

**Grassroots Filling in the Cracks for Oregon Farmworkers:  
A Social Justice and Social Movement Analysis of Oregon's Alianza Poder**

by

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**Capstone Research Synthesis**

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## **Abstract**

The agricultural labor system in the United States is predicated upon the oppression of Latinx workers who are frequently denied access to the protection of fair labor laws based on their citizenship status and access to social capital. There is, however, a rich history of political organizing and resistance by farmworkers experiencing exploitation. This research advances social justice and food systems scholarship by looking at how Alianza Poder, a social justice coalition in Oregon, approaches activism with the intent of disrupting farmworker and immigrant exploitation by building economic, social, and political capital through grassroots movement work. Chapter Two discusses the social oppressions that create the social problem of farmworker labor exploitation, and provides background on this Capstone's Overall Research Question, which asks how the social movement coalition Alianza Poder approaches social justice within the context of the historic and ongoing activism of the Oregon farmworkers' movement. Chapter Four presents qualitative research findings that seek to find cures for farmworker exploitation by examining the history and focus of the social movement activism of this Oregon farmworker and immigrant justice coalition. Chapter Five summarizes the research's findings and concludes with reflection on social justice scholarship. Ultimately, findings indicate that supporting grassroots social justice coalitions like Alianza Poder can build social justice movement capacity to make long-term, systems-level change for farmworker justice by using resources to promote cultural recognition and political representation for farmworkers and Latinx immigrants.

Keywords: social justice, social movement, exploitation, farmworker, food system, immigrant, activism

This research is dedicated to the historical and ongoing efforts for farmworker labor justice in the United States.

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Table 1. AP Member Organizations' Approaches to Social Justice Work

## Abbreviations

AP	Alianza Poder
CLI	CAPACES Leadership Institute
MLP	Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas
RMT	Resource Management Theory
PPT	Political Process Theory
CRQ	Constitutive Research Question
USDA ERS	United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service
LUS	Latinos Unidos Siempre
SKCE	Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality
FHDC	Farmworker Housing Development Corporation
WVIP	Willamette Valley Immigration Project
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
ORQ	Overall Research Question
PCUN	Piñeros y Campesinos del Noroeste
SMO	Social Movement Organization
SMT	Social Movement Theory
IMF	International Monetary Fund
US	United States



## One—Introduction

The great social justice changes in our country have happened when people came together, organized, and took direct action. It is this right that sustains and nurtures our democracy today.

—Dolores Huerta

Many of the hands that nurture and prepare the raw ingredients for meals in the United States (US) are not counted at the ballot and have limited access to political representation. Their work sustains the US food system, but their identities and experiences are erased, both in data points and in the dominant narrative of farm labor and food production. However, undocumented workers, the majority of whom have immigrated from Mexico, make up between one-half and three-quarters of the US's farmworkers (Bon Appétit 2011, 1). Undocumented farmworkers have few legal protections, making it easier for farm owners to exploit their labor to generate more profit.

Though undocumented and immigrant farmworkers have limited institutional legislative power, many Mexican undocumented and migrant farmworkers come from a culture of peasant organizing, which offers another pathway to create positive social change (Stephen 2007, 93). As such, there is a rich history of farmworker organizing to protest the inequitable distribution of power in the US agriculture system. In agriculturally intensive areas with a density of immigrant Latinx farm laborers, grassroots organizing efforts amongst workers and allies have gradually created networks of care to help farmworkers form community to meet their own needs in the face of adversity. As these populations set deeper roots over time in farming communities, they build power in numbers and solidarity, which increases their capacity to create systems-level change.

Efforts for farmworker justice through systemic change can help address a social problem that has detrimental impacts on the sustainability of the US food system. Beyond the moral implications of exploiting labor to put food on US tables lies the reality that a farm system that depends on labor exploitation is socially unsustainable. Fewer young immigrants are seeking employment as farmworkers and domestic workers are increasingly disinterested in these low-wage, physically demanding positions (USDA ERS 2022). More applications are being submitted by farm operators for immigrant worker visas through the H-2A Temporary Agriculture Program (H-2A) because there is an increasing need to fill farmworker positions with foreign-born temporary workers (USDA ERS 2022).

At the root of the unsustainable labor relations in the US farm system is exploitation, a socially created problem which has roots in Northern capitalism. Northern capitalism is a socioeconomic system that treats food as a commodity with the potential for creating global cash flow regardless of the human impact (Holt-Giménez 2017, 56). Without intervention, the Northern capitalist system that controls much of the US food system will continue the exploitation of farm laborers in the name of increasing surplus profit, undermining the rights of farmworkers and the long-term viability of the US farm system. Thus, this Capstone's research in food systems and society explores the social problem of farmworker labor exploitation by looking at grassroots activism efforts to develop cures.

In examining the social problem of farm labor exploitation and responses to it, I explore the work of Alianza Poder (AP), a social justice coalition focused on politically and economically empowering Latinx families in Oregon's Willamette Valley. Oregon's Willamette Valley is significant as one of the most productive agricultural regions in Oregon (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. a). AP is made up of nine sister organizations that are connected

through their histories and through their shared visions of equitable opportunities for the farmworker and immigrant Latinx population in the Willamette Valley. Through this research, I document the histories and programming at the core of AP's organizing efforts with the intent of better understanding how farmworkers and their allies can develop cures to farm labor exploitation. My research focuses on this farmworker and immigrant justice coalition's struggles to create social justice change in the face of unjust laws precluding farmworkers from equitable labor protections.

Specifically, this research addresses farmworker labor exploitation by inquiring about grassroots activism to increase farmworker justice. Through this analysis I identify ways to support social justice efforts to develop cures for farmworker labor justice. First, in Chapter Two, I describe the key concepts that have led me to explore farmworker labor as a social problem. Then I explain how farmworker labor exploitation constitutes a social problem to demonstrate the significance of this topic. I then pose my research problem and the research questions that will help me respond to this problem. In Chapter Three, I explain how I designed my research to address these questions as a scholar. In Chapter Four, I present my research findings backed by analysis that draws on theoretical frameworks grounded in social justice and social movement theory. I next explain the contribution that this Capstone has made before concluding my research by reflecting on critical inquiry, the food system as a social construction, and social movement activism in Chapter Five.

## **Two—Background and Significance**

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the social justice issue that this Capstone explores. This chapter will also do the preliminary work of introducing the theoretical perspectives that inform this Capstone research. I first explain how I approach farmworker labor organizing in Oregon based in a framework that engages food systems and society through critical inquiry to increase social justice. I then situate farmworker exploitation as a socially created problem that has social solutions, which can be explored through critical inquiry. Finally, I introduce my Capstone research problem and overall research question, which respond to this social problem by exploring how the grassroots social justice alliance Alianza Poder organizes and mobilizes for farmworker labor justice. The next section introduces and explains food systems and society as the theoretical foundations for my inquiry into farmworker exploitation and social movement activism.

### **Domain of Food Systems and Society**

An understanding of food systems and society guides my critical inquiry into the social problem of farmworker labor exploitation in the US food system. Critical inquiry is an approach to inquiry focused on understanding power structures in ways that can lead to social change (Denzin 2017, 8). Those engaging in critical inquiry strive for equity by questioning existing systems while accounting for the narratives of the oppressed and the narratives of those enacting oppression (Denzin 2017, Miller 2004). In this Capstone research I use critical inquiry to engage with both society and the food system through research into social movement organizing for farm labor justice. Society can be defined as an idea representing a common way of life, often moderated by the state, with implicit or explicit social contracts that influence dominant behavior

and perspectives (Dean 2005, Williams 1985). Built into society are systems for including and excluding individuals, or systems that mediate privileges and oppressions. Selective social inclusion from the process of cooperation defines and reinforces hierarchical social structures in society (Dean 2005, 329). Some individuals have fewer opportunities to define and participate in society than others. For example, in a capitalist system access to social and political power is held by those who have the greatest access to capital. In general, the food system is a network of common resources, needs, opportunities, and relationships subject to inequities in access, representation, and participation of society at large (Béné et al. 2019). A food systems and society framework explores the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of food in conjunction with the food system's socio-political drivers and bio-physical outcomes (Brouwer et al. 2020, Nguyen 2018, Neff et al. 2014). Thus, this research analyzes existing social dynamics in the food system to provide insight into ways to create social justice change (Brouwer et al. 2020, 2). By more closely exploring power relationships in the food system, this research produces knowledge that can be used to identify power inequities and pose solutions.

Specifically, this Capstone research focuses on grassroots organizing efforts addressing the social problem of farmworker labor exploitation performed by members of Alianza Poder. Farmworker labor exploitation is a problem in the food system that has been created by social conditions within US society and Northern capitalism and, as such, is a social problem that can be addressed through social-justice-focused critical inquiry.

### **Social Problems and Social Justice in Food Systems and Society**

In this section I elaborate on my perspective on social justice as a researcher and explain farmworker labor exploitation as a social problem. First, I define a social problem. Next, I define

social justice. Using these definitions, I describe how US farm labor exploitation meets the criteria of a social problem and why this constitutes a social justice issue. Then I discuss the social harms of farm labor exploitation through social categories of oppression to both provide context and demonstrate the significance of this social problem to social justice activism. Next, I discuss how these oppressions create or are created by privileges enjoyed by other social groups, like capitalists, thereby perpetuating the social problem. Finally, I explore some cures to root causes of farmworker labor exploitation before describing how I will address this social problem through research.

As discussed above society, and the food system as a facet of society, has inequities that are reinforced over time through unjust concentrations of resources like capital and privilege. The unjust concentration of resources creates situations of oppression that, in turn, constitute social problems. A social problem is “a condition that involves harm to one or more individuals and/or one or more social entities, has at least one social cause and/or at least one social effect, and consequently has one or more social remedies” (Alessio 2011, 3). Some social problems are produced by inequities within society. Inequity exists when the value of different essentialized identities, like race, gender, class, and ethnicity, are perceived by society as falling along a falsely naturalized hierarchy because of social conditioning, thereby affording privileges and opportunities to some identities at the expense of oppressing others (Adams and Zuniga 2018, Johnson 2011). Social action aspiring towards justice can work towards solving social problems and addressing inequities to create a more level social foundation for all regardless of born identity.

