



A BETTER NEVADA — FOR ALL



Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada is making change happen by elevating progressive voices and issues in our state



Strength in Numbers: 25 YEARS OF PLAN

How PLAN formed a coalition to focus on social change in Nevada

BY ELISSA EINHORN

When Jan Gilbert realized that victories for progressive issues in Nevada's Legislature were few and far between, she joined forces with Bob Fulkerson and created the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN) in 1994.

"With a coalition, we would have more power to work together and to focus our energies," Gilbert says. "We knew this was the future. We had to build power together."

After reaching out to connections across the state and filing as a 501(c)(3), PLAN got to work focusing on issues of justice — including economic justice, social justice and environmental justice.

The challenges were daunting. The Nevada State Legislature meets every other year, nonprofits have lobbying limits and a pervasive lack of resources persisted, but none of this stopped PLAN from focusing on "putting people and the planet first."

Early influential PLAN leaders included the late philanthropist and activist Maya Miller and longtime Nevada environmental and social activist Abigail Johnson. Johnson says that prior to PLAN, "Nobody had been a unifier or popped up as an umbrella over

all of the areas and said, 'We have more in common than our differences. Let's work together.'"

PLAN's membership grew to its current 30-plus organizations that Johnson says, "started to propose policies that should be considered by state government that would change lives."

Former Governor Kenny Guinn, who PLAN worked with on tax reform, understood the importance of the organization. "PLAN has worked hard to make our state a better place to live, to work and to raise a family," he said in 2009. "Their research, education and leadership development have made a positive difference for Nevada."

Gilbert was confident that everyone's issues would rise up, but this was a new concept.

"Everyone wanted their issue at the top of the pile," she explains. "We had to come to common agreements."

This became apparent as the Legislature tried to pit groups against each other. In response, Gilbert made sure legislators saw everyone together.

"We presented the appearance of power," she says. "We would also testify on issues of importance to other organizations."

"PLAN has worked hard to make our state a better place to live, to work and to raise a family."

Kenny Guinn
Governor of Nevada,
1999–2007



A quarter-century later, the issues and people that PLAN has impacted across the state are too numerous to list, but Johnson easily summed it all up: "PLAN" she says, "became a force to be reckoned with regarding social justice."

Keep reading for stories on how PLAN has fought for progressive issues "then" and "now," and reflections from PLAN members sharing their success stories from the first 25 years of PLAN.



HOW PLAN WORKS



Direct Action

PLAN uses direct action protest tactics in strategic campaigns to energize our base and to **deliver powerful messages to our opponents**. In 2015, Ray Hagar, political reporter for the Reno Gazette-Journal, said PLAN's protest at the 2015 Legislature was the most effective he had ever seen.



Leadership Development

None of what PLAN does is possible without developing strong leaders. By **reaching out to the community**, particularly to young people, PLAN starts early on developing strong individuals prepared to take on Nevada's issues.



Base-Building

"Organizing," says incoming PLAN Director Laura Martin, "must come from the community and represent Nevada's diversity. We reach into the community. That's who we are accountable to." PLAN builds a base within the **communities they represent** in order to best defend and fight for their rights.



Policy Work

When PLAN works with the Legislature, they go **deep into policy in order to fix inequalities**. Martin explains, "We make sure we are not just scratching the surface, but rooting out the causes about why inequity exists."

Jane Heenan is the executive director of Gender Justice Nevada, an organization which works toward creating infrastructure to give justice to persons expressing diverse sex/gender identities.
PHOTO BY HEATHER AULD



JUSTICE FOR ALL

PLAN was and is integral to passing legislation that promotes LGBTQ rights in Nevada

BY ELISSA EINHORN

Nineteen-ninety-three was a watershed year for Tod Story and for Nevada. “I was a college student and newly out of the closet,” remembers Story, currently the executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Nevada. “That same year, the state repealed its sodomy law and the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Southern Nevada opened its doors.”

Just a year later in 1994, PLAN became a galvanizing force for people who Story describes as “coming to know themselves, but with laws saying it was illegal to love someone of the same sex.”

A lifelong civil rights advocate, Story worked with PLAN toward the passage of several pieces of legislation addressing needs of persons expressing diverse sex and gender identities, among them the Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act, and civil rights inclusion in employment, housing and public accommodation statutes.

