



2021 was another busy year for ACRE Institute and 2022 is gearing up to be just as jam-packed. While we are still in the throes of a global pandemic; racial reckoning in cities and towns across the country; and economic upheaval—all of which are disproportionately experienced by BIPOC and working-class communities—we remain committed to supporting our partners with targeted research, analysis, and campaign infrastructure support.

Last year, we added critical capacity to our team, hiring brilliant researchers, analysts and corporate campaigners to fill out our Pillars of work. As a result, our efforts in 2021, and those coming up in 2022, have been more expansive, bold and visionary. We are very excited to share not only some of the highlights from 2021, but also a look ahead at what 2022 will look like for ACRE Institute.

## PUBLIC SERVICES

*ACRE Institute believes that public services must be expanded, fully-funded, equitably distributed, publicly-owned, locally controlled, and funded through deeply progressive taxation, with targeted investments in Black and Brown communities.*

### What's ahead for 2022:

As communities move into the budget season, we will work with partners on strategic campaigns using the Moral Budget Policy Package. ACRE is working with community groups, racial justice groups, educators, public service workers, care workers, and others to bring together local stakeholders to chart a new course in budget battles so that every community has the public service resources they need to recover, thrive, and survive the next crisis. The pandemic has confirmed what we already knew: that we need to dramatically expand and fully fund public services to strengthen our social safety net. We also know that the one-time American Rescue Plan federal funding doesn't address the longstanding injustice of structural underfunding of low-income Black

and Brown communities. We will work to support grassroots partners in their movement-building campaigns to popularize and advance offense campaigns that can be scaled nationally.

### 2021 Pillar Activities:

**Cancel Wall Street (2021)** In the fall of 2020, we launched our [Cancel Wall Street](#) (CWS) campaign to enable state and local governments to cancel interest payments to Wall Street by taking out interest-free loans from the Federal Reserve. The campaign is a way to connect local budget fights to a national demand for the Federal Reserve to make long-term, zero-cost loans available to state and local governments, potentially freeing up hundreds of millions of dollars a year in interest that could go toward essential city services. Since the rollout of this campaign, we have had several major wins: (1) In Chicago, Stacy Davis Gates, the Vice President of the Chicago Teachers Union, joined us for a press release and elected officials from Chicago, New York, and Florida also came out in support of CWS, drawing national attention to the campaign; (2) Cancel Wall Street resolutions were passed by the [Los Angeles City Council](#), [Philadelphia City Council](#), and

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[Los Angeles Metro](#); and (3) CWS was introduced in Chicago and the state of Illinois as a part of critical budget solutions.

**Philly Revenue Project (2021)** In Philadelphia, ACRE is supporting the work of the Philly Revenue Project which launched the Tax the Rich PHL campaign -- a long term campaign to demand universities, corporations and billionaires pay their fair share to fund public services. Last year, we focused on ensuring ARPA money is spent to the maximum on real neighborhood-based recovery -- instead of on corporate tax breaks. In early 2021, the Philadelphia City Council passed a resolution to Cancel Wall Street, calling on the Federal Reserve to issue no-interest loans for the City of Philadelphia to aid recovery, joining the City of Los Angeles in the national call for the Fed to act.

**Community Recovery First: No Cops, No Banks with Our Covid Relief Money (Summer 2021)** The past two years has shown us what happens when you layer a public health crisis on top of racial inequities. COVID-19 ravaged Black and Brown neighborhoods that had already been suffering from decades of disinvestment. Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal relief to go directly into communities, particularly those harmed the most from the devastating economic and health impacts of the pandemic. However, cities and states across the country could divert this much needed relief money to cops and banks at the expense of essential community needs, like rental assistance and public health programs. In recent months, a number of local leaders have [called](#) on the Treasury Department to make it easier to spend relief funds on debt, including to some of the wealthiest banks in the country.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration has begun [encouraging](#) states and cities to use relief funds to beef up their police departments. In Summer of 2021, ACRE brought together [over 50 national and local community groups](#) from around the country to call on Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and President Biden to set clear guidelines that encourage an investment in communities and protect relief funds from being rerouted to banks or police departments. This work is directly connected to the ACRE's CWS campaign arc to expose Wall Street's predatory lending, why we need to Cancel Wall Street payments draining our public budgets and engaging new partners.

