



GOLDEN STATE OPPORTUNITY

# 2023 Impact Report

*Dedicated to ending poverty by providing all Californians with the tools to build financial well-being and thrive.*

# Letter from the President

Reflecting back on 2023, the year started with so much hope for a new, post-Covid beginning. In-person activities and events were back, and it was a banner year for travel. Yet, while the masks may have largely been put away, the reality for low-income families continued to come into stark clarity. This report captures our dual path of innovation and intention, reflecting on the impactful work we've done for our organization and for the communities we serve.

Mid-year, U.S. Census data revealed that **child poverty skyrocketed in 2022 to the highest ever rate on record**, further strengthening our resolve to help put cash back in the pockets of people—cash they can use to buy food or pay for rent—to drastically alleviate the number of people, and particularly children, living in poverty.

Galvanized by this data and our firsthand experience working to help California's low-income communities, we recognized the urgency of the moment and accelerated our plans to push for policy solutions in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

In Sacramento, we hosted our first-ever **Community Action Day**, calling on our Community Connect nonprofit partners to join us and work together to advocate for expanding the tax credits that are proven to make real improvements in people's lives. Together, we lifted up the voices of people most affected by our broken systems. We made a compelling case for continued policy improvements while securing anti-poverty champions in the legislature.

In Washington, D.C., our team worked closely with Representative Judy Chu and our partners in the Coalition of Franchisee Associations and the Critical Labor Coalition to introduce our first bill. HR-5689, **the EITC Age Parity Act**, would expand the earned income tax credit to people 18-24 and over 65—demographics currently experiencing high levels of poverty. **We believe in the power of policy to effect meaningful change and are dedicated to advocating for policies that uplift all segments of society.**

In 2023, GSO saw an opportunity to step into the moment and push for meaningful change, laying the groundwork for our ongoing efforts to create a more just and equitable system for all.

In solidarity,



Amy Everitt  
President

# In 2023, Golden State Opportunity...

- Introduced our **first federal bill**, working closely with U.S. Representative Judy Chu (CA), Representative Gwen Moore (WI), the Coalition of Franchisee Associations, and the Critical Labor Coalition
- **Expanded the GSO Fellow Program** to include eight passionate young adults committed to helping improve their communities
- Began a five-year **strategic planning** process to mobilize communities, engage partners, and advance policies that create prosperity
- Issued **“Everything at Once: The Status of California Low-Income Women Nearly Four Years Into the COVID-19 Pandemic”** report in partnership with the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls

*GSO helped lead statewide efforts that resulted in over 3.4 million Californians claiming about **\$7 billion** in state and federal tax credits.*

- Held our first-ever **Community Action Day** in Sacramento, bringing together 50+ community members and nonprofit staff with 35+ legislative offices
- Launched **statewide CalEITC4Me outreach campaigns** reaching millions of households and empowering students, young families, ITIN (Individual Taxpayer Identification Number) holders, and workers everywhere
- Delivered easy-to-understand and culturally sensitive resources in 13 languages to **connect multilingual communities with resources** they need



# Putting People First in Policy Making



Connecting low-income families with cash-back tax credits.



Advocating for policies proven to reduce poverty.



Building a powerful movement to lift families out of poverty.

People in the United States are facing poverty at a very high rate and we need to take action now. Poverty happens because of the choices made by those in charge, but there are solutions. At GSO, we are committed to creating the political will to change policies that continue to foster inequality.

The release of U.S. Census data in September 2023 confirmed the effectiveness of programs like the **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** and **Child Tax Credit (CTC)** were reducing poverty rates. The data was even more telling for the child poverty rate—according to the Census Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), the child poverty rate more than doubled from 5.2% in 2021 to 12.4% in 2022 because pandemic relief programs (and particularly the increased CTC) ended.

Simply put, **policies that put money in people’s pockets work to relieve poverty, period.** The EITC and CTC programs are particularly effective and proven to positively impact a family’s economic well-being. This is not only backed by national research but also through the countless stories we hear from the people we serve. Like Sinia in Los Angeles, who walked into one of the free tax preparation days at GSO grantee Central City Neighborhood Partners in Los Angeles.

Sinia, a mother of two, was filing her taxes for the first time since receiving her social security number and was able to get all her questions

answered and feel confident about the filing process. She was able to file for tax years 2021 and 2022 and obtain a **total refund of \$12,249** including thousands of dollars from state and federal EITCs, CTCs, and the Recovery Rebate Credit. As Sinia shared, *el reembolso me ayudaría con deudas pendientes y también para hacer un viaje de vacaciones para mis hijos.* Translation: the refund will help me with overdue debts and also help me take a vacation trip with my children.



# Efforts to End Age Discrimination in the Federal EITC

On September 26, 2023, **GSO introduced its first bill in the United States Congress—H.R. 5689**, also known as the EITC Age Parity Act of 2024. The EITC Age Parity Act would expand the federal EITC to over 6.8 million workers without children (ages 18–24 and 65+) throughout the United States, including over 540,000 workers in California. This would put an estimated \$13.9 billion back into the pockets of low-income tax filers.

