

2016
**END OF
YEAR
REPORT**

SING
SOUTHERNERS ON NEW GROUND

SOUTHERNERS ON NEW GROUND



THE MANDATE

**TO AVENGE THE SUFFERING OF OUR ANCESTORS
TO EARN THE RESPECT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS
TO BE TRANSFORMED IN THE SERVICE OF THE WORK**

As we reflect on the past year of steering the ship that many of you have come to, offering your sacrifices, trust and vision, we are immensely grateful to be walking in the mandate that is at our feet. We don't take for granted the amount of love and support that we have received from our membership, our supporters and the Forever SONG family, whether in deed or in coin. Again and again you showed up: from the ICE raids of immigrant communities at the beginning of the year; to the onslaught of anti-trans, anti-LGBTQ, anti-immigrant, anti-worker, anti-local governance policies like North Carolina's House Bill 2; to responding to the hyper-policing and Islamophobia of our communities after the PULSE massacre in Orlando; to the ongoing abuse and murder of Black people at the hands of police; to the continued violence against trans and gender non-conforming people; to the attack on sovereignty and earth at Standing Rock. It is the countless amounts of unseen work and labor that we will never know about that makes SONG the political home it is for so many of us.

SONG was founded so that we could find each other and we will continue to look for our people in small towns and county fairs, in detention centers and county jails as well as clinics, pawn shops, pews, and queer Latinx nights. We will continue to hold space as we step into the light to be accountable for the harms we have inflicted upon one another so that another world - where we are in right relation with each other and we honor restoration and transformative justice above punishment - becomes more possible every day. Our founders and elders remind us that we have always believed that our vision of liberation is not just in the future but in the actions that we take now, the actions that show that we are more willing to call on each other where we see our desire, survival and joy reflected back in each other's eyes.

We have asked much of each other this year and as we move into 2017, we ask that you donate to SONG, become a member, and/or join the Forever SONG Sustainer Circle. We are called to bring forth work that transforms ourselves, each other, our hometowns, states, country, and this world. We need each other to show up with our hearts, smarts, and strength over and over again. We are ready and we need you. Please give as much as you can to fuel this ship as we enter fearlessly into another year of challenge and possibility for LGBTQ liberation.

mary hooks
Paulina helm-hernandez
SONG CO-DIRECTORS

2016

- Mary Hooks becomes Co-Director
- SONG responds to ICE raids providing rapid response technical assistance, tools, and training across the South
- SONG fights back HB2, S.1203, HB1523 + copy cat policies in local municipalities

- Combahee Direct Action Training
- Staff expands to include regional queering immigration fellow and TLC@SONG regional organizer
- SONG Donor Retreat
- Regional Membership Call
- Richmond SONG members lead police training on tgnc issues
- Kindred Sounds debuts!

JAN FEB MAR APR

Free From Fear Snapshot

- SONG receives award from NC ACLU
- Free From Fear Campaign Convergence

- SC Membership Call to fight S.1203
- SparkleBark 2016 Artist Residency Launches!
- TLC@SONG supports investigation of GA Dept. of Corrections
- We Want Freedom: Resisting Criminalization in the Southeast Convening
- TLC@SONG responds to Loretta Lynch DOJ statement on HB 2
- SONG Organizing Fellows Program Launches
- #WeCame2Slay Love Letter
- TLC@SONG Garden Party
- TLC@SONG Summer Legal Intern Hired
- Regional #MoratoriumNow actions after SCOTUS ruling on DAPA
- Calls in response to PULSE: Spiritual Solace - One Rise, One Fall
- Kindred Choir debuts at SONG GAYCATION
- Grief and mobilization after the PULSE massacre to fight Islamophobia and increased policing at vigils and PRIDE
- SONG members in SC mobilize to stop Berkeley County from passing anti-trans school board resolution
- Staff expands to include an additional organizer in NC
- AgitArte shares methodologies with SONG members in NC
- SONG continues to fight for full repeal of HB2 after proposed amendments
- Latinx Cookout, NC
- The Mandate Action and Video Released
- Fraternal Order of Police Action, NC
- A Vision For Black Lives Policy Platform Released
- NC Enemies of the People Leadership Summit
- Tribute - Memorial for member Keisha Webb
- SONG member Rebecca Keel runs for city council seat in Richmond
- Support to SONG members in Baton Rouge
- SONG mobilizes resources to political family hit by Hurricane Matthew
- SONG strategic planning meeting, KY
- SONG provides resources, communications strategy and support to Charlotte Uprising
- Bayard Rustin Convening at Highlander
- Protect + Defend Post-Orlando Community Convo Tool Released
- Make It Rain Grassroots Fundraising Team Announced
- AWID International Feminist Forum
- OUT SOUTH
- Dream! Vote! Organize! Call + Project led by SONG Fellows
- Durham Free From Fear Community Forum

