

striving to bring
financial well-being
to all low income
Californians.



Fall 2020 Newsletter

Note from our president

As the end of 2020 approaches, we find ourselves deep into our planning for 2021, building on what we learned when we pivoted to a digital forward campaign in March for our CalEITC outreach that allowed us to reach more than 3.7 million low-income Californians.

[continue reading -->](#)



In the news

**Meet our
2021 grantees**

[Page 2](#)

**GSO texts millions
of CA residents**

[Page 2](#)

My EITC story

[Page 1](#)

**GSO goes digital with “Building
Financial Well-being” webinars**

[Page 3](#)

Partner highlight

Eastmont Community Center

[Page 2](#)

Advocacy success:

ITIN holders now
eligible for CalEITC

[Page 1](#)

Note From Our President



As the end of 2020 approaches, we find ourselves deep into our planning for 2021, building on what we learned when we pivoted to a digital forward campaign in March for our CalEITC outreach that allowed us to reach more than 3.7 million low-income Californians. With the ongoing pandemic, we know that many more people who either lost their jobs or had their hours cut will be newly eligible for the CalEITC, the Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC) and the federal EITC, and we plan to get them the information they need to claim their credit.

Our outreach plans for 2021 again include partnering with community-based organizations -- some returning, some new. See the list on page 2. And while the EITC is one of the most effective tools to keep people from poverty, it is not the only tool. GSO has initiated a monthly financial well-being webinar series covering topics from credit to health care and from financing college to buying a home. Our goal is to give people the tools they need to build a solid financial future for themselves and their families. You'll read more about the webinars on page 3.

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I'm incredibly proud of the GSO team, and you can meet some of our new staff members on page 4. We are all committed to working to end poverty, and we appreciate our supporters as well. Keep your eyes peeled for our Giving Tuesday fundraising appeals — we'd love to be on the list of organizations you support financially as 2020 comes to a close.

Amy Everitt
President
Golden State Opportunity

IN THE NEWS



October 27, 2020

**Millionaire Entrepreneur
Joe Sanberg on a Mission
to End Poverty in America**

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September 18, 2020

**Newsom Signs Bill Expanding
Tax Credits to Undocumented
Workers**

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September 19, 2020

**California amplía la extensión del
CalEITC para contribuyentes que
declaran con un ITIN**

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General Updates

Advocacy success: ITIN holders now eligible for CalEITC

➤ On September 18, Governor Gavin Newsom signed AB 1876 into law, making California one of two states (with Colorado) that extended EITC eligibility to people with an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). The move came after years of organizing from the CalEITC Coalition and immigrant groups. Since immigrant communities have been particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, the CalEITC

expansion couldn't come at a better time. The California Franchise Tax Board (FTB) predicts that 255,000 people with ITINs will claim the CalEITC for the 2020 tax year. GSO is preparing a comprehensive campaign to reach, educate and mobilize ITIN holders to claim their EITC credit. This will include partnering with new community-based organizations in the Central Valley, targeted Spanish language advertising and mobile messaging, in addition to continuing our successful digital advertising, influencer engagement, and paid media.

“The outreach that Golden State Opportunity and its partners do to inform Californians about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) eligibility is indispensable. I'm proud that this year we passed legislation adding Californians who file taxes with an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN), specifically undocumented Californians, to CalEITC eligibility. Now, more than ever, low-income Californians need the economic boost the EITC provides.”



Christy Smith
California Assemblymember

GSO texts millions of CA residents

➤ Did you know 96% of Americans have cell phones? Ahead of the tax extension deadline on October 15, we worked hard to get the word out about CalEITC through text messages. Thanks to support from our many funding partners, we were able to significantly expand GSO's mobile messaging program and contact 2.1 million California residents in 2020! Texting has become a critical part of GSO's outreach strategy, allowing us to have ongoing conversations with recipients, answer their questions, and connect them to services.



my EITC

Aonya McCruiston
GSO Press Secretary

Growing up with my mom, it was always just the two of us. My mom was my teacher, my protector, and my best friend. I didn't fully realize until I was in college just how difficult it was for her to raise a child and pay for daycare on her salary alone. Fortunately, my mom had the EITC refund to help pay back bills, repair our home or car, and make other big purchases. The annual refund relieved some of the stress of raising me on a tight budget. With the help of the EITC, I was able to dream big and attend a private college across the country. My education brought me to Congress, top communications firms, and now GSO. I am proud to say my family benefited from the EITC, and I feel so fortunate that I am now in the position to help other families get signed up.

Our 2021 Grantees

We are excited to partner with the following outstanding community-based organizations to spread the word about the CalEITC across California in 2021.