ACRE spearheaded some of this work by exposing the use of ARPA funds to pay off debt to Wall Street and increases to police budgets, instead of investing in communities and in non-police violence prevention programs that have been shown to be effective, but that are severely underfunded. In Chicago, the mayor has proposed more than half of the city's \$1.9 billion recovery money be used to [pay back debt](#)- including \$465 million to JPMorgan Chase, to avoid paying \$9 million a year in interest on a loan. Partners in Chicago have held [press briefings](#), [local officials confronted Chase CEO Jamie Dimon at their shareholder meeting](#) about waiving the interest payments on the loan to free up all the ARPA relief money for communities.

[The American Prospect](#) and [The Nation](#) covered this campaign and used our framing and messaging. [Bloomberg CityLabs](#) reported on the above letter with quotes from ACRE, ACCE, United Working Families, and Philly Councilmember Kendra Brooks. We are really excited to have the #NoCopsNoBanks framing enter the national conversation.

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## POLICING AND INCARCERATION

*ACRE Institute believes public safety should be reparative, rehabilitative and transformative and the systems governing it should be accountable and controlled by communities.*

### What's ahead for 2022:

Our Policing and Incarceration team is working to continue to: (1) expose bloated police budgets in cities across America to encourage divestment in policing and greater investment in public services that better serve the complex needs of communities; (2) provide training and collateral that gives organizers and activists new information, language, and networks to push forward defunding campaigns; and (3) researching the role of publicly- and privately-held corporations in financing surveillance technologies used by policing and immigration authorities. We will continue to expand our work campaigning against Shotspotter in 2022, with the goal of producing replicable models that can be scaled nationally.

### 2021 Pillar Activities:

**Defunding the Police During a Recession (January 2021):** A series of webinars to provide analysis and context to help strengthen demands to defund the police and bring in progressive revenue to local budgets. Topics included: (1) History of Policing and Prisons, (2) Surveillance and Militarization (3) Policing & Austerity Budgets and (4) What's next? Campaign Challenges & Demand Recommendations.

### [21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing report \(Spring 2021\):](#)

Alongside the Community Resource Hub, ACRE Institute released a report examining the surveillance state that Black, Brown and working class communities are subject to and that corporations

profit from. Opening our report's webinar, Congresswoman Cori Bush gave us a powerful reminder that "it is a moral imperative that we get this right. We need to redirect energy to transformative justice."

**Shotspotter Campaign (Summer 2021)** With the support of ACRE, organizations and activists in Chicago launched a campaign to cancel or not renew Chicago's contract with ShotSpotter. ShotSpotter is gunshot detection technology that is framed as a tool to help police respond to gun crimes and ultimately deter gun violence. However, there is no evidence that ShotSpotter is accurate or deterring gun violence. Instead, ShotSpotter is another surveillance tool used to justify over-policing in Chicago's Black and brown neighborhoods, while inflating narratives and statistics around gun violence. The ShotSpotter contract was supposed\* to be up for renewal on August 19, and Chicago residents and activists have demanded that the City not renew the contract and instead invest that money into community-led violence prevention and interruption efforts. The campaign had a soft launch of social media infographics and a petition on July 15, 2021 and the first action (march and rally) in Little Village on July 29. The petition is currently at over 2000 signatures, however we are up against the challenge of strong counter-narratives that frame Black and brown people as inherently violent and their neighborhoods as needing this kind of surveillance.