“Getting the Domestic Partnership Act passed was a huge effort,” Story recalls, “including convincing people to override the governor’s veto. PLAN and the ACLU worked hand in glove to make that happen.”

PLAN also helped Story and others who were serving on the board of the Gay and Lesbian Center to become more politically organized and to speak to their constituents and representatives.

“PLAN was invaluable over the past 25 years teaching a community that was not normally involved politically to have a voice and to achieve change for the positive,” he says.

But the work isn’t done.

Jane Heenan, executive director of Gender Justice Nevada, notes several issues their organization is working on thanks to a \$250,000 grant — funding that would not have been given without PLAN’s influence. Among the efforts are those that protect sex workers,

“PLAN was invaluable over the past 25 years teaching a community that was not normally involved politically to have a voice and to achieve change for the positive.”

Tod Story
Executive Director, ACLU of Nevada

change school policies around sex and gender diversity and support people changing their sex and gender markers on documents, such as birth certificates or drivers’ licenses, without needing a doctor or therapist’s signature. Gender Justice Nevada is also sponsoring legislation to end medically unnecessary surgeries on babies who don’t conform to societal expectations about how they look.

“Nobody thinks or talks about it, but these procedures happen every day in the U.S.,” they say.

Heenan challenges terms like “LGBT,” explaining that identity politics has caused unnecessary division in communities. They would rather have a dialogue.

“Where dialogue is invisible,” they say, “there is no change.”



WHY I STAND WITH PLAN

HOW PLAN WORKS FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Kenya Pierce-Minott

Former Board Chair and chair, PLAN Racial Justice Committee

“Through PLAN I began my racial justice advocacy work, which led to me starting TRENDZ Inc. PLAN provided me with an opportunity to become a community leader and activist around issues pertaining **racial equity, analysis of policy and grassroots organizing**. ... During my time as a board member and board president, PLAN raised their visibility in the Las Vegas community and built new alliances and relationships with other organizations. This alone helped — in my opinion — PLAN and its alliance work on so many progressive issues, recruit more people of color, and support more progressive candidates to office.”

Darlene Gardipe

Senior Program Manager, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony

“The Reno-Sparks Indian Colony is an original member of the Nevada Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada. We continue to support, collaborate and be involved with PLAN on issues that affect the tribe with minority issues, voting rights, environmental concerns, equality rights and many other issues.

A major success the tribe has had with PLAN was the **anti-Oil-Dri Campaign**. ... The tribe and PLAN raised awareness about the health, environmental and quality of life issues and concerns about the plant. ...

I continue to support the work PLAN does and strive to utilize the knowledge and expertise of PLAN coalition members.”

Working for **WOMEN WORKERS**

Creating paid sick days is just one
of many economic justice issues

BY HOWARD HARDEE

If you're a working single mom and your child gets sick, it can be a financial dilemma: *Can I miss work and still pay the rent? Will I lose my job if I need to stay home to care for my child?*

Working on these kind of issues is Erika Washington's specialty. She is executive director of Make it Work Nevada, a Las Vegas-based nonprofit group that often partners with Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN) to address a wide range of economic, racial and reproductive justice issues. Specifically, her organization advocates for paid sick days and family leave, affordable and high-quality child care, fair scheduling, and raising Nevada's minimum wage.

"We are talking to folks, mostly women — women of color, in particular — about how these issues affect their lives," she said. "We have a lot of women who are disproportionately the heads of the household, especially if you're in Clark County. When it comes to working a full-time job and trying to raise children, you fall into the traps of working but not being able to take time off if you're sick, or if you're children or parents are sick, without feeling like you could possibly lose your job or miss out on pay."

Make It Work Nevada was one of the forces behind SB196, a measure introduced in the State Senate that would have granted

all workers in Nevada seven paid sick days a year. After bouncing around in the Legislature for several months, the bill was amended to grant just three paid sick days; even so, it was vetoed by GOP Gov. Brian Sandoval in June 2017.

"We may not see everything happen the way we want it in our lifetimes. But I have three daughters, so hopefully they will."

Erika Washington
Executive Director, Make it Work Nevada

Not to be discouraged, Washington says Make It Work Nevada is going to help re-introduce a similar bill during the 2019 legislative session. Personally, she has a long-term perspective.