This research inquires about social justice and activism to learn more about ways to address the inequities experienced by immigrant farmworkers. Social justice is a reflexive

pursuit that aspires toward the goals of equitably meeting basic human needs by supporting access to essential resources, freedom from conditions of exploitation and oppression, and accessibility regarding opportunity and full participation in society regardless of gender, race, class, sexuality, or ethnicity (Allen 2008, DuPuis 2011, Fraser 2004, Fraser 2008). Fraser's (2004, 2008) framework for social justice develops the concepts of socioeconomic redistribution, cultural recognition, and political representation to describe different aspects of social justice and different approaches to social justice work. Within this framework, socioeconomic redistribution provides equitable access to resources, legal and cultural recognition creates equitable social valuations free from hierarchical categories of privilege and oppression, and political representation promotes equitable participation through decision-making (Fraser 2004, Fraser 2008, Smaal et al. 2020). Fraser's (2004, 2008) framework for social justice can be used to explore solutions to the problem of farmworker labor exploitation developed by grassroots social justice organizations in AP. In turn, these solutions may point towards cures for the social problem of US farm labor exploitation, especially as it pertains to the immigrant Latinx population that comprises most low wage farmworkers.

While this Capstone research takes a meso- and micro-level analytical approach to observe the cures developed by a social justice coalition in Oregon, the overarching social problem addressed in this research is US farm labor exploitation. Exploitation is a structural relationship between social groups wherein those who have the power to decide "what work is, who does what for whom, how work is compensated, and the social process by which the results of work are appropriated" use their power to extract wealth through the labor of less powerful groups (Young 1990, 61). In the Northern capitalist system of the US capitalists hold the social and political power necessary to enforce a labor hierarchy that preserves their ability to claim

personal wealth from the results of farmworkers' labor without equitably sharing wealth or the benefits of labor with the laborers. However, even capitalist-inclined growers privileged with the opportunity to control land are constrained by the need to pay the taxes and fees associated with land ownership, as well as rising costs of production, thereby creating a cycle of overproduction in the name of profitability that is not reflected in farmworker wages (Guthman 2011, 59). While growers are exploiting farmworkers to meet the demands of land ownership, larger corporations and more powerful capitalists exploit growers. Corporations recognize that increasing the concentration of their market control over agricultural holdings gives them more power to control pricing and production of US farms to keep their labor costs low by keeping the price of food low (Howard 2016, 13). To this end, corporations employ lobbyists and contribute to political causes that ensure their continued power over agricultural production, and thus the cost of labor. While this relationship between power and profit has some degree of harm for all but the most powerful in this system, farmworkers as the most socially vulnerable bear the brunt of the social harms created by farm labor exploitation.

Farmworkers, especially those without citizenship status, are especially vulnerable to exploitation because they are denied access to many social privileges in the US, including full participation in and protection by society. For example, farmworkers are not guaranteed the same labor protections by federal law as workers in other industries. Currently, farm labor remains exempt from federal workplace protections covered by the Fair Labor and Standards Act (FLSA) like collective bargaining rights, overtime pay, unemployment insurance, and even minimum wage laws in some situations (Bon Appétit 2011, ii-iv). These exemptions are justified to maintain the profitability of farms, but also reciprocally create conditions of poverty for farmworkers. Thus, farm labor exploitation fits the established definition of a social problem



because farmworkers experience poverty-related harms including negative health outcomes, inequitable access to opportunity, and inequitable access to capital because of oppression and exploitation justified by perspectives of racism, sexism, classism, and xenophobia that uphold the hierarchies of capitalism in the US (Sbicca et al. 2020, 264).

Oppression is the systematic and personal suppression of groups or individuals' "ability to develop and exercise their capacities and express their needs, thoughts, and feelings" as enacted along the lines of dominance/subordination determined by socially reinforced ideas around group identity in relation to race, class, gender, ethnicity, and religion (Young 1990, 56). To elaborate on the harms and social causes of farm labor exploitation, I next discuss the oppressions and reciprocal privileges created by US farm labor as organized by the social categories of race, ethnicity, class, and gender.

### *Oppressions Based on Race and Ethnicity*

Latinx farmworkers experience race-based oppressions which constitute racism. Racism functions as a socially constructed system of categorization that has "institutional, cultural, and interpersonal patterns and practices that create advantages for people legally defined and socially constructed as white", and corollary disadvantages for people defined as belonging to racial groups that were not considered white (Castaneda and Zuniga 2013, 58). The US farmworker population is composed of a relatively high proportion of individuals who are vulnerable to both race and ethnicity-based oppressions and thus more vulnerable to exploitation. Ethnicity is a socially constructed way of categorizing individuals based on their countries of origin (Platt 2019, 91). Ethnic categorization is often defined in relation to minority groups as a way of creating a category separate from and subject to exclusions from the rights and benefits bestowed upon the majority population (Platt 2019, 91). According to the USDA Economic Research

Service (USDA ERS) (2019), 57% of farm workers are of Mexican origin and only 53% of farm workers are US citizens. It is likely that a higher percentage of the farmworker population in the US are ethnically Mexican, but the USDA's census process is not comprehensive regarding undocumented workers (Bon Appétit 2011, 3). Narratives around potential threats posed by Mexican workers taking positions in the US workforce that could be held by US citizens, as well as racist narratives that categorize Latinx individuals as inferior help justify farmworker labor exploitation (Sbicca et al. 2020, 264). Food insecurity rates among the Latinx community and other vulnerable low-income, minority groups impacted by racism are double the rate of the national average and have been linked with negative health outcomes like obesity, malnourishment, and depression (Weigel 2007, 2-3). In a racist system, these poverty-related harms created by labor exploitation are falsely justified as the symptoms of Latinx individuals' innate inferiority, thereby justifying exploitation of farmworker labor through racist and nativist narratives. Poverty-related harms like food insecurity that can be symptomatic of race-based oppressions are also symptomatic of, and intersectional with, class-based oppressions.

### *Oppressions Based on Class*

Class-based oppression creates a false hierarchy that bestows social power in relation to access to wealth and capital. Those without access to wealth or capital are forced into low wage labor to provide the means for their own subsistence. Undesirable or dangerous jobs that pay relatively little, like farm work, are staffed by individuals who do not have the class or social capital to access other ways of making money. Class is a system that categorizes people based on their "occupations and incomes, but also and importantly, by the lifestyle and sub-cultural characteristics... associated" (Alessio 2011, 86). These class-indicative "lifestyle and sub-cultural" characteristic can provide or, in the case of cultural outsiders like immigrants, prevent

access to some class privileges like employment or social acceptance regardless of actual income. However, the colonial distribution of land, capital, and rank that has shaped the modern US agricultural labor system ensures that people of color, in this case primarily Latinx workers, have less access to class conditions necessary to dictate the terms of their own labor (Graddy-Lovelace 2016, 83). Classism and racism are thus interconnected and intersectional in US farm labor. Furthermore, global trade liberalization policies like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have separated peasant farmers in Mexico from opportunities to provide for themselves and their families using traditional subsistence farming methods (Minkoff-Zern 2014, 1192). After NAFTA passed in 1994, the influx of cheap US corn into Mexico drove down the prices for food, making it impossible for many Mexican farmers to compete (Minkoff-Zern 2014, 1192). Though NAFTA provided wealthy agribusiness capitalists with the opportunity to make more money on the global market, many Mexican farmers were pushed into poverty.

The need to make a wage drove these farmers across the border to the US to find work on farms. However, wages among US farmworkers average \$10.60/hour, much lower than the national hourly wage average or what is considered a livable wage given the cost of living in the US (Hernandez and Gabbard, 2018). This estimation of average farmworker wages again does not include undocumented farmworkers, who are often paid even less. Some workers receive a piece rate wage which does not guarantee making the federal minimum wage and some farmworkers are illegally denied wages upon completing informal work contracts (Bales and Soodalter 2010, 46). Many Mexican and Latinx farmworkers become financially trapped by the high cost of housing and food imposed by employers in rural areas who exploit the workers' inability to access transportation to price gouge them out of their already meager wages (Minkoff-Zern 2014, 1192). Therefore, farmworkers experiencing poverty and other class-based

oppressions are more vulnerable to oppression and exploitation. Furthermore, experienced by farmworkers based on race, nationality, and class are even further compounded for female farmworkers.

### *Oppressions Based on Gender*

Women in farm labor experience intersectional oppressions based on false social hierarchies around race, ethnicity, and class, on top of oppressions based on gender. Gender is the socially constructed performance of traits based upon perceived physical sex that serves to categorize labor and assign hierarchical roles (Curthoys 2005, Ridgeway 2011, Platt 2019). As mentioned above, gendered oppression for female farmworkers is intersectional, meaning that their experience of gender-based oppression, or sexism, is compounded by the other oppressions that they face (Platt 2019, 84). For example, female farmworkers are particularly affected by unsanitary fieldwork conditions like the lack of toilets at field work sites because they are exposed both to a health risk and the risk of sexual assault (Bon Appétit 2011, 11). The crowded housing conditions for farmworkers can also provide physical and mental health harms as well as the potential for sexual assault for female farmworkers (Bon Appétit 2011, 11). Women, and especially women of color, are less likely to occupy higher paid management and supervision positions in agriculture than men, thereby limiting opportunities for representation, recognition, and resource access for female farmworkers (USDA ERS 2020). In addition to more difficult conditions at work, Latinx female farmworkers are at higher risk for human trafficking and receive no childcare support, which both increases their workload and creates harms and risks for their children (Sbicca et al. 2020, 264). Despite the dismal work conditions in the US the lack of widespread work for women in Mexico, especially in rural areas, continues to drive women across the border to seek opportunities to make an income for themselves and their families

(Stephen 2007, 182). These conditions of desperation and exploitation using race, ethnicity, class, and gender-based social oppressions as justification continue because oppressions can reciprocally create opportunities of privilege for select individuals.

### *Oppression and Privilege*

The continuation of farmworker labor exploitation has roots in capitalism, which justifies both oppression and exploitation in the name of profit and economic growth. Those who benefit from profit at the expense of exploitation are privileged in relation to the accrual of social and economic capital. Oppression is thus formulated in relation to privilege; for every category that is privileged, one or more are oppressed in relation (Johnson 2013, 17). Guthman (2011) explains that in the United States farmland was historically given to white men as a way of consolidating this select group's power by providing them with the means to capitalize (55). The privilege of owning land in a patriarchal society gave these white men the opportunity to pass on generational wealth to their white male descendants, thereby contributing to the concretization of political and economic power for white men in the US. Political and economic power is a form of privilege that affords the right to make decisions about society for one's own benefit. Privilege can continue to accrue over time; by having access to land, privileged individuals have more access to economic opportunities and political representation. Individuals who do not have access to land, money, or political power must work for landowners if they wish to earn an income from farming. Privileged landowners can then dictate the terms of their laborers' work and working conditions, creating opportunities for exploitation.

