



Dearest Friends and Supporters,

2017 has been a rollercoaster **year of struggle and growth**. Trump's election on a brazenly white supremacist, anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim platform that attempted to pit working-class people against each other sent shockwaves through our community. We faced heightened challenges of organizing in the face of acute fear, panic, and trauma. But we also saw how **in Alabama, we are uniquely prepared to fight back**. In January, we kicked into gear, hosting a series Know-Your-Rights trainings for affected communities and allies at local churches, mosques, and community centers all over the Birmingham area. We launched the campaign to make Birmingham a sanctuary city. We continued to organize against wage theft and workplace abuses and call out the systemic human rights violations at Etowah, the nation's worst immigrant jail, and we teamed up with pro bono lawyers to free our community members from detention. We fed our souls with arts and culture through hosting our annual Día de Muertos celebration and our first-ever Arts of Resistance training. Check out our full 2017 recap and other updates below.

We also dedicated ourselves this year to growing internally in order to step up our struggle: we secured federal tax-exempt status and raised enough revenue from diverse sources—including significant grassroots support—to become a fully independent, self-sustaining organization. We welcomed dozens of new members to our family, and our team will be growing in 2018 to include a new Workers' Rights Organizer, Administrative Assistant, and Organizing & Communications Fellow!

We have big plans for 2018, and **we hope you will continue to walk alongside us** as we move our communities forward (*adelante!*) toward justice, dignity, and liberation. Please consider [becoming a monthly donor, or making a one-time donation](#) ([bit.ly/donatetoadelante](http://bit.ly/donatetoadelante)) to Adelante to support our work during this critical time.

With love and solidarity,

Jessica Vosburgh  
Executive Director

Marisol Aguilar  
Board President

***“Freedom is never granted; it is won. Justice is never given; it is exacted and the struggle must be continuous, for freedom is never a final fact, but a continuing evolving process...” – A. Philip Randolph***

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## CAMPAIGNS & PROGRAMS UPDATE

### Combatting Wage Theft & Defending Workers' Rights

We continued to organize against wage theft and workplace abuses, taking action in the courts and in the streets. We recovered over \$40,000 in unpaid wages, and obtained U Visa certifications (paving the path toward permanent immigration relief) for Adelante members who were subject to retaliation, intimidation, and sexual abuse in the workplace. After our member Javier was reported to ICE by his former employer in retaliation for claiming his unpaid wages, we were able to get Javier freed on bond and close his deportation case.



### Creating Sanctuary

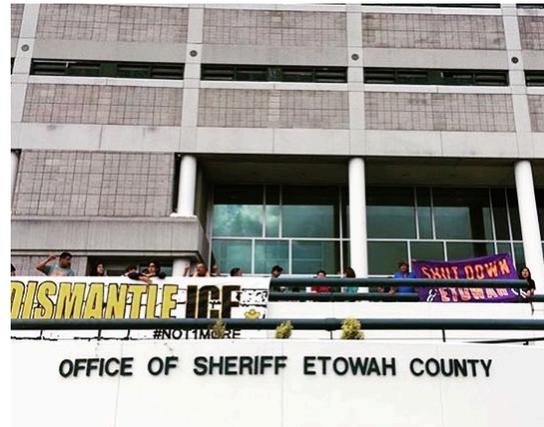
After Birmingham declared itself a sanctuary city in January, we launched a campaign led by Latinx, Muslim, undocumented, DACAdmented, and other directly affected individuals to work with the city to make good on that promise. The City Council is currently considering our proposed ordinance that would ensure NO city resources are spent on carrying out federal immigration enforcement. Learn more at [bit.ly/sanctuary4bham](http://bit.ly/sanctuary4bham).



We also called out places that represent the exact opposite of sanctuary: places like Gardendale, where police and courthouse staff have been actively [colluding with ICE](#).

## Fighting Incarceration & Deportations

We continued to shine a harsh light on the systemic human rights violations at Etowah, the nation's worst immigrant jail, through regular vigils and actions outside the jail, investigation and reporting (check out our [Shadow Prisons report](#) on Etowah and 5 other immigrant detention centers in the South, with Southern Poverty Law Center & [NLG National Immigration Project](#)), media advocacy, and litigation. This month we filed [Adelante v. DHS](#), a federal FOIA lawsuit seeking to force DHS to hand over an internal memo calling for Etowah's closure. To learn more visit [www.shutdownetowah.org](http://www.shutdownetowah.org) and follow @ShutDownEtowah.



As ICE arrests and deportations have surged and grown increasingly arbitrary and cruel, we have started to connect our community members who have loved ones in far-flung, for-profit detention centers with pro bono attorneys from the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) to help them gain their freedom, and we engaged in public campaigns and bond representation to successfully free some of our own members, like Antonio, pictured below with his family and other Adelante members.



## Community Outreach & Education

In the wake of the presidential election, we hosted numerous Know-Your-Rights trainings for immigrant communities and allies all over the Birmingham area. We continued our tradition of gathering our members and supporters at our monthly Assemblies. We have honored our commitment to worker leadership and popular governance by guaranteeing that a majority of our Board of Directors is composed of Adelante members—low-wage and immigrant workers. We know that celebration and revelry are also an essential

part of building community, and we have hosted Kermesses (community festivals), cultural events and parties that have packed Adelante's space to the brims.



## Arts & Culture

More than ever, we recognize the transformative power of arts and culture in our work. We strive to give our community *pan y rosas*, filling our bellies and our souls. For May Day, we joined the international strike and did a giant banner-drop over one of Birmingham's busiest highways during morning rush hour. We hosted our first-ever Arts of Resistance training in October (with [Ruckus Society](#)), with workshops on puppet-making, popular theater, and screen printing for use in direct action and social movements.