Make it Work Nevada Executive Director Erika Washington was part of a Souls to the Polls event on the historic west side of Las Vegas before the November 2018 General Election. Washington regularly talks to women workers, many of them single parents and women of color, who are disproportionately affected by issues such as low minimum wage, paid sick days and affordable child care.

PHOTO BY JAB BUHAY



WHY I STAND WITH PLAN

HOW PLAN WORKS FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Katy Chandler-Isacksen
Co-founder, Be the Change Project

"One major accomplishment is the passage of the Ban the Box bill last legislative session. Our board member and active contributor to Be the Change, Susan Chandler, worked extensively with PLAN and the **anti-mass incarceration work group** to make that possible. What an important success for employers looking for qualified employees and people seeking a fair chance at employment."

Bethany Khan
Director of Communications & Digital Strategy, Culinary Workers Union Local 226

"The Culinary Union is proud to have partnered with PLAN in 2017 on the 'Senator Heller, Protect Medicaid' campaign. PLAN is a great partner because they are always supportive of workers rights and real people power **movement building**. They are an essential and trusted part of our community and I love that PLAN always champions important intersectional justice issues."

Sheila Leslie
Nevada state assemblywoman and senator (1998–2012) and Behavioral Health Program Coordinator (retired), Washoe County

"PLAN's legacy rests with the young people they've trained, hired and sponsored over the years. I have seen many of these youths, often from communities of color, **evolve into today's leaders**, moving forward with progressive values in their careers in politics, education and human services. Without PLAN's guidance and support, many of these young people would not have had the opportunity to develop their unique skills and contribute so strongly to building a better Nevada."

Accountable to **THE EARTH**

PLAN helps the environment and those working to save it

BY HOWARD HARDEE

The Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN) has a long history of partnering with Native American communities that stand to be affected by the mining industry's corrosive and environmentally harmful practices.

Back in 2001, representatives from PLAN and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony successfully stopped the nation's biggest cat litter manufacturer, Oil-Dri Corp., from establishing an open-pit mine near Hungry Valley — land occupied by the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony. The deal would have allowed the company to stake a mineral claim to about 5,800 acres of federal land adjoining the reservation. Members of the tribe and PLAN traveled to Chicago for an Oil-Dri board meeting and stopped the mine in its tracks.

"As Oil-Dri moved through the permit process, it was opposed every inch of the way by the Native Americans who live near the proposed site, as well as by PLAN," said tribal Chairman Arlan D. Melendez.

Fending off Oil-Dri was a major victory for the tribe, but the fight to protect Nevada's natural resources and the indigenous people who depend on them is ongoing.

"PLAN has helped give our community visibility and, in some cases, legitimize our plight to non-Native audiences."

Arlan D. Melendez
Chairman, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony

Beverly Harry is a Native community organizer with PLAN Action and a member of the Navajo Tribe within the Four Corners Region. She got involved with PLAN as

a canvasser during the 2016 presidential election and has since had a hand in a host of environmental issues, from mining accountability to water protection. Her job involves traveling to Native American communities throughout rural Nevada that have been negatively impacted by the mining industry, which uses natural resources to extract gold, silver and copper from the land.

"It becomes an important environmental justice and human rights issue, as well as an indigenous rights issue," she said. "The Native people who reside on these lands have to live in areas that have been exploited. Some of them are running out of water resources. Some

of them are losing protected, sacred sites."

Looking forward, PLAN and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony will continue to collaborate on a number of fronts, including environmental justice, voter registration on tribal lands and organizing Women's Marches.

"The energy and hope generated by these marches exemplify the mission of our leadership to cultivate physical and emotional health in our tribe," Melendez said. "PLAN has helped give our community visibility and, in some cases, legitimize our plight to non-Native audiences."

Beverly Harry is a Native community organizer with PLAN Action and a member of the Navajo Tribe within the Four Corners Region.
PHOTO BY ERIC MARKS



WHY I STAND WITH PLAN

HOW PLAN WORKS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Abigail Johnson
President, Great Basin Water Network

"In 2017, we planned and conducted a Great Basin Water Tour with PLAN to bring awareness of urban residents to the **Las Vegas Water Grab**. PLAN was responsible for the Water and Mining portion of the tour GBWN was involved in the tour that traced the route of the proposed water pipeline.

"PLAN provided staff support and organizational acumen to the challenge of a two pronged tour involving 50 people and sent many of its urban staff on the tour to learn more about the water issue and the environmental justice aspects of draining one part of the state for another."