Put simply, the social problem of farm labor exploitation continues because some individuals benefit from surplus profit gained from the oppression and exploitation of farmworkers. Surplus is the new wealth produced through a business after the labor input is

taken away from the value added through the activities of production (Cameron et al. 2013, 56). The inequity that exists between farmworkers and agribusiness capitalists intensifies as surplus profit for owners grows. By keeping labor costs low, business owners like growers, corporate executives in control of highly capitalized operations, and food processors can extract more surplus from their businesses for their personal wealth or investments. These capitalists can reduce the labor inputs for their businesses by withholding fair wages and resources like access to healthcare, transportation, or safe housing. Given the accrual of surplus profit over time, the US agrifood industrial complex is now wealthy and powerful enough to enforce control over global economic institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Holt-Giménez and Shattuck 2011, 317, 318). This degree of political power reinforces agribusiness capitalists' privileges by affording them the power to make national and global decisions around land use to serve private rather than public interests. For example, as investment firms purchase farmland to increase individual profit, farmland is increasingly being utilized to generate non-food products that create more income, such as biofuel (Lawrence 2017, 782). Other wealthy capitalists in the US stand to indirectly benefit from farm labor exploitation because it allows for cheaper food, which helps to sustain cheap labor for other low-wage industries (Patel and Moore 2017, 143-144). By using influence and wealth to control the land, powerful individuals in agribusiness continue to dictate the terms of food production, including the labor relations, for their own benefit. As such, the social conditions of the US's Northern capitalist farm labor and legal system benefit capitalists, who in turn work to uphold the economic and political conditions that allow them to generate profit from labor exploitation in the food system.

## *Cures*

Given that Northern capitalism rewards capitalists who can reduce labor costs by keeping wages low while appropriating as much value from their laborers' work as possible, one possible cure to farmworker labor exploitation would be to systemically change Northern capitalism. This could look like setting a higher national minimum wage to improve the quality of life for all workers, providing universal health care to all residents of the US regardless of nationality, enforcing labor laws through regular inspections in both rural and urban areas, and enforcing higher tax rates on the wealthy to pay for social services. However, as Holt-Giménez (2017) points out, we must first address the systems of racism, classism, and patriarchy discussed above if we truly want to build a more equitable system (172). For example, creating labor standards without addressing racist and nativist narratives that classify foreign-born farmworkers without official work permissions as illegal aliens will likely have little impact on the labor experiences of undocumented workers. Employers may continue to justify the exploitation of foreign-born farmworkers by categorizing their labor and presence as inferior to that of US-born workers. Similarly, in a patriarchal society even a labor system with more equitable working conditions will most likely continue to ignore the value of women's home and care work. Changing immigration and labor laws to give all workers equal rights regardless of citizenship could be one way to approach changing the power structures that allow for farmworker exploitation. However, as long as social power is unjustly distributed based on wealth, ethnicity, race, and gender, those who hold power will continue to protect their access to the privileges that power bestows.

While the work of dismantling these deeply entrenched systems of inequity continues, farmworkers and allies have found some ways to build their own networks of support and

representation. Collective bargaining with employers is one possible grassroots cure that can put more power to reduce labor exploitation in farmworkers' hands. Groups like the United Farm Workers (UFW) and Piñeros y Campesinos Unidos (PCUN) organizing farmworkers to unionize and stage protests against workplace abuse. These two farmworker union organizations, based in California and Oregon respectively, have amplified farmworkers' voices to make changes to labor laws and facilitate more equitable labor contracts at individual work sites. Some of their successes include banning physically destructive farm tools like the short-handle hoe, increasing farmworker piece-rate wages, finding healthcare solutions for farmworkers, pushing for regulation of harmful chemical inputs, building legislative presence for the political representation of farmworkers, developing pension plans, helping farmworkers obtain drivers' licenses, increasing farmworker access to information and media representation through community radio programs, and securing the rights to overtime wages for farmworkers in both California and Oregon (Kim 2017, University of Oregon n.d., Swenson 2022). Ultimately, to make radical changes to the US system of farmworker exploitation, social change as well as federal and state level changes in legislation are necessary. It is also necessary to change global economic relationships that have developed through colonialism and unfettered Northern capitalism. Though these changes may seem daunting to undertake, grassroots activists have been working to address farmworker exploitation and its roots for over seventy years.

### **Capstone Research Problem and Overall Research Question**

Given the persistent social problem of farm labor exploitation and that cures for it are not evidently forthcoming from federal or state protections, this Capstone's research explores grassroots efforts at finding cures for farmworker labor exploitation using data gathered from the



social justice work of Oregon's Alianza Poder (AP)AI. The specific research problem that this Capstone focuses on is better understanding how grassroots activism efforts can address farmworker labor exploitation. I approach this research problem from a food systems and society perspective, which uses critical inquiry to develop scholarship that improves social justice in the food system. A food system and society perspective recognizes that the food system, as a part of society, is impacted by social structures and can reinforce social hierarchies. To this end, this research addresses farmworker labor exploitation by exploring AP's emergence in the Oregon farmworkers' movement as well as the alliance's modern approaches to developing cures for systemic oppression and exploitation of farmworkers with the intent of discovering ways to improve social justice action. The activism performed by these organizations, which are largely made up of farmworkers and local allies, can demonstrate some possible cures for the social problem of farmworker labor exploitation.

The scope of this research is focused on organizing efforts for farmworker rights in Oregon and, specifically, the social movement coalition Alianza Poder. Again, AP is a coalition of nine sister organizations that provide services, build capacity, and politically advocate for Latinx, undocumented, and migrant worker communities in Oregon (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d.). I use a social justice framework and social movement theory to analyze the role of AP organizations in the Oregon farmworkers' movement over time. To understand the approaches to social justice action used by the organizations in AP, I employ Fraser's (2004, 2008) representation, recognition, and redistribution framework for social justice.

This research also draws on social movement theory (SMT) to contextualize the emergence and approaches of AP member organizations. AP's member organizations originated from informal grassroots activism as a part of the ongoing farmworker justice and immigrant

social movement in Oregon. A social movement is an organized group with a sense of shared identity that engages in collective action as political outsiders and uses some non-institutional methods to pursue social change over time (Staggenborg 2017, Snow et al. 2019, Gupta 2017). Institutional methods include activism pursued through courts, lobbying, seeking campaign contributions, and engaging in the legislative process (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). Non-institutional methods include protests, boycotts, the formation of special purpose associations and coalitions, public meetings, vigils, rallies, demonstrations, petition drives, statements to public media, informal distribution of movement literature and other forms of citizen organizing outside of traditional legal process (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). While early AP organizations were founded as non-institutional citizen organizing efforts, all nine sister organizations have coalesced into social movement organizations. Social movement organizations (SMOs) are formal institutions created by social movement actors to pressure governments to affect policy change, educate the public about the movement, and sustain resources to allow the movement to continue to exist outside of individual protest events (Brooker and Meyer 2019, 257). Forming SMOs can grant legitimacy to social movements and allow social movement actors to leverage their organizing power to gather the resources necessary to make long-term institutional change through political process. The organizations in AP each separately meet the definitions of SMOs because they use institutional and non-institutional methods to pursue social change in the interests of farmworkers. Furthermore, AP organizations' methods and messaging trace their lineage to farmworker justice movements reaching back to the 1940s like the United Farm Workers movement led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. Therefore, SMT, which specifies analytical approaches for understanding social movements' strategies and approaches, is an important conceptual framework for understanding the role of AP in ongoing Oregon

farmworker justice movement (Gupta 2017, 7-8). I use the categories and language of SMT to better understand the emergence, resourcing, and on-going activism of AP organizations.

Besides individually qualifying as SMOs, the member organization of AP have come together to create what SMT refers to as a social movement coalition. A social movement coalition acts as a structure to bridge the activism of individual SMOs with the goal of creating cohesive social movement collective activism (Brooker and Meyer 2019, 253). In the case of AP, the member organizations Piñeros y Campesinos del Noroeste (PCUN), Mano a Mano Family Center (Mano a Mano), the Farmworker Housing Development Corporation (FHDC), Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas (MLP), Latinos Unidos Siempre (LUS), the Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality (SKCE), the CAPACES Leadership Institute (CAPACES), and Evolve Workforce Development and Multifamily Housing (Evolve) share institutional connections like human resources, organizing tactics, leadership development strategies, and movement ideology while also maintaining their individual forms of social activism for farmworker and immigrant justice in the Willamette Valley. This allyship as a social movement coalition builds capacity through resource-sharing while ensuring that AP's social movement work is cohesive.

To summarize, this Capstone research applies conceptual frameworks based in social justice and SMT to analyze AP as a part of the Oregon farmworker movement. The purpose of this inquiry is to better understand how grassroots social movement coalitions organize their social justice activism and how they can be supported in their efforts to reduce the exploitation of farmworkers and immigrants in Oregon. Understanding the organizing activities of a social movement coalition focused on achieving social justice for farmworkers in Oregon as well as the political processes that have impacted their organizational growth will reveal more about actions that can be taken to create a socially just food system through robust social movements.

As such, this research addresses the problem of farmworker labor exploitation by exploring AP's emergence in the Oregon farmworkers' movement as well as the alliance's modern approaches to developing cures for systemic oppression and exploitation of farmworkers with the intent of discovering ways to improve social justice action. The overall research question guiding this Capstone's inquiry into social movement activism for farmworker labor rights is: How does the social movement coalition Alianza Poder approach social justice within the context of the historic and ongoing activism of the Oregon farmworkers' movement?

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In summary, this chapter has explained the social problem of focus for this Capstone research, which is the oppression and exploitation of farmworkers in the US. The lack of legal labor protections for farmworkers leaves opportunities for exploitation and oppression of marginalized groups. This chapter then presented the overall research question that guides my inquiry into the organizing efforts of grassroots social justice coalitions that provide representation for farmworkers with the intention of securing more just labor conditions. I also introduced social justice and social movement frameworks used to organize and analyze these efforts. The next chapter describes how I address social movement efforts to change farmworker labor conditions through systematic critical social justice inquiry.

### **Three—Methodology and Methods**

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the guiding questions, methodologies, and methods that I used to structure my exploration of Alianza Poder's social movement organizing for farmworker justice and immigrant justice in Oregon. First, I explain my perspectives on the purpose of research and contextualize my research efforts as critical inquiry. Then I pose this Capstone's research questions, which include the overall research question and two constitutive research questions that were developed to answer the overall research question through critical inquiry. I detail how conceptual frameworks of political process theory (PPT), resource mobilization theory (RMT), and Fraser's categories for social justice action structure my inquiry my constitutive research questions. Finally, I outline this Capstone's research design, which details units of analysis for each of the constitutive research questions as well as my methodological approach, methods for data collection, and strategies for data organization and analysis that address each constitutive research question and the overall research question. In summary, this chapter describes the structure of my social justice research on social movement organizing within the farm labor movement.

