefers to focus on proactive policies to reduce poverty and promote inclusion. But a tough political landscape forced us to spend much of 2016-17 playing defense.

The threats came early and often. On health care, we worked hard to help beat back plans to slash Medicaid and gut the Affordable Care Act. On lending reform, we fought well-heeled industry efforts to entrench high-cost loans even more deeply into the state's financial landscape. And when we unexpectedly lost some foundation funding through no fault of our own, we had to do those things and many more with fewer resources and a smaller staff. More than ever, it was up to loyal Arise members like you to help protect our gains and sustain our work. We needed you to step up – and you did it in a big way.

We've defied the odds thanks to you.

Faced with a mountain of **challenges, y'all just started climbing.** When the drive to repeal the ACA reached lightning

Arise at a glance

Arise Citizens' Policy Project (ACPP), founded in 1994, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of congregations, organizations and individuals promoting public policies to improve the lives of low-income Alabamians. ACPP analyzes state policies, educates the public on poverty issues and equips members to advocate for a better Alabama.

speed and baffling complexity, folks like you leapt into action. You called, emailed and rallied to send a clear demand to Congress: **Guard the ACA's vital consumer protections and reject Medicaid cuts that would hurt millions of**



children, seniors, and people with disabilities. Your voices, joined with those of countless other advocates across Alabama and across the country, changed the entire narrative on health care. ACA repeal, once a seemingly unstoppable juggernaut, crashed to a dramatic halt in July, giving way to calls for bipartisan efforts to stabilize and strengthen the **health care system.** (And let's not forget your hard work to help prevent deep Medicaid cuts at the state level, too!)

As amazing as your success in saving health coverage for **millions was, you didn't stop** there. Many years of persistent advocacy from folks like you got results in April when Alabama became the last state in the nation to end its judicial override policy,

which allowed judges to overrule jury sentencing recommendations in capital cases. The bill won final (and overwhelming) legislative approval a few weeks after more than 180 Arise supporters came to Montgomery to urge an end to judicial override, and it was the very first bill that Gov. Kay Ivey signed upon taking office.

You're laying the groundwork for even more success to come. **With your support, we're building** public and legislative support for **an end to Alabama's grocery tax,** for stronger consumer protections for payday and title borrowers, for a state ban-the-box policy to help people rejoin the workforce, and for meaningful investments in housing and public transportation. Together, we work to fulfill our vision of a state where everyone has an opportunity to get ahead.

We're building a brighter future together – and we can't stop now.

We've weathered lots of storms this year, and our movement for change has stayed strong. Your generous support once again set new Arise records for giving and individual membership this year. Our influence on Facebook and Twitter grows with every post you share, and every word of support to your friends and family helps us add more Alabamians to **our cause.** **We've won improbable** victories and overcome some big obstacles on the road to a better Alabama. Rest assured that our journey is just getting started.

A letter from Kimble



Dear Arise supporter,

Thank you for the reassurance! The year after our record-breaking 2016 membership surge, you kept the surge going. We weren't sure our new level was sustainable. You proved it is!

In fact, now we've left those long-sought goals in the rearview mirror. Our former goals of 1,000 individual members and a \$120,000 member giving level are now baselines giving us confidence that our advocacy comes from a broad, committed membership.

Your loyal support sustained us when our foundation grants slipped away. As we adjusted to the sudden shift of \$250,000 in health grants to other states in January, the loss of talented staff left the remaining team wondering how we could handle the workload. Thanks to you, member advocacy helped us fill the gap.

You play a unique role in health care advocacy. When we gather to plan our strategies, each stakeholder has a role to play. Our partners look to Arise to deliver the people power that bolsters social media and lobbying messages. We're not the only group with members to mobilize, but our geographic reach is wide, and our members really do their homework.

As you know, this year the health care focus shifted to Congress, which went all out to try to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. That's why we sent more email alerts on the ACA than on any other issue. Your passionate and energetic response was contagious – and it got results.

Health care activism has sprung up across Alabama. Members like you have brought Arise organizing savvy,

policy smarts and advocacy know-how to planning tables up and down the state. The enthusiasm of new activists is revitalizing the movement for social justice. You can help build on that momentum by letting folks know the value of our *Daily News Digest*, our resources and our action alerts.

We see choppy waters ahead. Congress isn't finished with health care, and soon it will charge into tax reform and budget battles that will put low- and middle-income people at a disadvantage. In Alabama, legislators won't have any more BP settlement money to prop up the Medicaid budget for 2019. They'll be desperate for new revenue, but it'll be risky to admit it in

an election year. Our voices of reason and compassion will be essential.

Thank you for speaking out, reaching out, and being an Arise voice in your community. The promise of people power lies with each of us. Let's pay attention, spread the word, and redouble our determination to stand up for our neighbors in such dangerous times. We have to believe that we shall overcome someday.

Yours in hope,

Kimble Forrister
Executive Director

Arise's organizing work

As an Arise member, you understand that decisions made in the State House affect all of us. You support Arise because you believe that low-income Alabamians deserve a voice in developing the policies that affect their lives and livelihoods. Arise organizers work closely with low-income communities to help make their voices heard about unfair state policies and the attitudes that produce them.

We strengthen our coalition by deepening member involvement. Your support allows us to host workshops, listening sessions and other meetings where the public can discuss poverty issues and consider policy solutions. Arise organizers held 109 meetings across Alabama this year.

With your help, we continue to expand our e-advocacy network. It's a quick and effective way to help people learn about our issues, inform others, and advocate for policy change. Our online outreach builds on our in-person work and gets even more people involved in the democratic process.

