

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Voqal Invests \$445K to Advance Social Equity and Progressive Change in Illinois**

**Chicago, February 22, 2018**—Voqal is pleased to announce eight new grants to organizations working in Illinois to enhance the community and strengthen social equity. The grants of \$75,000 to Asian Americans Advancing Justice, \$75,000 to Black Roots Alliance, \$70,000 to Chicago Votes, \$50,000 to Common Cause, \$50,000 to Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, \$50,000 to Illinois PIRG, \$50,000 to Kartemquin Films and \$25,000 to One People's Campaign reflect Voqal's commitment to support progressive movements for social change.

### **Asian Americans Advancing Justice**

Asian Americans Advancing Justice works to advance civil and human rights for Asian Americans and to build and promote a fair and equitable society for all. With Voqal's support, it will convene and mobilize the Pan Asian Voter Empowerment (PAVE) coalition, which works to include the voices of those most affected by issues to inform policy solutions, partner with broader coalitions to collaboratively address larger root causes of racial inequality and shape the narrative around these issues.

### **Black Roots Alliance**

Black Roots Alliance is committed to the safety and liberation of all Black people. With support from Voqal, it will create a more equitable and inclusive democracy and economy in Illinois. It will accomplish this through deep organizing conversations with Black voters in six counties throughout the state, focusing on the core issues of policing, criminalization and strengthening economic security for Black families.

### **Chicago Votes**

Chicago Votes is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization building a more inclusive democracy by putting power in the hands of young Chicagoans. Voqal's support will enable Chicago Votes to continue its work to register, educate and develop thousands of young voters and leaders across Chicago.

### **Common Cause**

Common Cause is a nonpartisan watchdog group working to promote open, ethical and accountable government at the local, state and national levels. With the support of Voqal, Common Cause will highlight the influence of big money on racial and social justice issues while creating campaign wins and building a progressive movement that is more collaborative, coordinated and powerful.

### **Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights**

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights promotes the rights of immigrants and refugees to full and equal participation in the civic, cultural, social and political life of a diverse society. With Voqal's financial assistance, it will work to mobilize Illinois voters to put pressure on Congress to pass a clean DREAM Act.

### **Illinois PIRG**

Illinois PIRG is a consumer group that stands up to powerful interests whenever they threaten health and safety, financial security or the right to fully participate in a democratic society. Thanks to Voqal's support, Illinois PIRG will continue to work with coalitions like Just Democracy Illinois and Next Gen Illinois to advocate for voting and campaign finance reform and expand its youth mobilization work on college campuses.

### **Kartemquin Films**

Kartemquin is a collaborative center for documentary media makers who seek to foster a more engaged and empowered society. Voqal's grant will support Kartemquin's emerging and established social justice documentary filmmakers' efforts to reach new audiences, mobilize their existing advocates and motivate them all to meaningfully engage with the issues explored in the films and to create real and lasting impact in their communities.

### **One People's Campaign**

One People's Campaign works to ensure that all types of people are at the table when important policy decisions are made, and that the table is remade when it is set up to exclude people. With support from Voqal, One People's Campaign will train community members to engage with their neighbors, canvass on issues and candidates, move people to action, run for office themselves and build the power to enact social, racial and economic justice.

"We are proud to support these agents of social change and their work to build a better future for all Illinois residents," said Voqal President, John Schwartz.

*Voqal is a national collaboration of EBS (Educational Broadband Service) licensees that work to advance social equity by creating an educated and informed public. Voqal provides grants and investments for organizations and individuals, affordable mobile internet and wireless spectrum advocacy. Our efforts center around using media and technology to increase access, community and knowledge.*