#### **Capstone Research Paradigm**

This Capstone's social justice research uses critical inquiry to learn about ways that grassroots social movements have addressed farmworker labor exploitation. Specifically, this research explores Alianza Poder's emergence in the Oregon farmworkers' movement and the alliance's approaches to developing cures for systemic oppression and exploitation of farmworkers. While there are a variety of research paradigms that could address the approaches

to activism that AP organizations take to address farmworker exploitation, I choose to adopt a research approach informed by critical inquiry.

My choice to use critical inquiry in this Capstone is informed by the imperatives of a food systems and society perspective. Critical inquiry is a research paradigm born from critical theory, which is an analytical and explanatory approach that questions power and centers the voices of those who are often silenced as a foundation for stimulating social action (Miller 2004, 823). Critical inquiry is a way to apply critical theory by, for example, analyzing and understanding the perspective of those served by social justice programs with the intent of developing ideas for informed political action (Denzin 2017, 12). To this end, critical inquiry questions and challenges hegemonic social narratives by amplifying the voices of those who are oppressed by social structures. As such, critical inquiry is a research paradigm that aims to uncover and address oppression in society to realize more socially just outcomes (Denzin 2017, 8). In adopting critical inquiry as a research paradigm, I strive to increase social justice through scholarship by centering sources that include the voices of farmworkers and their allies who are engaged in social justice work to oppose farmworker exploitation.

Though my perspective is inherently limited by my individual positionality, I engage in this research with the intent to politically participate in a way that demonstrates responsible citizenship. As a researcher I seek to consciously challenge the biases of perspective inherent in my positionality as a white, educated, middle-class woman with US citizenship that has worked in multiple roles in the food system while conducting my critical inquiry. I have seen first-hand the differences between my working experiences in the food system and those of Latinx workers, both with work visas or citizenship and without. My perspective and position on Latinx farmworker exploitation is imprinted with my perception of labor inequality in the food system.

Though I cannot claim neutrality, I have developed the research questions and conceptual frameworks explained in the next section using critical inquiry and social justice as guiding frameworks for research that add scholarly perspective to my positionality as a worker in the food system.

### **Capstone Research Questions**

In this section I frame the research questions that guide this Capstone's critical inquiry into the social problem of farmworker oppression and exploitation. I first restate the overarching social problem, the research problem, and the overall research question that shape this Capstone's inquiry. I then explain the constitutive research questions proposed to address the overall research question. I also describe the frameworks that guide inquiry into the overall research question and explain how the conceptual frameworks will be used to explore my constitutive research questions. This section will act as a roadmap for my critical inquiry into the social problem of farm labor exploitation through the lens of grassroots social movement activism.

My Capstone research is structured to respond to the social problem of farmworker exploitation. I address farmworker labor exploitation by exploring AP's emergence in the Oregon farmworkers' movement and the alliance's approaches to developing cures for systemic oppression and exploitation of farmworkers in order to effectively support and replicate their work. My overall research question is: How does the social movement coalition Alianza Poder approach social justice action within the context of the historic and ongoing activism of the Oregon farmworkers' movement?

Using critical inquiry, I will explore the histories and social justice-oriented organizing strategies used by AP to better understand the Oregon farmworker justice movement and how these efforts can be supported in their pursuit of social justice. This Capstone will use two constitutive research questions to address the ORQ and explore how AP's social movement activism has addressed the social problems of farmworker labor exploitation and oppression.

The first constitutive research question that will guide my exploration of AP's social justice-oriented activities for farmworker labor is: What resources, organizational structures, and political opportunities supported the emergence of each of AP's nine sister organizations? I use critical historical inquiry and SMT to provide context on how and why the organizations in AP emerged. I define critical historical inquiry as historical inquiry that questions power, is political in nature, centers the voices of the oppressed and marginalized, and promotes activism (Miller 2004, 823). A critical historical lens looks at the formation of power structures in the broader context of history (Miller 2004, 823). Critical historical inquiry allows me to contextualize the history of farmworker labor movements and the existing state of farmworker labor in Oregon with sources that center the voices of the oppressed.

My critical historical inquiry is guided by social movement theory, focusing on political process theory (PPT) and resource mobilization theory (RMT), as ways of situating the activities of the members of AP within the Oregon state and US national farm labor movement histories. PPT is a branch of SMT that contends that the political environment impacts social movement activism and thus looks at the mobilizing structures, political opportunity, and framing processes that lead to social movement activism (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). Mobilizing structures are the networks, groups, and organizations that recruit movement members, gather and deploy resources, and organize social movement activism (Staggenborg 2016, 196). Political



opportunities are favorable political conditions as recognized by social movement actors for movement mobilizing (McAdam et al. 2001, McAdam and Tarrow 2019). These political conditions typically fall into one of six categories: the diffusion of hegemonic political power, the willingness of the polity to accept new movements or actors, threats to the movement, political instability, access to influential allies, the openness of the dominant regime to collective action claims, and periods of political change (McAdam et al. 2001, McAdam and Tarrow 2019). Framing refers to the way movements construct their cultural meaning and social narrative to identify grievances, threats, solutions, and opportunities to mobilize (Staggenborg 2016, 23). Given that each of these individual components are political processes that contribute to social movement formation, I use PPT categories to organize my research in this constitutive research question.

As social movement coalition, AP member organization require resources to form and sustain activism over time. Therefore, I also rely on RMT as another branch of SMT that helps me explore the availability of emergent resources that may have provided opportunities for the formation of AP member organizations. RMT identifies how access to and strategic deployment of resources like funding, human resources, commitment, office space, and infrastructure contribute to social movement coalescence and activism (Jenkins and Perrow 1977, Staggenborg 2017, Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). I use each of these resource categories identified by RMT scholarship as important to social movement formation to further explore the emergence of AP organizations.

In summary, I use aspects of SMT's PPT and RMT to identify the resources, political opportunities, and organizational structures cited by AP organizations in their histories to describe the emergence of AP as a coalition seeking social justice for farmworkers and their

families. I choose to use the organizations' own histories or the histories of scholars that have documented aspects of the organizations' work to describe the emergent history of AP.

Answering this research question illuminates the conditions that generate social movement activism for farmworker labor justice, which may be able to address the social problem of farm labor exploitation.

This Capstone's second constitutive research question is: How do the member organizations of AP describe their approaches to social justice action? Social justice as specified by Fraser's (2004, 2008) framework of redistribution, recognition, and representation, as well as SMT, were the guiding frameworks for this constitutive research question. In Fraser's framework there are three components to social justice action. Socioeconomic redistribution provides equitable access to resources. Legal and cultural recognition creates equitable social valuations free from hierarchical categories of privilege and oppression. Finally, political representation promotes equitable participation through institutional decision-making (Fraser 2004, 2008). These components are also known as Fraser's three R's (Smaal et al., 2020). Categorizing and organizing the activities of social movement groups in AP using the lens of social justice helps me describe the specific approaches to social justice programming that AP groups undertake in order to identify emphases and aspects of social justice at the center of their farmworker labor organizing efforts. By describing these approaches, my research sheds light on the range of social justice engagements in AP, as well as what grassroots cures may exist for the problem of farmworker labor exploitation.

I complement this analysis of social justice approaches by examining whether AP activities focus on institutional or non-institutional approaches to social change. To reiterate, institutional methods include activism pursued through courts, lobbying, seeking campaign

contributions, and engaging in the legislative process (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). Non-institutional methods include protests, boycotts, the formation of special purpose associations and coalitions, public meetings, vigils, rallies, demonstrations, petition drives, statements to public media, informal distribution of movement literature and other forms of citizen organizing outside of traditional legal process (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). Thus, I use SMT to better understand how AP organizations perform the social justice work analyzed using Fraser's (2004, 2008) categories of social justice. Considering the prevalence of institutional and non-institutional approaches demonstrates what organizing approaches AP organizations have taken in their grassroots social justice activism to make changes to the political structures that reinforce farmworker exploitation.

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Overall, this question describes and categorizes the social justice actions taken by organizations in AP. By using social justice theory categories of redistribution, recognition, and representation alongside the SMT categories of institutional or non-institutional activism I seek to describe AP organizations' current approaches to activism. Answering this question helps illuminate cures that may emerge from grassroots social justice coalitions working against farmworker labor exploitation. This question also identifies gaps in the types of social justice work that grassroots social justice coalitions organizing around social conditions created by farmworker exploitation can enact. Next, I describe how I document and analyze the social justice-oriented efforts of social movement groups using the frameworks elaborated.

## Capstone Research Design

The research problem that this Capstone focuses on is how grassroots activism efforts can address farmworker labor exploitation. To address this research problem in the context of Oregon's agricultural system, this Capstone asked the overall research question: How does the social movement coalition Alianza Poder approach social justice action within the context of the historic and ongoing activism of the Oregon farmworkers' movement? The following section will detail the research design for each of the constitutive research questions explained above.

For each constitutive research question, I will first identify and explain the unit of analysis used. Next, I will describe the methodological approaches used to analyze each constitutive research question. Then, I will outline my methods for data collection and analysis.

The first constitutive research question that will guide my exploration of AP's social justice activism is: What resources, organizational structures, and political opportunities supported the emergence of each of AP's nine sister organizations?

My units of analysis for CRQ 1 are the historical and political contexts from which AP's social movement groups emerged. To reiterate, the groups included in AP are: Piñeros y Campesinos Unidos, Mano a Mano Family Center, the Farmworker Housing Development Corporation, Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas, Latinos Unidos Siempre, the Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality, the CAPACES Leadership Institute and Evolve Workforce Development and Multifamily Housing. The scope of this question is the histories of the social movement groups within AP, as well as any relevant Oregon state history or Oregon and California farmworker movement history. To address this question and unit of analysis, I used critical historical inquiry guided by political process theory and resource mobilization theory to contextualize how and the SMOs in AP emerged. Critical inquiry as described by Denzin (2017)

will allow me to describe the existing state of farmworker labor in Oregon using sources that center the voices of the oppressed, in this case farmworkers facing labor abuses to develop an understanding of the existing power structures in the farmworker labor justice movement and how the activism of the social movement coalition AP fits into this broader narrative (Miller 2004, 823). My critical inquiry for CRQ 1 focuses on the histories around each organizations' emergence as described in movement literature, including relevant scholarly analysis of first-person interviews.