Brian Beffort
Director, Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter

"Sierra Club has been proud to work with PLAN around a series of successful activities over the years, such as **advancing renewable energy legislation, protecting Nevada's public lands from development** and standing up against Southern Nevada Water Authority's efforts to dewater rural Nevada.

"PLAN has been a steadfast and compelling voice for our natural resources, for the communities that depend on them and for the rights of disenfranchised communities and communities of color, who don't often receive the respect and justice they deserve."

Eloy Jara, president of Laborer's International Union of North America Local 169, says PLAN has helped its members work toward citizenship.

PHOTO BY ERIC MARKS

Building Space for **IMMIGRANTS**

PLAN established a coalition that changed the landscape for today's immigrants

BY ELISSA EINHORN

In the early 2000s, Nevada had no Latino elected officials and immigration reform wasn't embraced by the Democratic platform.

This presented a problem for Pilar Weiss, former political director of Culinary Workers Local 226, whose members were largely immigrants. She found a solution with PLAN.

"PLAN was one of the first organizations to be vocal in support of DREAMers, linking economic justice with the exploitation of immigrant workers and bringing that conversation to the legislature," Weiss explains.

Now working on behalf of criminal reform in California, Weiss occasionally returns to Nevada and, when she does, she sees a different landscape than the one she left behind in 2010.

"Today's leaders were organizers with PLAN who went on to lead new organizations or become elected officials or to work with national organizations," she observes, noting that PLAN created the building blocks for that leadership pipeline to happen.

Weiss' efforts with PLAN included forming the Nevada Immigrant Coalition, which provided a structure to work as a coalition to protect and advance immigrant rights.

"PLAN was the epicenter," she recalls. "It is part of the arc of 25 years of working toward racial justice,

criminal justice, voting rights and other causes. PLAN was the incubator in this space. It was pivotal in helping to bridge, on the electoral side, the importance of the Latino vote."

It still is.

"Twenty-five years ago, there was no place where anyone could say, 'I have a question about legal permanent status. Who can I ask?'" notes Eloy Jara, president of the Laborers International Union of North America

Local 169. "That's where PLAN has developed in the Hispanic community. People can look to them as a resource."

And people do. Jara's Union works side-by-side with PLAN to uplift the Hispanic community. This includes convening free clinics that have helped approximately 400 people since 2015 move from legal permanent status to citizenship. The union provides the space and PLAN provides volunteers who help

union members complete forms and answer questions.

"It's a benefit to my members and the community," Jara says, adding, "The government walks a fine line and oversteps its boundaries. Just because you don't have citizenship status doesn't mean you have no rights. PLAN stand for all humans. Organizations like PLAN bring daylight to immigrants."

"Organizations like PLAN bring daylight to immigrants."

Eloy Jara
President, Laborer's International
Union of North America Local 169



WHY I STAND WITH PLAN

HOW PLAN WORKS FOR IMMIGRATION

Raquel Cruz-Juarez

Public Affairs Manager for Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains

"With the help of PLAN's ongoing support during the 2017 legislative session in Nevada we advanced any **protections and liberties for women**. ... PLAN was one of the organizations that lead work with us and we held our congressional and senatorial delegation accountable.

PLAN advances our organizations work by promoting our work and always standing in solidarity with Planned Parenthood in addition to constantly partnering up with Planned Parenthood in ways that other partners did not."

Students at Bonanza High School register to vote in the Nov. 6, 2018 General Election on National Voter Registration Day. Voter registration is one of the many ways PLAN and its members encourage civic engagement.
PHOTO COURTESY PLAN

ACTIVATING THE PEOPLE

The key to making change is civic engagement — something PLAN knows well

BY ELISSA EINHORN

Getting more people to participate in our society ensures that our democracy works for us all. But back in the 1990s, efforts to encourage civic engagement in Nevada weren't so organized or inclusive. Then, along came PLAN.

"When we arrived on the scene, we worked with unions, environmental groups, trial lawyers, gay and lesbian groups, university women and others," explains Paul Brown, PLAN's former southern Nevada director who ran the organization's civic engagement efforts from 1995-2006. "We were trying to unify groups — the same groups that were getting kicked around in the legislature: Planned Parenthood, labor unions, environmental groups, Citizen Alert."