- Antelope Valley Partners of Health, Lancaster
- Asian Youth Center, San Gabriel
- Barrio Action Youth & Family Center, Los Angeles
- Bresee Youth Family Services, Los Angeles
- Central City Neighborhood Partner, Los Angeles
- Central Valley Partnership, Fresno
- Clinica Romero, Los Angeles
- Coachella Valley Community Tax Services, Palm Desert
- Community Partnership for Families of San Joaquin, Stockton
- Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement, San Bernardino
- Eastmont Community Center, Los Angeles
- El Centro de Ayuda, Los Angeles
- Family Assistance Program, Victorville
- Foundation for California Community Colleges, Sacramento
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center, San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties
- Inland Equity Community Land Trust, Riverside
- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation, Montebello
- NEW Economics For Women, Los Angeles
- Pacoima Beautiful, Pacoima
- Salvadoran American Leadership and Education Fund, Los Angeles
- San Bernardino Community Action Partnership, San Bernardino
- Sigma Beta Xi, Inc., Moreno Valley
- Starting Over, Inc., Corona
- Time for Change Foundation, San Bernardino
- Watts Labor Community Action Committee, Los Angeles

PARTNER
highlight



Located by the iconic Whittier Boulevard in East Los Angeles, the **Eastmont Community Center (ECC)** has served East LA and surrounding neighborhoods for more than fifty years. GSO partnered with the ECC to educate its monolingual Spanish speaking clients--including many older adults and immigrants--about the CalEITC. Before the partnership began, ECC found that many people in its community didn't know they qualified for the CalEITC or they risked falling for scams. ECC used GSO materials to educate the community through walk-in visits to the center and in-person visits, as well as word-of-mouth. This year, with the support of GSO and other funders, ECC is also relaunching its VITA program to help clients prepare their taxes at no cost. "As a small, grassroots nonprofit, we could not do our vital work without statewide partners like GSO," said ECC Executive Director Isaias Hernandez. "Their partnership and advocacy at the state level are invaluable to our center."

GSO goes digital with “Building Financial Well-being” webinars

➤ GSO launched the free “Building Financial Well-being” webinar series this September to help people better understand and protect their personal finances during the pandemic. The webinar series is presented by Aspiration, a socially-conscious online banking company that provides financial services to automate and amplify social impact. Every month, we partner with a different organization to discuss a topic

relevant to low-income families including creating family budgets, building credit, paying for higher education, and navigating the costs of health insurance. These webinars, presented in both English and Spanish, allow GSO and our partners to connect with a statewide audience online in the absence of our typical in-person events. Be sure to sign up for our emails to be notified of upcoming webinars.

Upcoming webinars

- **Understanding and Protecting Your Credit | December 9th @ 5pm**
with Credit.org
- **Foreclosure Prevention | January**
with ELACC
- **CalEITC for ITINs | February**
with CA Immigrant and Policy Center
- **Single Moms and Financial Security | March**
with NEW Economics for Women



October: Get a Degree, Not Debt



September: Setting Financial Goals

Visit our webinars page to learn more >>

Welcome new team members



Sandra Pérez González
Campaigns Director

Sandra Pérez González has devoted nearly two decades to civil and human rights as an activist in community and advocacy based organizing while serving organizations that include Amnesty International USA (AIUSA), Parent Revolution, PowerPAC.org, Southwest Voter Registration Education Project (SVREP), National Association of Latino Elected/Appointed Officials Educational Fund (NALEO) and Leadership for Educational Equity (LEE). The daughter of immigrants, Sandra was born and raised in San Bernardino and now lives in east Los Angeles County with her husband, 3 children, 4 dogs and 1 cat. Sandra attended the University of La Verne where she majored in Political Science and Public Administration.



Sabrina De Santiago
Policy and Research Director

Sabrina De Santiago serves as the Policy and Research Director for Golden State Opportunity. For more than 15 years, Sabrina has worked to build stronger and more prosperous communities through policy, advocacy, and government affairs. During her time in Washington, D.C. she was an advisor on economic policy, housing policy, and appropriations to several Members of Congress, including former U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton (NY), U.S. Senator Tom Udall (NM), and U.S. Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA). She was also a Director of Government Affairs for the Center for American Progress focusing on economic and security issues. Most recently Sabrina oversaw the Community Engagement unit at the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), the largest homeless Continuum of Care in the nation. A native Angeleno, Sabrina now lives in Pasadena with her husband and daughter. She is a fervent pizza and Dodgers fan.



Aonya McCruiston
Press Secretary

Aonya uses her experience in media outreach, strategic messaging, and digital strategy to reach diverse audiences and drive social change. Aonya has worked in California politics for elected leaders at the federal and city levels, leading communications and community engagement strategies around a diverse set of public policy issues including criminal justice, environment, and social welfare. She was the communications deputy for L.A. City Controller Ron Galperin and the press secretary for Congresswoman Karen Bass. Aonya also previously worked with young men of color at a South L.A. nonprofit and has advised campaign, labor, and nonprofit organizations with BerlinRosen. A native Angeleno, Aonya is a graduate of Wellesley College, where she studied political science.



Allison Hayes
Graphic Designer

Allison Hayes is a graphic designer based in Los Angeles. A native Oregonian, she graduated from the University of Oregon and holds degrees in both graphic design and photography. She has spent much of her career at a full service design firm working with a multitude of companies ranging from sports and lifestyle to tech and finance and in media publishing. Her work has also appeared in Southbay and Ventura Blvd magazines. Her passion as a designer centers around designing for small businesses and nonprofits.



Ryan Scholl
Digital Campaigner

Ryan Scholl has been running digital advocacy, fundraising and organizing campaigns for progressive, non-profit organizations for more than 10 years and is excited to bring this experience to bear in furthering Golden State Opportunity's important work.