The unit of observation is historical record found in literature from relevant scholarly sources and AP organizations' institutional literature. I focused on AP histories as described by member organizations whenever possible because the perspectives and framing that these histories provide give insight to subjective observations of key social movement characteristics relevant to PPT and RMT analytical categories. I also prefer AP organization histories as a researcher conducting critical inquiry because these histories center the voices of farmworkers and social movement activists facing oppressions. In the case of missing organizational histories, I use scholarly articles that describe the emergence of AP organizations. The scholarly articles I used primarily draw on case studies and interviews to describe organization emergence, thus keeping the focus of my research on the voices of farmworkers and social movement activists. These were identified through searches of institutional literature that linked to scholarly and media descriptions of organizations and through searches in academic databases using the member organizations of AP as tags. The data sources sampled were from 1977 to the present; 1977 was when the Willamette Valley Immigration project, precursor to Piñeros y Campesinos del Noroeste (PCUN), the first organization in AP, was founded.

To organize and analyze the data collected, I used RMT and PPT to create categories to describe the emergence of AP organizations. By looking at AP emergence through these social movement categories I was able to understand the social justice coalition as a part of the greater farmworker justice movement. These broad categories are the mobilizing structures, political opportunities, and resourcing during the emergence of AP organizations. In looking for mobilizing structures, my analytical criteria identified historical evidence related to AP networks, groups, and organizations that recruit movement members, gather and deploy resources, and organize social movement activism (Staggenborg 2016, 196). In addressing political opportunities, I used the following seven analytical criteria: the diffusion of hegemonic political power, threats to the movement, the willingness of the polity to accept new movements or actors, political instability, access to influential allies, the openness of the dominant regime to collective action claims, and periods of political change (McAdam et al. 2001, McAdam and Tarrow 2019). In applying RMT to understand emergent resourcing, I used analytical criteria including funding, human resources, commitment, office space, and infrastructure to find and organize the resources that were available to AP organizations during their emergence (Jenkins and Perrow 1977, Staggenborg 2017, Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). In applying these analytical criteria to histories of AP member organizations, I wanted to understand why and when farm labor social movement groups like the organizations in AP formed. Ultimately, I sought out AP foundational histories as a way of developing insight into how other grassroots groups might form to improve labor conditions for farmworkers.

This Capstone's second constitutive research question is: How do the member organizations of AP describe their approaches to social justice action? The unit of analysis for CRQ 2 is the approaches to social justice action taken by of each of the nine sister organizations

in AP. To understand the approaches to social justice action used by members of AP I used content analysis as a methodology, focusing on the descriptions of current programs and initiatives of AP organizations. I used a directed approach to content analysis that is guided by the concepts of redistribution, recognition, and representation in social justice, as well as SMT understandings of institutional and non-institutional approaches to social change. A directed approach to content analysis involves taking pre-existing theory and using it as a framework to guide analysis of a research question (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1281). By looking for AP social justice activity using Fraser (2004, 2008) and SMT as categories for interpretation, I take on a research perspective that is informed by pre-existing inquiry, but also one that contains the bias of believing that these analytical categories are important and applicable for this topic before starting inquiry (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1283).

This question's units of observation are explanations of approaches to social justice action undertaken by these specific farmworker labor social movement groups. The data source is programmatic literature relevant to social justice from AP organizations. The scope is limited to AP member organization web sites and linked news or social media articles that describe ongoing core AP organization programs or initiatives. This scope allows me to focus on recent approaches, whereas CRQ 1 focused on critical historical review.

I organize and analyze data collected using Fraser's three R's and SMT's categories of institutional and non-institutional. In doing so, I aim to document and analyze AP member organizations' approaches to social justice with the inclusion of a social movement lens. Specifically, Fraser's (2004, 2008) social justice framework, which categorizes activism aspiring towards social justice into the three categories of economic redistribution, cultural recognition, and political representation helps me better understand what aspects of social justice are

prioritized and pursued by AP's member organizations. Analyzing social movement action as institutional vs. non-institutional helps me understand whether AP organizations' activism primarily seeks to create change through formal political processes or informal movement activity. My inductive and deductive tags for sorting data within Fraser's three R's and SMT's categories of institutional and non-institutional come from scholarly articles addressing both frameworks. Fraser (2004, 2008) in-depth description of the three R's characterizes socioeconomic redistribution as providing equitable access to resources, legal and cultural recognition as creating equitable access to social privileges, and political representation as promotion equitable participation through decision-making. Criteria used for redistribution include "infrastructure", "food", "land", "pay", and "funding;" recognition included criteria like "cultural activity", "pay", "learning;" representation included criteria like "political", "voter", "political campaigns", "voice", and "infrastructure" (Fraser 2004, Fraser 2008, Smaal et al. 2020). Criteria indicating institutional methods included "courts", "lobbying", "campaign contributions", and "legal process" (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019, 6). Non-institutional criteria include "protest", "boycotts", "special purpose associations and coalitions", "public meetings", "vigils", "rallies", "demonstrations", "petition drives", "public media statements", "citizen organizing" (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). I anticipate that this constitutive research question will reveal more about the forms of social justice activism that social movement coalitions like AP use and potential ways to support these efforts as a part of broader social justice work.

Through critical inquiry, historical analysis, and directed content analysis, this Capstone will explore the existing grassroots efforts of social movement coalitions and draw connections to legislative efforts to institutionalize their work at the state and national level. The following



chapter will share research findings and provide critical analysis aimed at supporting and celebrating the efforts of farm labor social movement work.

## **Four—Research Applications and Contribution**

In what follows I share my research findings, analyze the data produced by my research, and share the overall contribution that this research makes to scholarship concerning the social problem of farm labor exploitation. First, I restate my overall research question and describe how learning about Alianza Poder's social justice activism addresses the problem of farmworker exploitation. Then I share relevant findings from my first CRQ, which uses historical narrative to describe the emergent resources, organizational structures, and political opportunities that led to the formation of AP member organizations. I then provide analysis on how this data describes the context of AP member organizations to contribute to an understanding of how and why social justice movements form to address farmworker exploitation. Then I reintroduce and share relevant findings from my second CRQ, which uses the SMT categories of institutional and non-institutional alongside Fraser's (2004, 2008) categories for social justice action to describe ongoing AP organization activism as social justice movement activism. In analyzing my second CRQ, I explore how AP organizations' activism approaches social justice to address conditions of farmworker exploitation. For both CRQs I provide tables to summarize my data and reference the tables in my analysis. After addressing each CRQ, I summarize my research findings and analysis by describing the contribution this Capstone makes to understanding and addressing the social problem of farmworker exploitation and scholarship about it.

### **Research Findings**

My Overall Research Question for this Capstone research asks: How does the social movement coalition Alianza Poder approach social justice within the context of the historic and ongoing activism of the Oregon farmworkers' movement? My ORQ was developed to build an understanding of how grassroots activism efforts can address the social problem of farmworker

labor exploitation. In this section, I first share findings from my first CRQ, which addresses the historic activism of AP organizations that led to their coalescence as a social movement alliance working towards social justice for farmworkers. I present my findings through narrative descriptions that rely on Political Process Theory and Resource Mobilization Theory to describe the emergence of each of the members of AP in chronological order for CRQ 1.

For CRQ 2, I explore the types of social justice action that the members of AP currently use to work towards farmworker labor justice. I use Fraser's (2004, 2008) categories of socioeconomic redistribution, political representation, and legal and cultural recognition to characterize and describe AP organization projects as aspiring towards social justice for farmworkers. Drawing on social movement theory (SMT), I sort the social justice actions of AP organizations into the categories of institutional or non-institutional. By combining social justice and social movement frameworks, I use the individual initiatives of AP organizations to provide analysis of the collective efforts AP has taken as a social justice movement coalition.

*CRQ 1: Emergent resources, organizational structures, and political opportunities*

This constitutive research question provides historical context for AP's ongoing social justice action and demonstrates how AP was formed. For each organization, I first share a brief history and then I use political process theory and resource mobilization theory to look at the opportunities and resources that were available to each organization during their founding. As elaborated in Chapter Three, RMT explains how access to and strategic deployment of resources like funding, human resources, commitment, office space, and infrastructure contribute to social movement coalescence and activism (Jenkins and Perrow 1977, Staggenborg 2017, Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). PPT explains how the political environment impacts social movement activism and thus looks at the mobilizing structures, political opportunity, and framing processes

that lead to social movement activism (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). I use these categories to provide context for AP movement social justice activism in opposition to farmworker exploitation.

I then present a figure (Figure 1. Organizational Connections within Alianza Poder) demonstrating the emergent institutional connections among the organizations. This figure intends to highlight connections between AP member organizations, which demonstrates how the organizations supported each other and coalesced into a social movement alliance. The member organizations of AP are, in order of emergence and analysis below: Piñeros y Campesinos Unidos, Mano a Mano Family Center, the Farmworker Housing Development Corporation, Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas, Latinos Unidos Siempre, the Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality, the CAPACES Leadership Institute, and Evolve Workforce Development and Multifamily Housing.

Piñeros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN).

Piñeros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), was formally founded in 1985 as Oregon's tree planters' and farmworkers' union (PCUN n.d. a). PCUN was preceded by the Willamette Valley Immigration Project (WVIP), an organization formed in 1977 by three graduates of Oregon's Colegio César Chávez, Cipriano Ferrel, Ramón Ramírez, and Juan Mendoza, as well as a fourth founder, Larry Kleinman, who had ideological ties with the movement as well as legal and media experience (Stephen 2012, 13). WVIP was formed with the long-term goal of creating a farmworkers' labor union. WVIP's founders spent ten years opposing Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) raids and providing legal services to farmworkers facing deportation as a way of building their movement through broad support services, gaining community trust, and learning how to engage with the legal challenges facing

farmworkers in Oregon (Sifuentez 2016, 101). In 1985, WVIP officially became the union of Piñeros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, or the United Tree Planters and Farmworkers of the Northwest.

The formation of PCUN as a formal union was strategically timed. Reframing WVIP's legal services organization as an official union helped the organization respond to the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 through political recognition and allyship (Sifuentez 2016, 101). The IRCA provided a pathway to legalization for Mexican immigrant workers who had been residing in the United States starting in 1982 if they could provide documentation proving their employment over the past year (Library of Congress n.d.). While this bill provided opportunities for Mexican workers in Oregon and other parts of the country, the power to sign documentation proving employment was in the hands of the employers, giving the growers more power (Sifuentez 2016, 127). PCUN was able to use immigration reform proposals to form coalitions with other state and national groups that were concerned with immigrant rights, thereby building their institutional strength within the first year of the union's incorporation (Sifuentez 2016, 103). The IRCA's passage was intended to revive elements of the Bracero Program to provide farm owners with the opportunity to legally import cheap labor from countries like Mexico, which PCUN opposed in principle (Sifuentez 2016, 102-103). However, the IRCA also provided a gateway to citizenship for Mexican workers, which PCUN saw as an opportunity to enhance its constituency's opportunities and access to rights (Sifuentez 2016, 103). Organizing around the IRCA gave PCUN in its fledgling stages the opportunity to develop identity as a union in response to the threat of increased farmworker labor exploitation.