At the time, groups advocating for change were working independently of one another. PLAN "took small fish and created one big fish," Brown says.

The result was better organizing among PLAN's member groups, training about how to run political campaigns and better follow through when it came to citizen action.

"It's not enough to register 10,000 new voters," Brown notes, "if only 500 go to the polls."

"Engagement of voters is not just about active participation in deciding who gets elected, but active participation in all aspects of life."

Grecia Lima
Political Director, Center for Community Change

Grecia Lima, political director for Community Change, a PLAN strategic partner, agrees. She notes how in the past, Nevada's civic engagement was largely led by candidates, with minor involvement by grassroots organizations.

"Now," she adds, "it is a flourishing environment with grassroots organizations

that understand engagement of voters is not just about active participation in deciding who gets elected, but active participation in all aspects of life."

This, Lima explains, means becoming more involved in lobbying and the legislative cycle that ultimately results in critical policy changes for real people. The political director also notes that the most critical investment PLAN and its political arm PLAN Action has made is in building people's capacity to advocate and mobilize, to understand that strategic choices need to be made, and that battles may not be won the first time around.

"The most important part of civic engagement is training and coaching teams, and supporting the process in order to have successful impact," Lima says. "PLAN has devoted itself to its members and has gained the respect in the state for being thoughtful partners. That doesn't just mean being victorious on election day, but to nurture new leaders."

As it set out to do 25 years ago, PLAN continues its civic engagement efforts and has become a leading force in state, local, and city policy making that improves the quality of life for all people.



WHY I STAND WITH PLAN

HOW PLAN WORKS FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Elvira Diaz
Community Organizer, PLAN

"I have been involved with PLAN since 2009. I've learned many skills like lobbying for the transgender and immigrant community and **how to participate in elections by registering people to vote**, canvassing and phone banking.

"I have participated in many national conferences. I've learned about the African American community by walking from Selma to Montgomery in Alabama. I received the Champion of Change award from President Barack Obama for my work in health care.

"Thanks PLAN for empowering communities in Nevada."

The Next Generation of **LEADERS**

Young people pave the way for
developing a better Nevada

BY HOWARD HARDEE



“Volunteering for PLAN felt like a great way to get involved in policy and politics and maybe address some of the bigger structural issues.”

Howard Watts
Nevada State Assemblyman

It's taken Howard Watts all 30 years of his life to become the leader he is today. The Las Vegas-based community organizer — who won a seat in the Nevada State Assembly's 15th District on Nov. 6 — was born two months premature, but his parents were able to afford his lengthy stay at Sunrise Hospital thanks to Culinary Union health insurance. He's personally benefited from progressive programs since the get-go.

Watts became interested in politics, government and community service during his junior year of high school, and his passions followed him to college at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. “I went to UNLV because I

“At the time, I was running a youth volunteer group that did clothing drives and nice, feel-good stuff, but I felt like we were addressing the very end of the problem, rather than the root of the problem,” he says. “Volunteering for PLAN felt like a great way to get involved in policy and politics and maybe address some of the bigger structural issues.”

In the summer of 2008, PLAN offered Watts a six-month fellowship through the Center for Community Change. It involved intensive training on community organizing, voter registration and other electoral work. That led to a community organizing position with PLAN; he worked there until 2014. The experience made him more aware of important progressive issues in Nevada — fighting for LGBTQ and immigrant rights, shoring up social services, and curtailing environmentally harmful mining and groundwater management practices.

“I learned a lot about the issues and the political process, the difference people can make when they raise their voices and get engaged,” he says. “We were able to make some pretty positive strides on the LGBTQ-inclusive nondiscrimination laws. We managed to address these three big areas of housing, employment and public accommodations. They all changed in 2011 to be fully inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity, which is huge.”

Though he's proud of his accomplishments, Watts is by no means satisfied now that he's an Assemblyman. He said there's far more work to be done on all manner of progressive issues in Nevada, and encourages the next generation of leaders to step up and be heard. And getting involved with PLAN is a great place to start.

“It was a great leadership development experience for me,” he says. “I got to meet people from so many different communities, learn their perspectives and build relationships, and that's really what we need to overcome the challenges we face.”

wanted to be more involved in my community,” he says. Then he adds with a chuckle, “Also, I wanted to get a cheaper education.” He drifted in and out of various service organizations and clubs, trying to find one that fit his interests. He found his match at a community fair booth on campus in the spring of 2007: Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN).