*\*We have since found out that the city covertly renewed the contract in December 2020, unbeknownst to many local groups, activists, and press. We are now working to make sure this obscene lack of transparency from the city is well-known and not repeated."*

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## HOUSING

*ACRE Institute believes that housing is a human right. We work with partners across the country to research and support strategies that disrupt racialized speculation and financialization of housing by the largest corporate landlords and Wall Street. We envision a U.S. where land and housing are publicly owned and used for the overall public good.*

### What's ahead in 2022:

Our housing work has taken on urgency in the last 18+ months, as COVID has further destabilized housing for BIPOC and working-class communities. Some of the activities we're planning include: (1) Researching and creating popular education demystifying the structure of the biggest and most aggressive corporate landlords, exposing the role of private equity and institutional investors in driving the worst abuses; (2) bringing corporate campaigns and policy fights to federal regulatory agencies and policymakers with latitude to stop abuses by these private equity and corporate landlords; (3) calling out pandemic profiteers in housing and how they weaponize their political clout to shape policy making; and (4) fine-tuning our narrative to grow the base of people and organizations in housing justice fights against corporate landlords and private equity in housing.

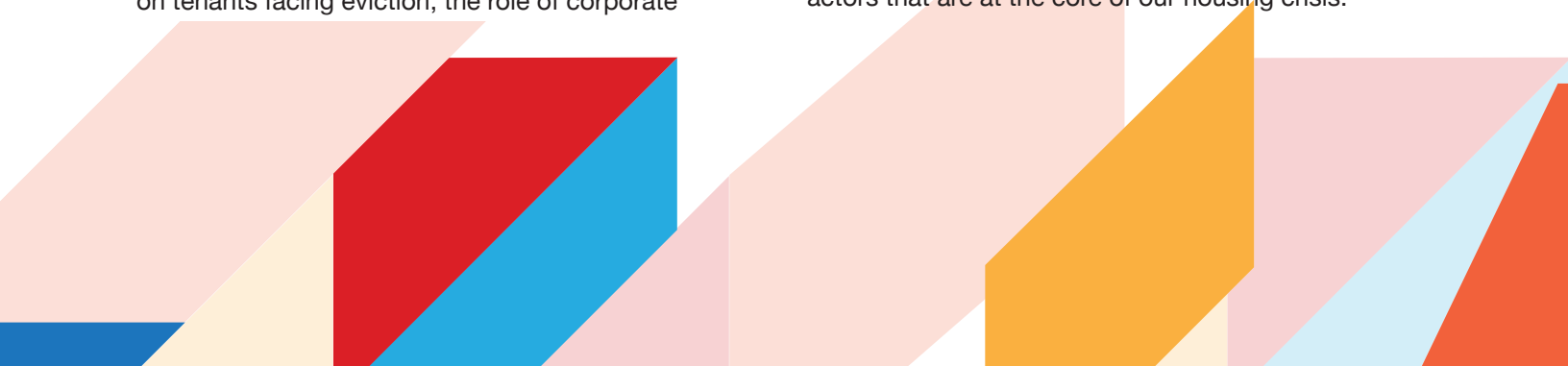
### 2021 Pillar Activities:

**Eviction Moratorium Campaigning (2021)** In January 2021 ACRE joined a coalition of housing justice organizations in support of bold demands to address the housing crisis made worse by the COVID-19 crisis. ACRE's Deputy Campaign Director for Housing submitted written testimony for the April 14, 2021, House Financial Services Committee Hearing 'Building Back Better: Investing in Equitable and Affordable Housing Infrastructure'. Our testimony focused on tenants facing eviction, the role of corporate

landlords in our housing crisis, the inadequacy of our current solutions, and the collision of the housing and climate crises. In July of 2021 ACRE Institute mobilized grassroots partners around the need to extend the Federal Eviction Moratorium. We led a National Day of Action in partnership with the Center for Popular Democracy and their grassroots affiliates in September 2021 against one of the largest landlord lobbying organizations in the country, the National Multifamily Housing Council. The NMHC mobilized beginning in 2020 to eliminate the eviction moratorium.

**Campaign support to grassroots partners taking on large scale corporate landlords (2021)** We are supporting several grassroots campaigns, with a particular focus on a corporate campaign in the Twin Cities, led by Inquinxs Unidxs to hold one of the largest single family rental corporate landlords in the U.S, Pretium Partners, accountable for a lack of repairs and exorbitant rent increases. ACRE Institute's support has included financial research, strategic corporate research, drafting Congressional testimony, and facilitating congressional relationships.