PCUN's emergent resources were rooted in the broader farmworker justice movement of the 1950s through the 1970s. Colegio César Chávez, where the founders of PCUN met, was an

educational institution founded to serve the needs and activism of the Chicano civil rights movement (Knutson and Hyatt-Evenson 2020). As such, Ferrel, Ramírez, and Mendoza had the opportunity to absorb and enact the moral and tactical infrastructure of the United Farm Workers Movement (UFW) of California and the Chicano United Farmworkers Union (Stephen 2012, 13). Furthermore, the founders were able to secure office space in Woodburn upon the official formation of PCUN (Stephen 2012, 14). Having a physical office in the Willamette Valley made PCUN accessible to the population it sought to represent and granted legitimacy to the emerging organization.

Political opportunities that helped the emergence of PCUN include political environment, the changing population of the Willamette Valley, and political threats that stoked activism in and for the Latinx labor community in Oregon. The political environment of the 1950s-1970s was a favorable one to social justice movement work. Public sympathy for and awareness of the farmworker movement grew through the sustained activism of groups like UFW, thus providing more political opportunities for groups like PCUN to build a strong membership base (Stephen 2012, 10). Oregon's Willamette Valley was an expansive land for agricultural enterprise but lacked the labor population necessary to fully capitalize on their natural resources. Mexican workers were sought out in increasing numbers starting in the 1930s because they would accept physically demanding agricultural work for less pay (Stephen 2007, Sifuentez 2016). The influx of Mexican agricultural workers increased following the Bracero Program, which ran from 1942 to 1964. The Bracero Program was a guest worker program designed to recruit more Mexican workers to US agriculture as the onset of World War II created a shortage of workers (Stephen 2007, Sifuentez 2016). Over time, guest worker opportunities increased and concentrated the population of Mexican workers in areas close to Oregon's main agricultural production region in

the Willamette Valley. While guest worker policies were intended to provide a ready workforce for agricultural capitalists, they also increased the numbers and cultural density of Mexican workers in agriculturally intensive regions of Oregon. Towns in the Willamette Valley like Woodburn, where PCUN was founded, developed significant Mexican populations with interest in supporting efforts to unionize farmworker labor.

Ultimately, legislative threats were the political opportunities that catalyzed WVIP's transition into PCUN and helped the growing organization build greater capacity for social justice work. WVIP's legal aid services for undocumented farmworkers had built support and name recognition within the Willamette Valley (Stephen 2012, 14). Following the passage of the IRCA, an influx of workers from Mexico who were seeking legalization through arrangements with growers to falsely furnish paperwork shifted the power balance between farmworkers and growers. There were more willing bodies than available farm jobs, making it easier for growers to displace or threaten workers who might seek better working conditions through protest (Sifuentez 2016, 127). At the same time, there were more farmworkers who were dissatisfied with their working conditions or false employment promises and were open to organizing for their rights. PCUN formed using human resources, commitment, infrastructure, and office space leveraged from connections to older farmworker justice movements like the United Farm Workers' Movement in California through the mediating institution Colegio César Chávez. The political processes that helped PCUN form included mobilizing structures and framing borrowed from the UFW and Colegio César Chávez as well as the political opportunity posed by uniting against the threat of the IRCA.

Mano a Mano Family Center (Mano a Mano).

Mano a Mano was established in Salem the summer of 1988. Initially, Mano a Mano was an informal organization of community members that provided free food boxes to farmworkers during a dry, agriculturally challenging summer (Mano a Mano n.d. a). Given the recent passage of the IRCA, Mano a Mano's efforts proved indispensable to the growing Mexican community of Salem who continued to face food insecurity and difficulty accessing community resources for Spanish-speakers (Mano a Mano n.d. a). In 1990 Mano a Mano became an official organization dedicated to providing help and support to the Mexican community of Salem, many of whom are farmworkers or the families of farmworkers.

Mano a Mano's primary emergent resources were office space and the commitment of volunteers. The initial food box distribution and organizing space for the founders was at Chemeketa Community College (Mano a Mano n.d. a). Mano a Mano remained staffed by volunteers committed to helping the Latinx community of Salem until they received funding for their first paid staff member in 1991 (Mano a Mano n.d. a). Thus, the growing population of Mexican farmworkers in Salem provided human resources in the form of Mexican families and allies who were willing to put their time into helping other members of their community access resources.

The primary political opportunity contributing Mano a Mano's emergence was the threat posed by the passage of the IRCA in 1986. Like Woodburn, Salem saw an increase in its Mexican immigrant population following the passage of the IRCA. In the summer of 1988, a major drought impacted agricultural production and led to widespread wildfires (Holmes 1992, 9). Many farmworkers lost their jobs or were forced to work in unsafe environments with intense heat and smoke, resulting in an emergency-level need for food and supplies for farmworkers and their families (Holmes 1992, 9). Mano a Mano worked with the farmworker community to



organize resources to combat the threats of hunger, physical danger, and worsening work conditions. In summary, the resources that Mano a Mano relied upon during its institutional emergence were the human resources and commitment of the growing Mexican population of Salem, as well as office space at Chemetka Community College. The political processes that helped catalyze Mano a Mano's formation were political opportunities in the form of threats to the farmworker community as posed by the IRCA and extreme weather in the summer of 1988. Responding to these threats mobilized the farmworker and Latinx community of Salem, thereby creating a foundation for continued activism by the founders and early volunteers that made up Mano a Mano.

Farmworker Housing Development Corporation (FHDC).

The Farmworker Housing Development Corporation was founded in 1990 when a group of community organizations and individuals came together to address and develop affordable housing infrastructure for low-income farmworkers (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation. n.d. a.). Ramon Ramírez, one of the founders of PCUN mentioned above, credits the idea for FHDC to a conversation between Cipriano Ferrel of PCUN and Nargess Shadbeh of the Oregon Law Center during a protest at Kramer Farms in 1988 (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation 2021, 00:00:36-00:00:42). Housing was identified in this conversation as a major barrier to organizing farmworkers. Many migrant farmworkers live in housing on the farms that they work on, so by protesting labor conditions they risk both their jobs and homes (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation 2021, 00:02:20-00:02:40). The founders of PCUN and Nargess Shadbeh wanted to develop a housing project that would “reduce the isolation of migrant farmworkers” and create community (Farmworker Housing Development

Corporation 2021, 00:01:55-00:01:59). Therefore, FHDC was started as an agency to develop secure, affordable housing communities for farmworkers and their families.

FHDC's emergent resources came from the funding, human resources, commitment, moral and organizational infrastructures of the organizations involved in its founding. PCUN, Oregon Legal Services, the Salud Medical Center, and Farmworker Ministries, as well as individual donors, all conspired to resource FHDC's formation and initial housing project, Nuevo Amancer (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation. n.d. a). Human resources like Nargess Shadbeh's legal expertise and PCUN's connections to Governor Barbara Roberts helped overcome grower opposition to Nuevo Amancer (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation. n.d. a). Once the initial housing project was completed in 1992, FHDC was able to continue securing funding and government approval for their work (Stephen 2012, Collins 2010). Having commitment from groups and individuals that were in support of PCUN's work, as well as the moral and organizational infrastructure necessary to nurture the early iteration of FHDC allowed the project to grow into a full-fledged organization over time.

The political opportunity that helped the FHDC's emergence was the political threat posed by the passage of the IRCA. Like PCUN and Mano a Mano, FHDC was founded in response to the influx of Mexican workers seeking residency for themselves and their families through farm labor opportunities. Farm housing facilities did not expand to meet the increase in workers. The ensuing housing and resource crisis was further compounded by depressed wages for farmworkers. At the same time, the community began to recognize that grower relations with farmworkers from Mexico were creating a problem that needed to be addressed by organizations like PCUN that had experience working with the immigrant farmworker population. FHDC was ultimately able to form using resources like funding, human resources, commitment, moral and

organizational infrastructure. Political processes like the mobilizing force and political opportunity generated by the IRCA as a threat to farmworker justice as well as the framing processes of previously existing farmworker justice organizations like PCUN catalyzed the available resources to create the FHDC in response to the farmworker housing crisis.

Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas (MLP).

MLP also began as a project of PCUN. Following the IRCA of 1986 more women and children from Mexico moved to Oregon for jobs or to be with family (Stephen 2007, 253). As more women joined PCUN, it became apparent that female farmworkers and women in farmworker families faced unique gender-related struggles compounded by conditions of labor exploitation. Women reported spousal abuse, sexual harassment in the workplace, and mental health issues related to isolation to PCUN's service center staff (Stephen 2007, 255). The Women's Leadership Project, MLP's first iteration, was created in 1992 to address these issues and to provide a platform for female empowerment. MLP evolved to become a space for community, leadership training, and entrepreneurship for Mexican women that fundraises through an annual wreath-making project (Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas n.d.). MLP became an independent non-profit in 2001 (Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas n.d.). The organization now operates independently but continues to have close ties with PCUN.

MLP's emergent resourcing was primarily derived from PCUN. PCUN's staff provided human resources, commitment, and space for MLP to take shape (Sifuentez 2017, 135). PCUN staff also applied for funding grants for MLP once the organization began to grow (Stephen 2007, 255). Like FHDC, MLP is a member of PCUN's network of care for the immigrant Latinx and farmworker population in the Woodburn area, and thus benefits from the alliances and resources within that network.

The political processes that helped MLP take shape were the threats posed to women in the farmworker community by the passage of the IRCA, as well as the framing processes created by PCUN and other farmworker justice organizations. As mentioned above, cultural concentration of Mexican immigrants in Woodburn increased following the IRCA, both creating a need for social services tailored to this population and the threat necessary to mobilize the growing Mexican population to form organizations like MLP (Stephen 2007, 253). As PCUN's influence and network began to grow, it became easier for PCUN organizers to build support for projects like MLP by borrowing existing framing processes from farmworkers' justice movements like the UFW while developing their own Oregon specific farmworker justice frameworks. MLP used the funding, human resources, commitment, office space, and infrastructure acquired by PCUN to create a female-specific farmworker justice organization in response to mobilizing opportunities around threats posed by farm labor conditions in Oregon following the passage of the IRCA.

Causa.