We also continued our annual tradition of turning Adelante's space into a giant community altar in November to honor our ancestors and victims of unjust deaths for Día de Muertos.



## Building Regional & National Solidarity

Adelante delegations attended regional and national gatherings in Washington, California, and Tennessee through our partners [Detention Watch Network](#), [National Day Laborer Organizing Network](#) (NDLON), and Southeast Immigrant Rights Network. We also hosted over 50 day laborers and organizers at Adelante for the NDLON Regional Assembly in May.



Share the love! In addition to supporting Adelante, consider donating to some of our fabulous partner organizations doing great work in Alabama and the South: [Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice](#), [CAIR-Alabama](#), [Greater Birmingham Ministries](#), [Guadalupe Multicultural Services "La Casita"](#), [Project South](#), [Southeast Immigrant Rights Network](#). Help us lift up #SouthernPeoplesPower

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## OUR TEAM

This year we said goodbye to our inimitable founding Organizer Yazmín Contreras—but she isn't going far! Yazmín recently joined Adelante's Board of Directors. We were extremely blessed this year to count on the support of Organizing Fellow Cesar Mata, who will soon be concluding his fellowship but will continue to be deeply involved with Adelante. We were also graced with two wonderful summer legal fellows, Jodi Wilson of the University of Alabama and Julie Pittman of UC Berkeley, and Sanctuary Campaign Organizer Victor Spezzini, along with a great crew of interns and volunteers all year round.

We are delighted to announce that our team will be growing in 2018. We have a new Administrative Assistant and Organizing & Communications Fellow starting in January, and we are still accepting applications for a full-time Workers' Rights Organizer ([apply now!](#)).

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*"This year has been my most amazing year as an activist. Working with and for the people, defending our most elemental rights, our civil and labor rights, and stopping the separation of families. The love and thankfulness I have received in return is the greatest form of compensation I could imagine."*

-- Cesar Mata, Adelante member & 2017 Organizing Fellow

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## ADELANTE IN THE NEWS

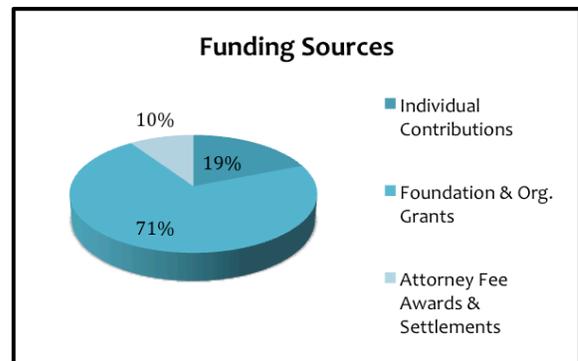
These are just a few of the media pieces from 2017 featuring Adelante's work and our members:

- *Weld*: “[Waiting for the Crackdown: How might the Trump Administration’s immigration policies play out in Alabama?](#)” Feb. 22, 2017 (cover story featuring interviews with Adelante members Marisol Aguilar and Gabriel Diaz)
  - *AL.com*: “[‘ICE Watch’ event teaches what to do if immigration officers raid your neighbors,](#)” May 25, 2017
  - *WBHM*: “[Marchers Urge Birmingham to Become Sanctuary City,](#)” July 1, 2017
  - *AL.com*: “[‘We feel attacked’: Protestors decry immigration enforcement tactics at Gardendale court,](#)” Sept. 15, 2017
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## FUNDING & SUSTAINABILITY

In 2017, we were able to significantly grow and diversify our funding sources. Our main sources of funding came from private foundation and non-profit organization grants, individual contributions (including community fundraiser events, suggested donations for our handmade merch, and donations big and small from our members and supporters), and attorney fee awards and settlements from our successful legal cases in defense of workers' rights.

We currently have 36 recurring supporters who have committed to give to Adelante on a monthly or yearly basis. This is a key source of support that allows us to maintain our autonomy and fierce independence, and to plan for the future.



> [Become a recurring supporter today, if you haven't already: bit.ly/donatetoadelante](https://bit.ly/donatetoadelante)

Adelante is now a 501(c)(3) federal tax-exempt non-profit organization. We have counted on invaluable seed funding, mentoring and assistance from NDLO since Adelante's founding in 2014. Next year will be our first full year as a self-sustaining, independent organization.

We thank the following foundations and organizations for their support in 2017:

Abelard Foundation – East, A.J. Muste Memorial Institute, Ben & Jerry’s Foundation, Defending the Dream Fund (Solidarity Giving), Detention Watch Network, Heising-Simons Foundation, Hill Snowden Foundation, Peace Development Fund, Peggy Browning Fund, Resist

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## ABOUT ADELANTE

### Our Mission & Vision

Adelante unites low-wage and immigrant workers and their families in the Birmingham area to defend our rights, promote our dignity, and pursue justice for all.

We envision a multiracial worker-led movement for justice, dignity and human rights that lifts up the voices of the most vulnerable and excluded workers, and welcomes individuals of all races, ethnicities, genders, ages, sexualities, beliefs, and immigration statuses. We strive to move our communities forward (*adelante*) to a world where immigrants, people of color, and all working-class families are respected and safe at work, in the streets, and where they live.

### Board of Directors

Marisol Aguilar, President

Carlos Alemán, Secretary (*outgoing*)

Lily Andrews, Treasurer (*outgoing*)

Yazmín Contreras (*incoming*)

Karla Pesquera (*incoming*)

Helen Rivas

Benjamín Tzompaxtle Itehua, Vice President

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Follow us on social media: @AdelanteAlabama

**Donation link: [bit.ly/donatetoadelante](http://bit.ly/donatetoadelante)**