**Private equity and predatory finance in housing (2021)** In partnership with Americans for Financial Reform, ACRE has created a research cohort to document the mechanics of private equity and predatory finance in residential real estate. This research is building on the testimony ACRE's Deputy Campaign Director Sofia Lopez gave at the Senate Banking Committee's hearing on private equity landlords and their impact on housing. This research will support the work of grassroots housing organizations in their campaigns against corporate landlords. This research will inform political education to bring more grassroots organizations into the fight against large corporate landlords and the financial actors that are at the core of our housing crisis.



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## CLIMATE JUSTICE

*ACRE Institute's climate and environmental justice program envisions a future where all families live in healthy neighborhoods and where frontline Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities are fully empowered in restructuring our entire economic system to replace polluting industries with a democratically controlled, sustainable, regenerative energy sector.*

### What's ahead of 2022:

The Climate Justice team is continuing to build up corporate and financial campaigning capacity with grassroots environmental justice groups; to identify Wall Street connections to local Black and Indigenous-led frontline fights against toxic facilities and fossil fuel pipeline fights that could add national solidarity components to these campaigns; to ensure more Black and Indigenous-led organizations are represented and active in national climate finance campaigns and the development of financial regulatory demands; and to help facilitate connections and intersections between climate justice campaigns and other movements (such as housing justice, economic justice, and carceral justice fights).

### 2021 Pillar Activities:

**[BlackRock's Governance Mess: As BlackRock Rushes to Cut Climate Risk, Lead Director Murry Gerber Doubles Down on Fossil Fuels.](#)** (2021) The report looks at the extensive ties of BlackRock's lead independent director, Murry Gerber, to the fossil fuel industry - including his personal pandemic profiteering off fossil fuel investments - and the impacts on frontline communities of the fossil fuel companies he's tied to. ACRE and LittleSis also worked together with the [BlackRock's Big Problem](#) campaign, which included coordinating closely with the Sunrise Project and others, as that campaign

rolled out Gerber as a new campaign target, with the hashtag #GerbersGottaGo.

**Stop The Money Pipeline (2021)** ACRE Institute is a steering committee member with the Stop the Money Pipeline Coalition. We support frontline fights and engage in regulatory advocacy to educate congressional staff and financial regulators on why climate change, racial equity, and economic justice need to be priorities for all the agencies that oversee our financial system. Throughout 2021, as members of the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion team and Partnerships team, we worked to ensure that Stop the Money Pipeline is representative of all communities struggling against the fossil fuel industry's exploitation.

**Build Back Fossil Free (2021)** As a member of the core coordinating circle of Build Back Fossil Free, we are working closely with frontline leaders to demand that the Biden Administration adopt 25 executive actions that our coalition has identified that can end the era of fossil fuel production and lead to meaningful investments in Black, Indigenous and Brown communities. Throughout 2022, we will offer strategic campaign support, digital organizing infrastructure, and communications support to draw attention to the frontline Black, Brown, and Indigenous leading campaigns to shut down oil and gas plants and to block the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure. We also resource the Stop Line 3 and Stop Formosa Plastics campaigns through the Build Back Fossil Free Coalition.

**Climate FinReg (2021)** ACRE Institute is filling an urgent need in the climate financial regulation space for a racial justice-led analysis; Black, Brown, and Indigenous representation and participation; and frontline community inclusion in what has typically

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been a white-led, DC-centric space. We began engaging racial justice, environmental justice, and climate justice organizations to develop and advocate for policy recommendations specifically aimed at eliminating harmful climate change-causing private investments and targeting significant reparative private funds into frontline communities of color. Our work also includes subgranting to BIPOC-led groups and frontline groups representing BIPOC communities that might be interested in engaging on climate financial regulatory issues with the benefit of more capacity.