Causa was founded in 1995 to provide legal representation to Oregon's farmworker population. When House Bill 2691, the Employment Opportunity Act, was proposed Mano a Mano and PCUN joined with other farmworker rights organizations in the area to oppose its passage (Causa, n.d. a). HB 2691 was a response by the National Federation of Independent Business to Measure 36, which increased the minimum wage in Oregon to \$5.50 per hour with future incremental wage increases that would gradually bring the minimum wage up to \$6.50 per hour. HB 2691 was proposed to add contingencies to the minimum wage increase for employers of low wage workers like growers (Gilliam, 1997). These included a provision to exempt growers from paying the minimum wage to all workers in a piece rate system as long at least half

of the crew was making minimum wage (Causa, n.d. a). HB 2691 was successfully opposed and defeated through the legislative efforts of Mano a Mano, PCUN, and other farmworker justice organizations. Following the victory of HB 2691, Mano a Mano decided to continue dedicating resources to legislative activity in the name of the Oregon farmworker justice movement through Causa. Causa could use growing movement resources to oppose unfavorable legislation and propose favorable legislation to promote the political representation of the farmworker and Latinx community in Salem and the surrounding areas. Causa became an independent organization in 1996 but continues to work closely with Mano a Mano.

As an organization born from Mano a Mano's community support efforts, Causa was able to use the growing network of organizations providing support for the farmworker community in Salem for its emergent resourcing. Causa received funding, human resources, commitment, office space, and organizational infrastructure from Mano a Mano and PCUN, as well as other established farmworker justice projects (Woken n.d., Mano a Mano n.d. a). Mano a Mano and PCUN's reputations in their communities also likely contributed legitimacy to Causa while it was being established as an independent organization.

The emergent political opportunities available to Causa were the threats posed by HB 2691 and other ballot measures targeting the farmworker population in Oregon during the late 1980s and early 1990s. As the threat from powerful independent business lobbyists began increasingly targeting farm labor regulations, Oregon's farmworkers began to develop more cohesive legislative efforts to responding to the political opportunities created by this threat (Causa n.d. a). Causa was able to use the framing processes of groups like Mano a Mano and PCUN to mobilize resources for farmworker legislative representation. Once again, the Oregon

farmworker and immigrant justice movement grew using the resources held by social movement organizations to address evolving threats posed by capitalists seeking more power and profit. Latinos Unidos Siempre (LUS).

LUS was founded in 1996 as another arm of Mano a Mano. LUS was initially founded by a small group of students to fight immigration raids, gang activity, high dropout rates for children of farmworkers, and anti-immigrant legal proposals by the Oregon state legislature (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a). LUS's emergence is akin to the emergence of MLP in that LUS grew existing Oregon farmworker and immigrant organizational infrastructure to address unique emergent social problems experienced by a group within the farmworker community. Mano a Mano staff acted as a resource to amplify the voices of youth in the Salem area and encourage the start of youth-directed activism (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a). The first event that LUS organized was a Thanksgiving dinner for low-income families that continues to this day (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a). LUS now acts as a site of youth leadership training in Salem for Mano a Mano and other members of the CAPACES network.

LUS benefited from emergent resources provided by Mano a Mano, its parent organization. These resources included human resources, funding, commitment, office space, and organizational infrastructure (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a). By LUS's emergence in 1996, the farmworker and Latinx immigrant population of Salem had increased to create a notable political force, and the children of farmworkers began to form an important independent constituency. The continued legislative activity of business lobbying for growers' rights in Oregon also acted as a political threat that became a political opportunity for the founders of LUS to organize against (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a). LUS's organizing relied on Mano a Mano's mobilizing work with youth to form and borrowed framing processes from the work of

Causa, SKCE, and Mano a Mano. LUS is another example of an organization that was able to organize a facet of the Willamette Valley community against legislative threats to the farmworker and immigrant justice movement in Oregon by using the existing reputation, frames, and resources of farmworker community movement organizations like Mano a Mano.

Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality (SKCE).

SKCE is a non-profit organization in the Salem/Keizer area that formed in 1999. The Salem/Keizer school district is regionally significant in that it is the second most populous school district in Oregon (Ishimaru 2017, 195). A rapid demographic change in the Salem/Keizer school district started in the mid-1990s to early 2000s as the Latinx farmworker population continued to grow, lay down roots, and enroll their children in district schools (Ishimaru 2017, 195). The school district initially resisted changing existing policies to serve its growing English Language Learner (ELL) and immigrant student population, resulting in sub-par educational opportunities for the children of farmworkers (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. a). Community organizers and sympathetic educators came together, many of whom had experiences in grassroots organizing for farmworkers and the Chicano movement, to find ways to work with the school district to meet the needs of an increasingly Latinx student population (Ishimaru 2017, 196). SKCE was formally founded with support of local farmworker justice organizations like Mano a Mano to address the high drop-out and expulsion rates for low-income, non-English speaking, and immigrant youth (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality. n.d. a). Over time SKCE became an important ally for the Salem/Keizer school district and has played a major part in empowering Latinx parents in relation with the school district.

Like other organizations representing farmworkers and their families in Salem in the 1990s, SKCE was able to borrow from the resources held by existing farmworker and immigrant

justice movement organizations. One of the key founders of SKCE, Eduardo Angulo, worked with youth and juvenile detention camps in Los Angeles through UFW activism (Ishimaru 2017, 196). Several other board members had grassroots backgrounds that provided key strategic insights from the civil rights movement, the UFW movement, and the Chicano movement (Ishimaru 2017, 196). These activists represented human resources already dedicated to the farmworker justice movement. They used the movements' framing and approaches to build commitment and infrastructure. Mano a Mano was also a foundational sponsor for the SKCE and provided further human resources, funding, commitment, office space, and organizational infrastructure (SKCE n.d. a). The gradual growth of the institutional Oregon farmworker movement helped provide legitimacy and numbers to SKCE's emergent efforts.

The primary political opportunities surrounding SKCE's emergence were threats to the Latinx student population in the Salem/Keizer school district. Specifically, a Latinx student was exposed to dangerous traffic and killed by a car as the result of limited school transportation services for Latinx families (Ishimaru 2017, 197). The subsequent public dismissal of the students' death by the school district acted as a mobilizing force for farmworker families to engage in improving their students' abilities to navigate the Salem/Keizer school district (Ishimaru 2017, 198). These families were guided by Angulo, who used farmworker justice movement framing processes to establish SKCE as a social movement organization.

Additional legislative threats were political opportunities that encouraged the formation of SKCE. The passage of Oregon's Measure 11 in 1994 posed a threat to the Latinx students in the Salem/Keizer school district (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. a). In addition to increases in other minimum sentencing laws, Measure 11 made penalties for juvenile misdemeanors more severe. Subsequently the Salem/Keizer community saw a dramatic increase



in the number of juveniles, primarily from the Latinx community, that were sentenced to felonies between 1994 and 1999 (Merritt et al. 2004, 54). The founders of SKCE connected the high dropout rates and increasing gang activity of Latinx students with disenfranchisement related to the felony convictions that Measure 11 permitted and decided to intervene in the school district first (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. a). SKCE thus formed using the existing resources within the greater farmworker justice movement to mobilize against a threat to the farmworker and Latinx immigrant population in the Willamette Valley.

CAPACES Leadership Institute (CAPACES).

CAPACES was established to develop future leadership for farmworker and immigrant social justice efforts in the Woodburn and Salem area. Originally, CAPACES was a project of PCUN intended to create a space for those interested in pursuing leadership in Oregon's farmworker and immigrant justice movement (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. a).

CAPACES evolved by 2003 into a project that could unite the nine sister organizations that now make up AP through a shared leadership network and shared activism (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. a). In 2008 the members of CAPACES identified the need to accelerate and intensify leadership development efforts (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. a). This push led to CAPACES becoming an independent non-profit in 2011 (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. a). CAPACES's physical space resides at PCUN's facility, but the leadership institute provides training and opportunities to connect for all the members of AP.

CAPACES's emergent resourcing was furnished by established social movement organizations for farmworker and immigrant justice in Salem and Woodburn. These resources include funding, human resources, commitment, office space, moral, tactical, and organizational infrastructure from PCUN, Mano a Mano, FHDC, MLP, Causa, LUS, SKCE, Voz Hispana

Cambio Comunitario, and the Oregon Farm Worker Ministry (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. a). Each of these organizations developed its own approach to activism, and CAPACES represents a formal joining of these organizations through shared leadership training and association under the umbrella of Oregon's farmworker and immigrant justice movement.

The political opportunities available to CAPACES upon its emergence also came from the existing activism of the member organizations in Salem and Woodburn. CAPACES emerged at a time when Oregon farmworker and immigrant justice movement organizations had established a strong shared mobilizing force with overlapping from processes drawn from current and historical farmworker justice activism. The resources and long-standing political activism of member organizations like PCUN and Mano a Mano gave legitimacy and opportunity for a more formal organization like CAPACES to build future movement capacity through leadership development.

Evolve Workforce Development and Multifamily Housing (Evolve).

Evolve grew out of the FHDC in 2015 to provide alternative job training to individuals living in FHDC housing. Evolve's mission is to provide internships and leadership training that could provide stable income to migrant workers and people of color (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation 2019). Property management jobs are year-round employment opportunities that pay better than farm work and give workers more time to spend with their families or community. There is also an increasing demand for property managers as the population of Woodburn and the surrounding areas continue to expand (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation 2019). Evolve thus empowers employees to deliver trainings for other property management organizations that are interested in incorporating an equity-centered approach to housing management in their work (Evolve n.d. b). Evolve gives farmworkers and

their families the opportunity to have more agency to seek alternative employment in the event of farm labor exploitation.

As an organization that emerged from the existing lineage of FHDC and PCUN, Evolve was able to access resourcing from movement predecessors. These resources include funding, human resources, commitment, office space, moral, tactical, and organizational infrastructure (Evolve n.d. a). FHDC's expanding network of housing developments made the emergence of Evolve possible. Evolve operates out of the same office space as FHDC and was founded by members of FHDC, many of whom are connected to the work of PCUN and other AP member organizations (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. a). Evolve's tactical approach to social justice work, cultivating leadership through equity-focused work opportunities for Latinx immigrants, borrows from previous framing and mobilizing approaches to building capacity that other farmworker justice organizations developed.

The political opportunity that helped Evolve take shape as a SMO was the continued growth of FHDC housing. As FHDC expanded and added new housing projects, the work of managing these properties justified the formation of a separate organization (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. a). The combined social movement work of AP member organizations and allied groups has helped FHDC acquire the resources, commitment, and community reputation necessary to expand. Thus, Evolve grew from the political opportunities created by the continued activism and organizing efforts of FHDC and PCUN as a grandparent organization in this SMO lineage.