Arise's policy analysis

Policy analysis is an essential part of our work, and your support helps us keep it going. Our policy team analyzes current

and proposed laws to assess their effects on low-income Alabamians. Arise produced 12 legislative updates, six newsletters and seven fact sheets and issue briefs during our most recent budget year.



Arise's communications

We provide timely, accessible policy information at our website, arisecitizens.org. There you'll find all our fact sheets and other resources. You can get the latest news on poverty issues through our *Daily News Digest* and stay connected with Arise through our email alerts, Facebook (5,000+ followers) and Twitter (2,400+). We spread the word through traditional media, too. In 2016-17, we issued 17 news releases and advisories, produced four op-eds and four videos, and appeared in more than 200 news stories to discuss how better policies can improve lives.

How change happens

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We can't do it without you! Arise thanks the following individuals for tax-deductible contributions received between July 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017:

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In memory of Nancy Brennan:
Kimble Forrister
Richard & Linda Jenkins
Norbert & Judith Lechner

James & Wendy Tucker
Mary Weidler

In memory of Peter Horn:
Stan & Gracie Johnson
David & Susan McAlister
Frank Romanowicz & Bob Hill

In memory of Margaret Solberger:
Nellie Tiller

ACPP thanks the following member groups for their 2016-17 support:

(Note: Most member groups give to our sister organization, Alabama Arise.)

Adelante Alabama Worker Center
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Alabama-Northwest Florida
CJC Services Corp., Gadsden
Environmental Defense Alliance
Independent Living Center of Mobile
Latham United Methodist Church, Huntsville
Progressive Women of Northeast Alabama
Resurrection Catholic Church, Montgomery
Unitarian Universalist Church, Birmingham

ACPP thanks the following businesses for their 2016-17 support:

Beasley, Allen, Crow, Methvin, Portis & Miles, PC
EBSCO Industries, Inc.

ACPP thanks the following foundations and organizations for their grant and contract support in 2016-17:

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Community Catalyst
Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham
Community Foundation of West Alabama
El Dorado Community Foundation
Ford Foundation
Gratitude Foundation
Marguerite Casey Foundation
Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Pointer Family Fund
Stephens Foundation
Temple Emanu El
Rabbi Jonathan Miller Discretionary Account

You are Arise! Connect with us online for the latest updates on the work you make possible:

Website: arisecitizens.org

Facebook: [facebook.com/AlabamaArise](https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaArise)

Twitter: [@AlabamaArise](https://twitter.com/AlabamaArise)



A note from Brenda



Thank goodness for our members! We're always grateful for the financial support of the many individual donors who value our work, but this year we simply can't express our appreciation enough.

While some of our expected grant money got redirected, members like you understood the importance of continuing support for Arise's work. As a result, we saw an amazing 48 percent increase in member giving in just one year!

This influx of additional support kept us going during the difficult days after we had to say goodbye to several talented staffers just to make ends meet. The financial report on this page shows how necessary it was to trim the budget wherever possible while trying our best to maintain the effectiveness and professionalism our supporters rightly expect. We were able to do that because of the outstanding generosity of our members, and again I say, "Thank you so much!"

Several member groups that usually make dues payments to Alabama Arise moved their support to ACPP this year. Two generous corporate gifts also helped shore up funding for the research and organizing that undergird our advocacy work.

We are grateful as well to local foundations who chose to support our advocacy to promote long-term solutions to poverty issues and to national foundations who continue to see the potential for state-level progress. We couldn't do this work without your support!

With appreciation and hope,

Brenda Boman
Development Director



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ACPP financial report

Fiscal Year ended 6/30/2017

Carryover from 6/30/16 \$431,736

INCOME

Dues of member groups*	\$3,553
Individual contributions	180,314
Grants and contracts	454,000
Sponsorships	7,710
Alabama foundations	5,000
Other income	8,174
Total income	\$658,751

EXPENDITURES

Personnel	\$541,505
Office expenses	87,863
Travel/meeting expenses	35,423
Contract expenses	101,762
Total expenses	\$766,553

Carryover to 7/1/17 \$323,934

* Most member groups give to Alabama Arise, not ACPP.

ACPP Board of Directors, 2016-17

Cindy Lowry, President
Alabama Rivers Alliance

Nancy Francisco Stewart, Vice President
Board member at large, Anniston

Sara Wood, Secretary
Board member at large, Montgomery

Carmen Austin, Treasurer
Mary's House, Birmingham

Norman Baldwin
Grace Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa

William Blackerby
Board member at large, Birmingham

Carolyn Foster
Board member at large, Birmingham

Sr. Marilyn Graf
Sisters of Mercy of Alabama

Dollie Hambrick
Board member at large, Montgomery

Andrea Hudson
Bay Area Women Coalition, Mobile

Cesar Mata
Adelante Alabama Worker Center, Hoover

Roger McCullough
Board member at large, Columbiana

Vera Moore
Women As Strength Program (WASP), Birmingham

Alice Paris
Board member at large, Tuskegee

Jim Trumpower
Church of the Reconciler, Birmingham

Chris Wooten
Monte Sano United Methodist Church, Huntsville

ACPP staff, 2016-17

Kimble Forrister, Executive director

Presdelane Harris, Organizing director

Robyn Hyden, Organizer

Stan Johnson, Contract organizer

Shakita Jones, Organizer

David Stout, Special projects organizer

Jim Carnes, Policy director

Carol Gundlach, Policy analyst

Stephen Stetson, Policy analyst

Chris Sanders, Communications director

Rebecca Jackson, Communications and development associate

Brenda Boman, Development director

Wendy Tucker, Bookkeeper

Juliette Thornton, Office assistant

Ron Gilbert, Daily News Digest manager