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## CRESCENDO

*ACRE Institute's Crescendo project seeks to eradicate anti-Muslim bigotry and help build political power and radical racial and economic analysis in MASA communities and connect them with movements on the left.*

### What's ahead for 2022:

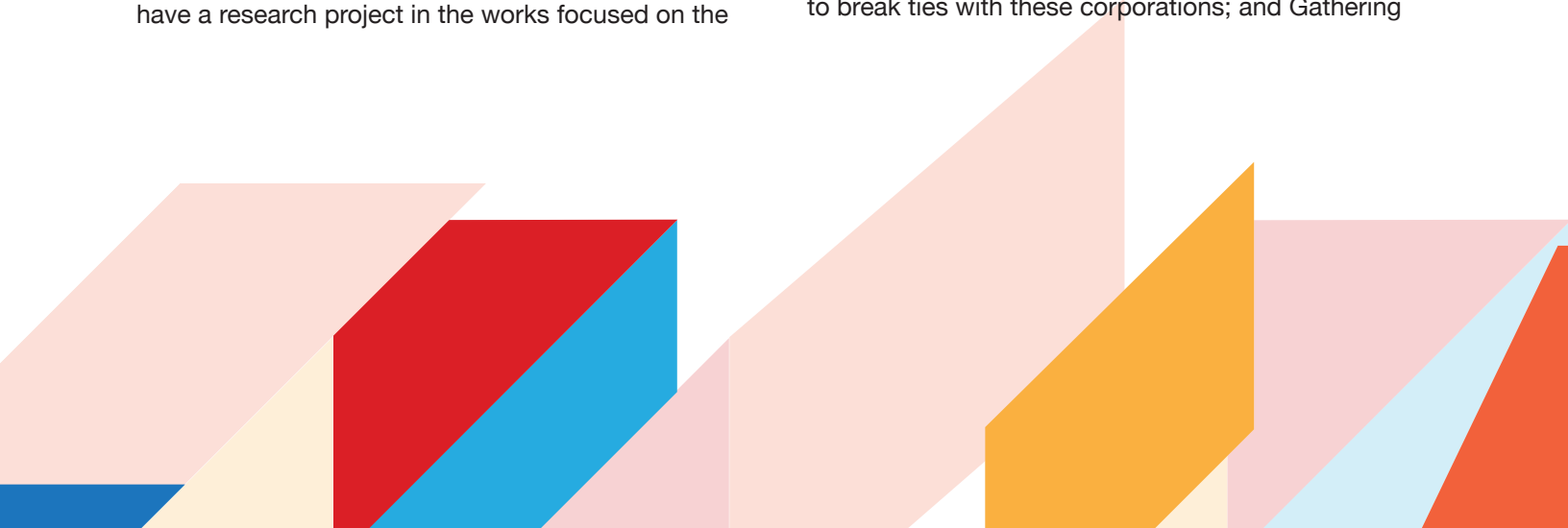
We spent 2021 doing narrative work around Islamophobia, the War on Terror, and complicity of corporations and tech companies. We now want to build on this by shifting their behavior. We are planning to hire a full-time organizer to tackle this work. We plan to build out our #WhoseTube campaign in coordination with other groups that we know are targeting the platform, such as Kashmiri and Palestinian activists. Like the multi-pronged strategies for taking on Facebook that other groups have used, we plan to employ a similar strategy that targets YouTube from different directions. We also have a research project in the works focused on the

experience of Muslim YouTube creators. There is more research to be done around how tech companies are profiting from the War on Terror, particularly related to the use of Artificial Intelligence and drones, plus the ongoing militarization of US policing and borders. We are working to plug-in with organizers pushing back against US militarism whether it is locally via policing, at the borders, and/or globally through our continuing warmongering. Finally, we want to build more deeply with Muslim communities, particularly to bring a corporate and economic analysis to groups already engaged in organizing against Islamophobia and anti-Muslim bigotry.

### 2021 Pillar Activities:

#### Stop Funding Fascism/Unmasking Fidelity (2021)

In response to the January 2021 attack on the Capitol, we launched the [Stop Funding Fascism](#) campaign as an emergency response. In addition to a [press conference](#) held to kick off a flurry of actions, including: convening a rapid response call with nearly 70 peers from across several organizations to make an action plan; writing and sending letters to the CEOs of [Amazon](#), [Blackstone](#), [Fidelity](#), and [Google](#) telling them to stop funding and platforming white supremacists and fascists, with 41 allied organizations signing on with us; mobilizing nearly 4,000 people to send individual [emails](#) to these CEOs on MLK Day, flooding their inboxes with our demand that they #StopFundingFascism; following up our letters to the CEOs of these four corporations by reaching out to some of their most important customers. We sent letters to 30 [pension fund](#) managers, 20 [university](#) presidents, and 18 [foundation](#) presidents, asking them to break ties with these corporations; and Gathering