MAY JUNE JULY AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

- SONG members support tgnc led fight to defeat anti-trans ordinance in Oxford, AL
- Charleston AME Massacre Commemoration
- Richmond SONG members lead 2nd police training
- A Gathering Storm, A Rising Tide Published
- Regional Crush the Confederacy Actions
- Hieu Tran joins SONG board
- Verano de Cenas, Chisme, and Conexión Latinx Base Building Tour
- AgitArte + SONG convene
- Regional #FreedomNow Actions
- Richmond SONG members lead 3rd police training
- SONG members intervene at National Law Enforcement Retreat at Billy Graham Center
- #PackYourBagsPat action
- The Jewel Box Revue TGNC Tour Launches
- SONG members intervene at National Law Enforcement Retreat at Billy Graham Center
- Lanzate
- SONG gains new members and monthly donors in wake of election

- Trump becomes US President elect. SONG organizes regional membership calls and rallies to develop both rapid response and long-term strategies
- SONG releases Protect + Defend Community Mapping Tool
- SONG members join Bazta Arpaio Campaign in Phoenix
- NC SONG BLM Cohort Launches
- SONG mobilizes resources to Standing Rock
- Facing Race
- AgitArte + SONG convene
- SONG Grand Marshall in ATL Pride Parade

SONG'S MANDATE

This year we shifted uncomfortably under the weight of so many necessary fights and unnecessary tragedies. Our spirits and our strategies flexed the boughs of our ship entering treacherous waters and we questioned how much weight we could hold every time those tragedies struck.

How will we hold the weight of the thousands of immigrant people who have been deported or continue to sit in detention centers across the South? How will we hold the weight of the relentless attacks against Black and Brown communities in an election cycle that embodied the consolidation of white political power? How will we hold the weight of the very familiar white rage putting targets on our backs and those of our kinfolk? How will we hold the weight of the fight to protect natural water sources and our tribes from ongoing attempted genocide? How will we hold the weight of escalated environmental disasters rocking our Gulf Coast, Caribbean and Pacific Islander political family? How will we hold the weight of every police shooting and every killing of our trans and gender non-conforming family? How will we rise together in resistance in times of uncertainty to take risks and live out our collective vision?

This year we sharpened our shared commitment to not be neutral about this violence we experience. We worked to better understand, confront, and dismantle all the ways anti-Black racism have shaped the South, the current debate over "law and order" that Trump reignited during his campaign (echoing George Wallace, echoing Richard Nixon), the continued use of gender and sexuality to create panic, the mobilizing and division of communities with fear and scarcity based economics, and the policies that impact our peoples' lives every day. We notice the places we are strong and the places we need to fortify to do what is needed and what is asked of us both individually and collectively. We are reminded that love and kinship are some of the most powerful medicine we have to confront the violence, cynicism, and fragmentation of our times. We've worked to reclaim our legacy, unearth the bones of the forgotten, remember what real community safety is beyond policing. We've learned that we have to dream, to vote and to continue to organize to make those dreams come to pass.