Howard Watts poses during a Nevada State Democratic Party event on Nov. 6, 2018, the night he won a seat to Nevada's State Assembly. Watts started volunteering with PLAN during college and credits the experience with helping him develop as a leader.

PHOTO BY JAB BUHAY

CREATING LEADERS



Part of PLAN's mission to create a more fair and just Nevada is developing the next generation of forward-thinking leaders. To that end, PLAN registers voters in high school classrooms and on college campuses, and offers internships and community organizing positions to young people. It all helps cultivate leadership and knowledge of progressive issues.

“It really comes down to being in the community, meeting people and organizing with them,” said Laura Martin, associate director of PLAN. “It's about getting people on the ground floor and seeing how they move up the leadership ladder.”

Martin encourages aspiring progressive leaders to check out PLAN on Facebook, call the office or

attend sponsored events to learn more about potential internships, part-time positions and volunteer opportunities with PLAN and its member organizations.

“We're all on the same team,” she said. “As long as our progressive movement is strong, that's what really counts.”

Getting INVOLVED

Doug Smithson's passion for K-12 education led him to volunteer with PLAN in support of a school funding ballot measure.
PHOTO BY ERIC MARKS

Volunteer makes a difference by campaigning for school funding measure

BY HOWARD HARDEE

Doug Smithson has volunteered in Washoe County's K-12 schools for years, so he's seen the overcrowded classrooms for himself. He's watched students lean against the wall because there aren't enough seats to go around, and share outdated textbooks because there aren't enough of those, either. And overcrowding doesn't impact only students.

"It affects the whole school, and eventually the district," he says. "From the bottom to the very top, overcrowding is corrosive. It's like a cancer on the school system. Nevada ranks at or near the bottom of every single school performance statistic that's ever been calculated, and we have high school kids in Las Vegas taking required math classes with over 50 kids in a classroom. I started feeling like I should do something about it."

Smithson retired from the Reno Fire Department about 18 years ago. At 61 years old, he's a regular volunteer for the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN), working specifically on issues such as funding education, tax reform and voter registration.

He got involved with PLAN back in 2014, around when he started researching corporate taxation as a mechanism for school funding. "I discovered that, in the 1950s, our federal government received over 31 percent of its revenue from corporate taxes," he says. "At the time I did the study, it had fallen to less than 10 percent; that was before the latest tax cut. In the '50s, our schools were the envy of the world."

Until then, he had always considered himself socially liberal and fiscally conservative. But his research shifted his worldview to "progressive in all ways," and

he started stumping for the Nevada Margin Tax for Public Schools Initiative, which would have instituted a 2 percent margin tax

"I found out that PLAN was in the fight, and I started volunteering."

Doug Smithson
Volunteer

on businesses operating in Nevada that make more than \$1 million annually. Revenue would have gone to public schools.

"I found out that PLAN was in the fight, and I started volunteering," he says. He describes his volunteer experience "like I was campaigning to get elected. I was giving presentations and I was in debates up against professionals, lobbyists getting paid big bucks by the corporations we were fighting."

The ballot measure lost by a 4-to-1 margin in November 2014. But Smithson says his efforts through PLAN did ultimately make a difference, influencing the Legislature to act the following year.

"At the time, Nevada was one of only three states without a corporate tax," he says. "The following legislative session, they passed what's called the commerce tax; it's basically the same thing, but it's not as high of a tax. It's bringing in a quarter of what the education initiative would have, but at least it's a start. That vindicated my efforts."



WHAT PLAN VOLUNTEERS DO



Many of PLAN's paid staff members started as volunteers, as did many of the young progressive leaders who have used their experience with PLAN as a career-launching pad. Here are some of the community-minded activities volunteers typically engage in:

Canvassing: Going door-to-door, signing-up supporters at events and initiating other forms of nonpartisan civic engagement with members of directly impacted communities.

Political phone banking: Calling people and talking to them about our issues of mutual concern to support and motivate them in taking their next step as an activist.

Event planning: Working with PLAN leaders and community organizers to set up events and community activities.

Public speaking: Taking opportunities to speak at rallies, press conferences, roundtables and other community events.