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more than 8,000 signatures on our [petition](#) calling on these corporations to #StopFundingFascism. We put out a [Medium post](#) to demand that Amazon, Blackstone, Google and Fidelity take decisive action to deplatform and defund white supremacist groups, individuals and content and make serious amends to the communities hurt by their prioritization of profit over peoples' safety. We also created [a social media toolkit](#) for use in any digital organizing work against corporations that supported and profited from divisive rhetoric over the last several years.

ACRE Institute subsequently formed the [Unmasking Fidelity](#) Coalition, a group of mission-aligned organizations. Along with the Hate Is Not Charitable Campaign, the coalition is leading the effort to hold Fidelity accountable for contributing to organizations supporting white supremacists and fascist movements behind the January 6 attack.

**WhoseTube Campaign (2021)** We launched our WhoseTube campaign in response to the two-year anniversary of the tragic and deadly Christchurch massacre. The massacre, which targeted a mosque during prayer and killed more than 50 Muslims, was carried out by a white supremacist that inspired by watching right wing videos on YouTube. YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki has argued that she has since taken steps to strengthen YouTube's hate speech policy and alter its recommendations system. But—under her watch—the streaming platform continues to profit from the spread of anti-Muslim ideology and violence. This campaign called on YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki to put a stop to the spread of anti-Muslim hate on her platform. We launched a petition, released

this [informational video](#) and also continue to share content with our online community via emails and upcoming research that will be released in 2022.

**Big Tech Sells War (2021)** Approaching the 20th anniversary of the Global War on Terror, ACRE Institute, MPower Change, and LittleSis launched our [Digital Destroyers: How Big Tech Sells War on Our Communities](#) campaign during Summer 2021, which highlighted the many ways Big Tech (like Microsoft, Amazon, Google, and Facebook) has supported and profited from the War on Terror over two decades. As a part of this project, we led with our [campaign website](#), [social media toolkit](#) and a series of emails linking our audience to actions, stats and other information to help showcase the enormous amounts of money Big Tech has made from targeting Muslim folks across the globe.

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## WORKERS RIGHTS

*ACRE Institute believes all workers should have the right to collectively bargain and deserve dignity, respect, fair wages, and benefits that allow their families and communities to thrive, and rest.*

### What's ahead for 2022:

Over 2022, we will focus on several areas of tech-based workers' rights abuses. App-based companies are the new phase of an employment model based on the subjugation of workers of color. App-based companies intentionally misclassify workers to disassociate themselves from any obligation to provide their BIPOC workforce with no benefits,

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overtime, OSHA and discrimination protection, job security, guaranteed work hours, skirt UI, and SSN obligations, all in the name of lean overhead in the pursuit of profit. This year, we will continue to build with partner organizations challenging this employment model and fighting the corporate power and political influence of app-based companies like Uber. We will deepen our partnerships with PowerSwitch Action, WPUSA, Gig Workers Rising, and Gig Workers Collective and create connections with other app-based grassroots worker groups across the country. To support our partners, we will continue to advise on strategy, provide strategic research support, solidify research as an active tool to empower the Black and brown workforce, support narrative change, write 1-pagers/briefs/fact sheets, convene worker, elected, and public-facing informational hearings and briefings, and sketch out worker-facing pop ed modules.

We will continue to lead in the Athena Coalition, particularly focusing on creating a resource hub for organizations that are organizing fulfillment centers and last-mile delivery facilities. We will continue to support efforts to end Rate and Time of Task (TOT) which are surveillance measures, disguised as productivity controls, that create high-tech sweatshops that churn and burn through Black and Brown bodies. Rate and TOT measures, and Amazon's overall surveillance infrastructure, pressure workers to work faster, skip breaks, or face punitive measures, including termination if work rates are not met. Black workers disproportionately bear the brunt of Amazon's model, with one New York warehouse being nearly [50% more likely](#) to fire Black workers for productivity rates. Amazon's largely BIPOC workforce is squeezed so hard that the injury rates in its warehouses are at least 80% higher than the

warehouse industry at large. The constant pressure and surveillance have also caused a devastating toll on workers' mental health.

