

Lailan Sandra Huen

DONOR PROFILE

Oakland native Lailan Sandra Huen cares deeply about youth of color and that is why she is a passionate advocate for DataCenter's work to build research capacity for youth of color organizing for educational reform, juvenile justice, and health.



Lailan was the lead coordinator for the Da Town Researchers (DTR), which organizes high school students from Oakland's public schools to assess priority issues affecting their peers and develop policy reform recommendations to the School

Board, using surveys and other youth-led participatory action research tools.

In 2010, the Oakland School Board praised the project for providing unique student perspectives on improving schools, while cultivating exceptional young leaders with a powerful, authentic voice. Many policy recommendations made by the DTR team

were adopted by Oakland Unified School District, leading to victorious student campaigns (in collaboration with the Meaningful Student Engagement Collaborative) demanding programs that support student empowerment and access to college.

"I believe in DataCenter's work because it helps youth find their own voice for change," says Lailan. "The youth movement deserves and needs its own autonomous, independent research infrastructure to ensure that youth are effectively heard in shaping their own realities and future." As a board member of Youth Together and advocate for the National Student Bill of Rights campaign, Lailan now serves DataCenter as a youth research advisor.

Lailan works with California Assemblymember Sandre Swanson as Senior Field Representative on education, housing and community development in Oakland, Alameda and Piedmont. She also co-coordinated her mother Jean Quan's successful mayoral campaign in Oakland in 2010. She is completing a Masters in Media Studies to develop media-based, place-based, action research curriculum for classrooms.

Urban Planning

Communities demand change in the face of daily injustice

by Anne Ryan | Communications Associate

Your average morning: wake up, get dressed, eat breakfast, and head to work or school. But what can slow you down? Minor things: you sleep through your alarm, your hair looks goofy.

Major things: An overcrowded apartment, where you share a bathroom with six other people. A two-hour wait in oppressive heat for the bus. A rising bus fare you can barely afford.

Urban planning--a topic that may seem to some as interesting as staring at the wall--has a huge effect on our basic rights to livelihood. Urban planning determines the ease or inconveniences of our daily lives. In 2011, DataCenter is partnering with two organizations to illuminate issues in urban communities and demonstrate that equity in urban planning is priority #1.



Photo Credit: POWER, People Organized to Win Employment Rights

SOUTH ASIAN RESIDENTS VOICE NEEDS IN NEW YORK

DataCenter has joined *Chhaya Community Development Corporation (Chhaya CDC)* in New York to develop a survey to assess the needs of a South Asian residential community in Queens that faces overcrowding, landlord/tenant tensions, predatory lending and foreclosures. DataCenter will then compile a report, which will document the most pressing needs of this community, so that Chhaya CDC can adapt their programs, increase public awareness about these issues and design strategic urban planning advocacy campaigns. Stay tuned as we continue to update you on this study!

TRANSPORTATION INJUSTICE IN COACHELLA VALLEY, CA

DataCenter, in conjunction with students from the University of California, Berkeley, provided an assessment of transportation issues for *Lideres Campesinas*, a grassroots group of farmworker women in the Coachella Valley, a southern coastal region in California. This assessment was crucial to Lideres' community-based study of low-income and farmworker communities, many of whom rely on public transit as their sole mode of transportation. The final report detailed the egregiously inefficient transit system that led to economic injustices and abuses. Want to learn more? Contact us for the full study!