SUPPORTING PLAN

in Every Way

Donors allow PLAN to successfully bring social justice and civil rights to everyone

BY ELISSA EINHORN

Scott Jordan is no stranger to the difficulties faced by low-income citizens in Nevada. As a legal services lawyer turned public defender turned family court judge, Jordan saw firsthand the struggles that resulted from a lack of services and support.

What he also saw was how PLAN began to address these issues back in the early 1990s.

“PLAN had a sense that all issues are connected and interplay, and need to be addressed,” says Jordan, who is now retired. He adds, “No other organization is as effective in promoting environmental safety, immigration, support to low income residents.”

Jordan, along with his wife, Marcy, became early financial supporters of PLAN, but he had to keep a low profile when he became a judge in Reno in 1992 so as not to violate any ethics rules. His role, he explains, was more behind-the-scenes than as a public activist.

Dawn Le, on the other hand, has made a career of activism, having worked for the Alliance for Citizenship and with the Service Employees International Union. These professional roles led her to PLAN and she, like the Jordans, became a proud supporter of the organization.

“What I really respect about PLAN is how they collaborate with so many groups and, at the same time, get shit done,” she says from Washington, D.C., where she works on political campaigns. “PLAN garners trust and builds coalitions.”

And while what drew her to the organization was immigration work, Le notes that PLAN is a multi-issue organization. She also became impressed with PLAN’s leadership and their lack of ego. PLAN has been and continues to identify and foster the next generation of leaders in Nevada.



“No other organization is as effective in promoting environmental safety, immigration, support to low income residents.”

Scott Jordan
PLAN Donor

“What’s amazing is that PLAN has long been a training ground for young people to get political experience,” Le says. “It’s not a revolving door, however. Since 2013, I’ve worked with three different communications directors, not because people leave the organization, but rather the two previous ones have grown to take on greater leadership roles and positions in the organization. PLAN attracts new people, but there is still the core people who have been with the organization for awhile.”

Among those, Jordan notes, is PLAN’s director Bob Fulkerson, who he says, “has devoted himself — mind, body and spirit — to make PLAN a success.”

Le agrees, noting that, “It is a testament to Bob and Laura Martin, PLAN’s associate director,” and the people “that turn out for rallies and protest.”

She adds, “Anyone who wants to see progressive change happen in Nevada must consider donating and investing in PLAN. There’s no better partner who will bring people together, shake stuff up and win big!”

SUPPORTING A STRONG NEVADA



Since it began 25 years ago, PLAN has grown to a coalition of approximately 30 of Nevada’s strongest and most diverse organizations. Without the generosity of its donors, along with the work of member groups that believe every Nevadan deserves a sustainable, equitable and health society, as well as a clean environment, PLAN could not be successful in its work on behalf of the people of Nevada.

Donations may be targeted to specific issues — economic justice, immigration, civic engagement, environmental justice or public policy — that ultimately benefit every citizen of Nevada. Find a cause that speaks to you and consider your investment as one that will:

- Ensure the participation of everyone in a strong democracy
- Build an economy that puts people and the planet first
- Support criminal reform that does not exploit economic injustice
- Protect the state’s water and air resources
- Keep families together through advocacy, citizenship workshops and document preparation

Interested in donating? You can go to planevada.org and click “Donate” to help PLAN support the citizens of Nevada. You can also donate to any of PLAN’s member organizations, listed on the back page.



PLAN co-founder and current Director Bob Fulkerson and incoming Director Laura Martin say more work needs to be done in the nonprofit's next 25 years.

PHOTO BY ERIC MARKS

PLANNING

for the Future

Times are changing, and PLAN is making waves rather than going with the flow

BY ELISSA EINHORN

ON THE AGENDA



PLAN is working on the following issues and policies in 2019:

"As a state, we have the opportunity to move things forward," says Christine Saunders, Policy Director for PLAN.

"We saw historic shifts during the last election and now is the time to push our elected officials to act boldly and make meaningful differences in the lives of Nevadans."

Pollution: End big mining's free reign to contaminate Nevada water in perpetuity and hold bad actors accountable.

Payday Lending: Protect consumers from predatory lending and cycles of debt by capping the payday lending interest rate.

Pay Equity: Guarantee equal pay for equal work.

Sex Workers' Rights: Revise prostitution statutes to protect sex workers and prevent people in our community from being marginalized.

Immigrant Rights: Prevent short term rentals from sharing information with ICE.