To support an end to this racist and abusive surveillance we will continue to be a part of the TOT table, try to leverage agency (OSHA, DOL, etc.) power to end Amazon's use of surveillance and productivity measures and participate in discussions on workplace surveillance- stressing that companies that many companies that implement invasive worker surveillance predominantly employ Black, Brown, and other workers of color.

### 2021 Program Activities:

**Partnerships and Campaigns (2021)** We have partnered with organizations, including PowerSwitch Action, Gig Workers Rising (GWR), and to coordinate movement efforts to push back against platform corporations like Uber, Lyft, and DoorDash who are actively rolling back worker rights, protections, and benefits. ACRE has committed to helping steer strategy and bottom-line the research during these initial phases of coalition-building.

We provided rapid response research to support GWR's action on DoorDash, which included organized direct action at the CEO's house. We began work on a corporate profile on Uber, preparing for a corporate campaign. Working alongside GWR, we supported the drafting of the unreleased 'Gig Work Kills' brief, which outlines the safety crisis gig companies have created. We work actively alongside partners to determine research priorities, sketch out worker-facing pop ed modules, view health and safety issues through a racial capitalism lens, solidify research as an active tool to empower the Black and brown workforce, and relationship-build.



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## TECHNOLOGY AND SURVEILLANCE

*ACRE Institute believes the internet should be treated as the vital public utility it is and that Big Tech corporations should be heavily regulated.*

### What's ahead for 2022:

Our tech team supports ACRE campaigns across several program areas, including Pillars that are focused on policing and surveillance of Muslim, Black, Brown, and immigrant communities. We have gathered several other organizers of color from organizations like MediaJustice, Fight for the Future, Data 4 Black Lives, and Kairos, who focus on tech and surveillance to conceive a project that connects Big Tech's monopoly power with racial capitalism and promotes our shared vision for cooperatively, publicly-owned tech infrastructure. We hope to hold listening sessions with local, base-building groups that may not already be focused on tech and surveillance in order to broaden our understanding of how best to engage in conversations around Big Tech's monopoly power and its harms on people of color.

ACRE teams across several program areas that are focused on policing and surveillance of Muslim, Black, brown, and immigrant communities are seeking to build a campaign that exposes and seeks to end the ways that local police departments gain access to and receive funding for technologies and equipment that are typically used for military operations. Knowing that military-grade equipment is often used against racial justice protestors of color, we understand that these tools do not make us safer, but rather give local police forces increasingly aggressive and

invasive ways to criminalize Muslim, Black, brown, and immigrant communities. Through the end of the year, ACRE has committed to researching potential corporate targets and local partners to work with next year.

Additionally, ACRE Institute and our allies Fight for the Future, MediaJustice, and others within the Athena coalition, are seeking to curb Amazon's anti-monopoly power by linking it firmly with anti-racism. We are seeking a federal ban on corporate surveillance, which would significantly undercut the ways Amazon uses private surveillance systems like Ring to criminalize BIPOC communities.

### 2021 Pillar Activities:

**Partnerships and Campaigns (2021):** In addition to supporting Crescendo's Big Tech Sells War and WhoseTube campaign; Policing and Incarceration's 21st Century Policing report; and Workers Rights campaigns against the gig economy; and working closely with Athena coalition partners, our Tech team also launched and partnered for anti-monopoly efforts. ACRE's partner MediaJustice led the Athena coalition through a month of actions both online and off that highlighted the ways that Amazon harms communities of color. ACRE partnered with MPower Change to hold a [Twitter townhall](#) that demonstrated how Amazon partners with the police and military to criminalize and surveil Muslim, Black, Brown, and immigrant communities both here and abroad. We organized several partner organizations, including Vigilant Love LA, Muslim Justice League, and Data 4 Black Lives, to speak on these issues from the perspective of their communities.