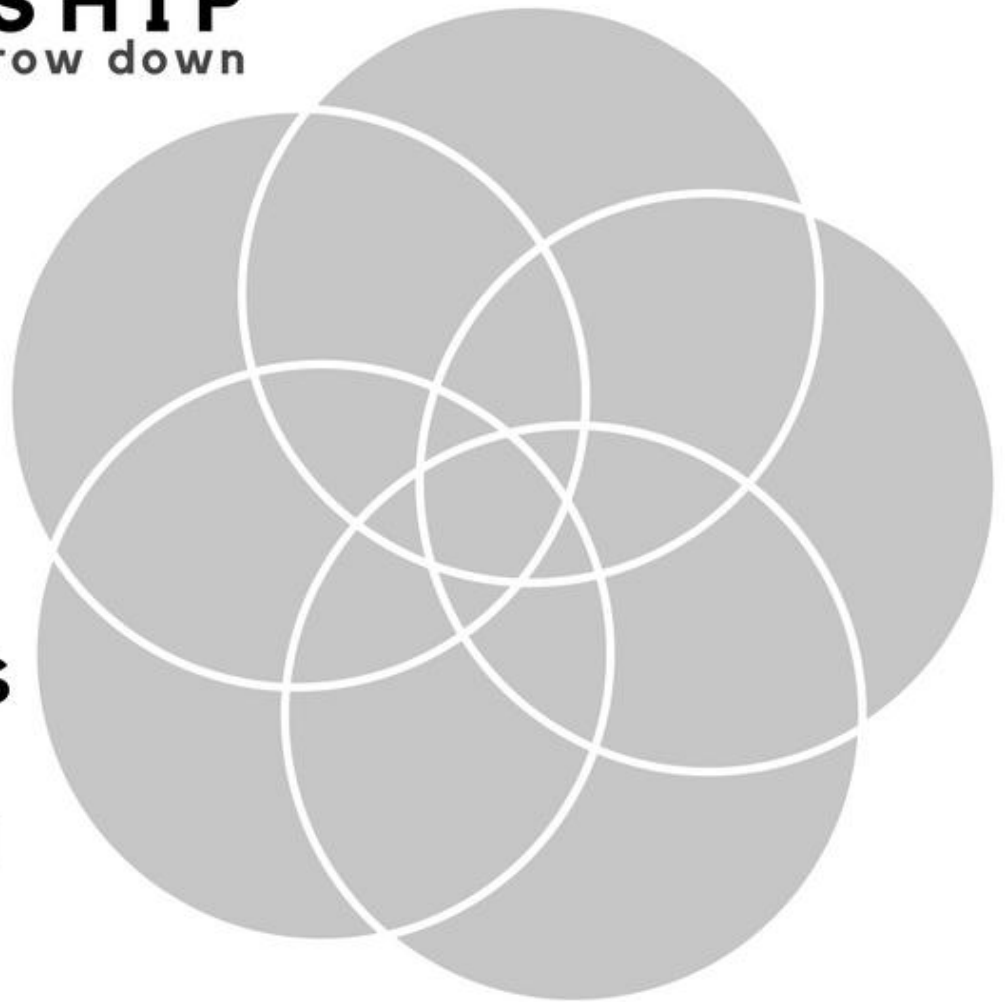
We hold our vision of possibility with SONG's shared mandate to continue to transform our spirits and our strategies for the times ahead and for a world free from fear. We are all a part of SONG's story and legacy: one of longing for justice, kinship, love and sanctuary. Our story is not just of building kinship but of building power. Power concedes nothing without a demand and we are here to honor the sacrifices that brought us here. We are here to honor the sacrifices we know it will take to build and find new levels of courage and bravery to open our hearts to lean into the collective risks we need to take to win.

MEMBERSHIP

renew. sign up. throw down

Time to risk. Time to lean in. Time to work. Time to experiment. Time to make our ancestors proud (and for some of us, roll over in their graves). This is our mandate.

TRAINING
CULTURE
CAMPAIGNS
POLITICAL
EDUCATION
KINSHIP



We need each other to kindle the will, fuel, and courage we must call upon to protect and defend our communities, to win the fights calling our names, to change the conditions in our communities and for the struggles we will face in the months and years to come. That is why SONG is a membership based organization. We invite you to get in formation with us, because we need each other now. We need numbers. We need to know who is with us. We need to chart the path forward together. Bring yourself, your homies, your ideas, your schemes, your dreams, your fire, your skills, your questions and imagination. *Our kinship is only as strong as our courage and our willingness to take risks together.* Sign up or renew your membership at **southernersonnewground.org** to join other LGBTQ people across the South united in action towards liberation.

BUILD SOUTHERN LGBTQ POWER IN 2017

Contribute to building a long-haul, broad-based movement for queer liberation in our beloved southern region. Do it for the young queens coming up in the sticks. Do it for the dykes raising babies. Do it for the queer elders who are fighting alongside us every day. Do it because you're fabulous and dangerous and no one can stop you from being a part of a movement that says NO to fear and unjust power and YES to hope, resistance, and our power together.

JOIN THE FOREVER SONG SUSTAINER CIRCLE BY JANUARY 31

- Our friends at Fund 4 Democratic Communities will match your donation with a one-time \$100 donation (up to 60 matches--that's up to \$6,000 for Southern LGBTQ movement building!)
- We'll send you a copy of the *Liberation in Our Lifetime* SONG Chapbook, a collection of interviews with SONG's founders and analysis pieces from over the years.
- You'll also be entered to win one of three SONG Swag packages, each containing: 1 Limited Edition Trans Flag 'Turn Up' V-Neck T-shirt, a Flaming Idols Bayard Rustin candle, and five silkscreened 'Homosexual Agenda' postcards.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
MARCH 3-5

GAYCATION
JULY 12-16

SAVE
THE
DATE

PHOTO CREDIT
ELAINIEL BALDWIN