Cash Bail: Ends wealth-based incarceration that impacts economically disadvantaged communities.

Traffic Tickets to Civil Court: Addresses recommendations of the Interim Committee to Study the Advisability and Feasibility of Treating Certain Traffic and Related Violations as Civil Infractions.

A quarter-century after PLAN began with a vision to advance progressive issues in Nevada's legislature, the organization is now looking toward the next 25 years.

Co-founder and current Director Bob Fulkerson says he has been delighted to witness the organization's many accomplishments over the years.

"In 1994, there were just a handful of organizations versus today, where we have a wider breadth and depth of progressive organizations," Fulkerson says. "If this trend continues, there is no reason why progressives shouldn't have full governing power in 25 years. Instead of people from special corporate interest groups holding office, governing bodies should be dominated by people from our organizations."

Laura Martin, PLAN's current associate director who will take over for Fulkerson on Jan. 1, 2019, sums up the nonprofit's outlook on the future this way: "Our strategy is about what's possible."

PLAN will continue to represent a broad array of issues, but Fulkerson says three focus areas will rise to the top. First is mass incarceration, more specifically, stopping the school-to-prison pipeline, ending the

"We have awesome organizations doing good work, building new leadership and creating a future Nevada that will support everyone."

Laura Martin
Associate Director, PLAN

cash bail system and curtailing practices that imprison people based on the color of their skin. Another is the connection between climate change and water, and the need to adopt the idea that water is sacred and needs to be protected. Fulkerson says that currently, water is being taken for granted in development and mining plans. The third issue is turning the tide on the state's

economic inequality. Nevada is currently the fourth most unequal state in the nation when it comes to the gap between the wealthy and the poor.

Other issues emerge more organically. For example, a recent shooting exposed the lack of bilingual services.

"There are only two therapists that speak Spanish," comments Martin, further explaining, "There is a high population of Spanish speakers who are left without services. This may eventually end up in the legislature, but we are seeing the problem and seeing what the community can do to make it right."

Regardless of what the future holds, Martin is intent on PLAN staying true to its grassroots-style advocacy by doing more listening, having more conversations, and knocking on more doors to learn what is happening in the community.

"We have always been an organization that understands organizing has to come from the community," she says. "We have awesome organizations doing good work, building new leadership and creating a future Nevada that will support everyone, not just the legislative dogs at the top."

PLAN TO HELP!

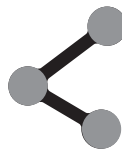
PLAN works hard to help make Nevada better, but they can't do it alone. There are so many different ways to help make Nevada the best place it can be for its citizens!



Donate to PLAN through planevada.org, or to any of the member organizations listed on this page, and support efforts to bring about change.



Volunteer by filling out the form on planevada.org/get-involved and give your time to social justice.



Connect with any of the many member organizations that work with PLAN in order to target the help you can give Nevada and its citizens.



Member Organizations

American Association of University Women (AAUW), aauw.org

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Nevada, aclunv.org

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), afge.org

Be the Change Project, bethechangeproject.org

Comstock Residents Association, comstockresidents.org

Culinary Workers Union Local 226, culinaryunion226.org

Food Bank of Northern Nevada, fbnn.org

Gender Justice Nevada, genderjusticenv.org

Great Basin Resource Watch, gbrw.org

Great Basin Water Network, greatbasinwater.net

Human Services Network, humanservicesnetwork.org

Institute for a Progressive Nevada, instituteforaprogressivenevada.org

NAACP Reno Sparks Branch, renosparkснаааср.org

National Association of Social Workers (NASW), socialworkers.org

NARAL Pro-Choice Nevada, prochoicenevada.org

Nevada Coalition Against the Death Penalty, nvcadp.org

Nevada Justice Association, nevadajustice.org

Nevada State Education Association (NSEA), nsea-nv.org

Nevada Women's Lobby, nevadawomenslobby.org

Northern Nevada HOPES, nnhopes.org

Planned Parenthood, plannedparenthood.org

Reno Justice Coalition, facebook.com/RenoJusticeCoalition

Reno Sparks Indian Colony, rsic.org

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1107, seiu-nv.org

Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter, sierraclub.org/toiyabe

Transgender Allies Group, transgenderalliesgroup.org

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Nevada, uufnn.org

Washoe Education Association, weatoday.org