Over **40 community organizations and business associations have signed on in support of the legislation** and seven U.S. Representatives have signed on as co-sponsors. GSO worked closely with U.S. Rep. Judy Chu (CA), Rep. Gwen Moore (WI), the Coalition of Franchisee Associations, and the Critical Labor Coalition to introduce this bill.

## LEAD SPONSORS

United States Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA)  
United States Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI)

## CO-SPONSORS

United States Rep. Brian Higgins (D-NY)  
United States Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL)  
United States Rep. Dwight Evans (D-PA)  
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United States Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ)  
United States Rep. Jimmy Gomez (D-CA)  
United States Rep. Jahana Hayes (D-CT)



## AGE PARITY ACT NUMBERS IN 2023

Emails delivered  
**27,187**

Emails opened  
**10,591 (39%)**

Unique Advocates  
**205**

Letters sent to  
**51 REPS**  
in the House

# Community Action Day



## “Everything at Once”: The Status of California Low-Income Women Nearly Four Years Into the COVID-19 Pandemic

### BRINGING COMMUNITY VOICES TO THE LEGISLATURE

GSO held its first Community Action Day in Sacramento, advocating for expanding the California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC). **With more than 50 Community Connect Partners on hand, we met with 37 legislative offices to share the impact of tax credits and promote expanding the young child tax credit to include kids 0-18 years old.** Our partners from MICOP were at the forefront of this day.



### MICOP AT COMMUNITY ACTION DAY

The Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP) is a community-based organization and GSO subgrantee that engages with and organizes indigenous migrant communities in California. At GSO’s 2023 Community Action Day, two representatives from MICOP, Jorge and Roberto, attended several legislative meetings where they spoke about the importance of financial support programs and the crucial need for investment in these programs and affordable housing. When speaking with GSO afterwards, Jorge emphasized the importance of spreading the word about programs like the CalEITC. “When we applied for the GSO grant, we knew that much of our community qualifies for tax credits like the CalEITC and Young Child Tax

Credit. **This was an important benefit for our community that many didn’t know about or thought they qualified for. I’ve seen us make an impact in the community.”**

Jorge also reiterated that the language barrier impacts the community’s access to resources. Because of this, they have seen the importance of offering information about the CalEITC in native languages. Many of these workers are newly arrived immigrants who only speak Indigenous languages, such as Mixteco, Zapoteco, or Purepecha, making traditional outreach methods ineffective and reinforcing the importance of partnering with organizations like MICOP.

Two years ago, the California Commission on Women and Girls released *The California Blueprint for Women’s Pandemic Economic Recovery*, which began to track the effects of COVID-19 on women and families. The commission knew there were lasting repercussions of the pandemic on women and families. They charged us with hosting a series of roundtables that brought together women across the state to hear their stories firsthand. GSO hosted six roundtable sessions and was honored to listen and collect stories from 64 women.

GSO presented our findings as part of a briefing that included speakers with lived experience, nonprofit leaders, elected officials, and policy analysts.

The report and subsequent briefing were truly a call to action—a call to join GSO and advocate for programs and policies that support women and families across the state.



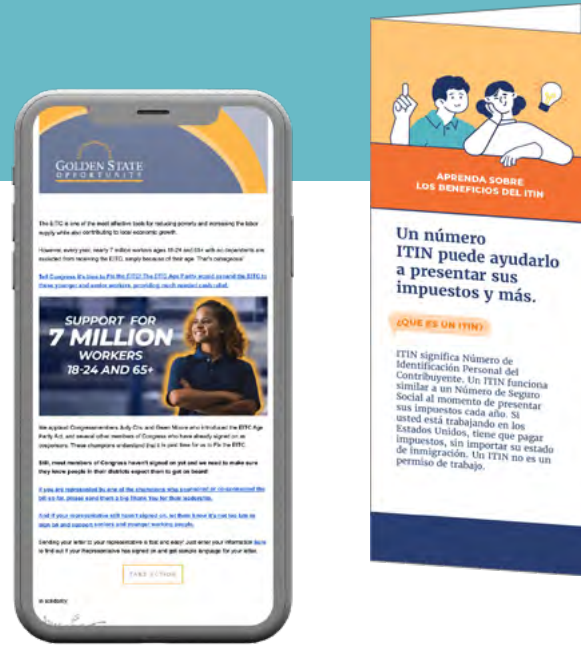
View the full report at [goldenstateopportunity.org/publications](https://goldenstateopportunity.org/publications)



# CalEITC+ Program Highlights

**2 MILLION TEXTS**  
sent to promote tax credits

Punjabi added as the  
**14<sup>TH</sup> LANGUAGE**  
for collateral materials



**MIXTECO  
& ZAPOTECO**  
radio public service announcements

**34 COMMUNITY  
CONNECT PARTNER  
NONPROFITS**  
across California working to help  
people claim their tax credits



**2,381 ITIN  
RETURNS**  
submitted by Community Connect  
Partners

**1 MILLION+**  
likes, follows, and website visits

**600,000+**  
visits to CalEITC4Me.org

**50+ LEGISLATIVE  
MEETINGS**  
to advocate for policies that  
lift people out of poverty

# Supporters

Thank you to GSO supporters who fuel our work in building a state where everyone can thrive.

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Foundation  
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LA2050/Goldhirsh Foundation  
Share Our Strength  
Sobrato Philanthropies  
Sunlight Giving

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the year

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