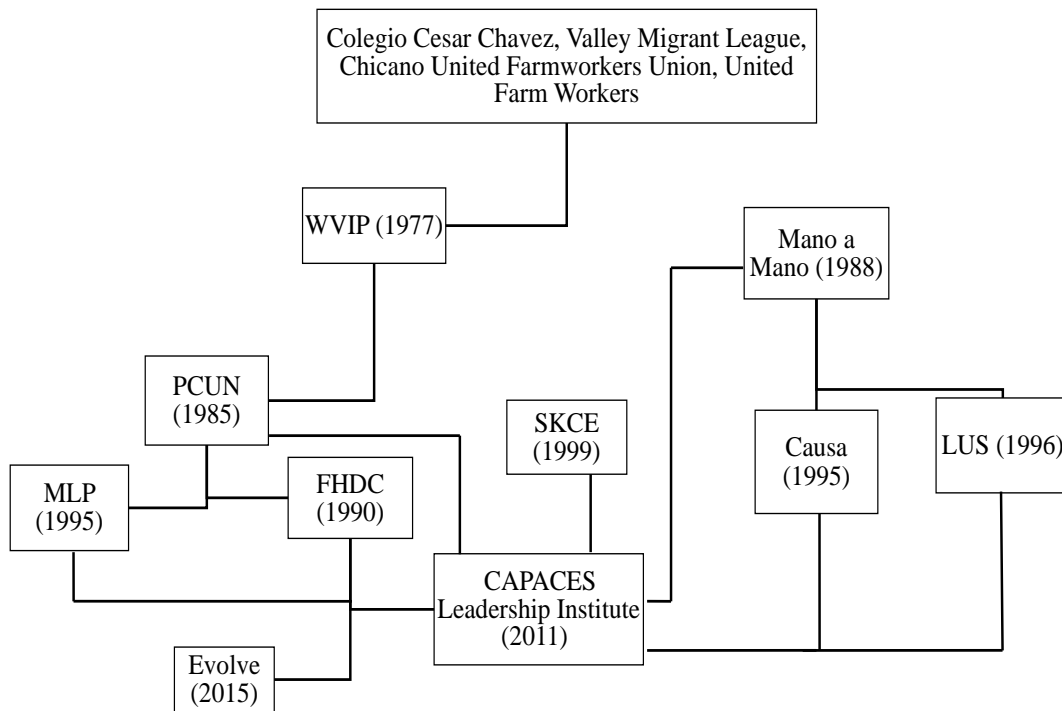


Figure 1. Organizational Connections within Alianza Poder

*Analysis*

In the process of exploring the mobilizing structures, emergent resourcing, and the political processes that contributed to the formation of AP member organizations, I found an interconnected web of organizational growth in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. Older organizations in AP like PCUN and Mano a Mano traced their ideologies to the farmworker justice movement activity of organizations like the UFW and the Chicano Farmworkers Movement that started in California in the late 1950s (Sifuentez 2017, Stephen 2012, Mano a Mano n.d. a). The work the farmworker justice movement in California was able to accomplish in the 1960s and 1970s created mobilizing structures by developing networks to support leadership and movement growth in other regions.

In the Willamette Valley of Oregon, PCUN and Mano a Mano collaborated with other members of the growing farmworker justice network and became sites for the growth of this movement in. As illustrated in Figure 1 above, the other seven sister organizations in AP emerged either directly from or with the institutional support of Mano a Mano and PCUN as mobilizing organizations that used their resources, infrastructure, and commitment to foster the growth of Oregon's branch of the greater farmworker labor movement. The lineage of farmworker justice activism continues through each of these organizations as they continue to grow. This not only fulfills the imperative of SMOs, which is to sustain activism for a social movement over time, but also provides a rich cache of resources and political opportunities through social movement coalition association (Brooker and Meyer 2019, 257). The SMOs in AP support continued movement growth by fostering fledging farmworker and immigrant justice SMOs in the Willamette Valley while sustaining their own activism.

Thus, AP member organizations can sustain contentious activism over time by continuing to build their movement presence, access to resources, and access to mobilizing opportunities. To recap, social movement organizations (SMOs) are formal institutions created by social movement actors to pressure government to affect policy change, educate the public about the movement, and sustain resources to allow the movement to continue to exist outside of individual protest events (Brooker and Meyer 2019, 257). Political processes necessary to stage contention include mobilizing structures, political opportunities, and framing processes. Mobilizing structures are the networks, groups, and organizations that recruit movement members, gather and deploy resources, and organize social movement activism (Staggenborg 2016, 196). Political opportunities are favorable political conditions as recognized by social movement actors for movement mobilizing (McAdam et al. 2001, McAdam and Tarrow 2019).

Framing refers to the way movements construct their cultural meaning and social narrative to identify grievances, threats, solutions, and opportunities to mobilize (Staggenborg 2016, 23). Each organization in AP builds upon the farmworker justice network, both in Oregon and nationally, as a mobilizing structure and framing process. This furthers the growth and evolution of the farmworker justice movement as they respond to threats and opportunities related to the evolving needs of the farmworker and farmworker-adjacent community in Salem and Woodburn. As Oregon's farmworker and immigrant justice movement, more activist perspectives and experiences contribute to the evolution of AP mobilizing structures and framing processes. Work to develop social movement leadership with a shared understanding of social justice helps these framing processes stay consistent over time. Thus, by connecting the activism of more recently established members of AP to farmworker justice groups of the 1950s through the 1970s, my findings underscore the importance of SMOs in sustaining social movement activism over time while evolving to meet the challenges of changing political environments.

In terms of emergent resourcing for AP member organizations, much came from existing farmworker social justice movement organizations. Figure 1 illustrates that six of the nine AP member organizations trace their emergence to the organizing work of Mano a Mano and PCUN. Though SKCE was not founded directly by individuals connected to Mano a Mano or PCUN, SKCE did receive funding, commitment, office space, and infrastructure from Mano a Mano. Furthermore, Mano a Mano, PCUN, and SKCE all cite organizing tactics, moral framing, and member commitment that can be traced to existent farmworker justice movements like the UFW and the Chicano United Farmworkers Union. These older AP organizations draw on organizing experience from over seventy years of farmworker justice movement work to resource each other and foster movement growth as subsequent generations of activists identify new needs and

opportunities. By sustaining and building resources over time, AP organizations can ensure that their social justice coalition can adapt to the changing political climate and are able to act when political opportunities for movement growth arise.

The two most frequently identified political opportunities cited as contributing to the emergence of AP organizations were the growing numbers of the Latinx farmworker community in Salem and Woodburn and legislative threats posed to this community. In terms of PPT, the growth of the Latinx farmworker community represents a diffusion of hegemonic power as Latinx families occupy more physical, political, and cultural space in the Willamette Valley. As the Latinx population and the farmworker social justice movement in the Willamette Valley grows, the dominant political regime has also acknowledged the unique needs of Latinx farmworkers in Oregon with grant funding. Reciprocally, the dominant political regime has also challenged the farmworker justice movement and the Latinx population in the Willamette Valley through legislation intended to maintain grower power and criminalize Latinx farmworkers. Much of the generative power behind AP organizations can be traced back to legislation like the IRCA of 1988 that brought Latinx migrants to the Salem and Woodburn areas to furnish growers with cheap labor, plentiful sources of labor. The IRCA and subsequent legislative threats in the 1990s and early 2000s have built commitment to the Oregon farmworkers' justice movement and catalyzed the formation of AP member organizations like PCUN, Mano a Mano, FHDC, MLP, Causa, LUS, and SKCE.

Given that uniting around threats is one of the more common reasons for organizations to form social movement coalitions, it logically follows that these organizations' choice to come together as a social justice coalition was also partially motivated by providing a united front against on-going legislative challenges to farmworker and undocumented Latinx rights in

Oregon (Obach 2010, 200). Though immigration, guest worker, and law enforcement legislation has contributed to social problems for farmworkers like persistent labor exploitation, AP's diverse network of member organizations speaks to the current Oregon farmworker justice movement's ability to organize and grow in response to threats.

### *CRQ 2: Approaches to Social Justice Action*

Again, my Overall Research Question for this Capstone research asks: How does the social movement coalition Alianza Poder approach social justice within the context of the historic and ongoing activism of the Oregon farmworkers' movement? This ORQ was developed to build an understanding of how grassroots activism efforts can address the social problem farmworker labor exploitation. My second CRQ addresses the present-day activism of AP organizations using Fraser's (2004, 2008) categories of legal and cultural recognition, socioeconomic redistribution, and political representation to describe social justice work, as well as the SMT categories of institutional and non-institutional social movement activities. To reiterate, institutional methods include activism pursued through courts, lobbying, seeking campaign contributions, and engaging in the legislative process (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019). Non-institutional methods include protests, boycotts, the formation of special purpose associations and coalitions, public meetings, vigils, rallies, demonstrations, petition drives, statements to public media, informal distribution of movement literature and other forms of citizen organizing outside of traditional legal process (Gupta 2017, Snow et al. 2019).

This analysis addresses the ORQ by describing AP organizations' social justice approaches and the ongoing activism of AP as a part of the Oregon farmworkers' movement. I will offer a narrative of my findings before presenting Table 1, which summarizes my findings



using the categories mentioned above. Finally, I provide analysis of what these findings reveal about social justice efforts to develop cures to the social problem of farmworker exploitation.

Piñeros y Campesinos del Noroeste.

PCUN's approaches to social justice action include both institutional and non-institutional action aimed at redistribution, recognition, and representation. Examples of on-going core programming that take an institutional approach to social justice through institutional legislative action include soliciting campaign contributions through PCUN's Electoral and Political Action Program, policy advocacy at state and national levels, the creation of political coalitions for farmworker labor justice, and PCUN's Healthy Workplaces documentation and response program (PCUN n.d. a, PCUN n.d. b). PCUN's Electoral and Political Action Program use institutional methods, like providing campaign contributions and non-institutional methods, like using citizen organizing to build voter turnout, in support of candidates who advance farmworker labor justice (PCUN n.d. a). As such, the Electoral and Political Action Program is an example of social justice work for political representation that also serves cultural recognition by underscoring that Latinx farmworkers' lived experiences play an important role in state and national agriculture. PCUN describes their policy advocacy work as "pro-farmworker, and pro-immigrant policy in the state legislature, as well as in congress. PCUN pushes for change through the circuit and supreme courts – while developing grassroots activists to lead change" (PCUN n.d. a). This multi-pronged approach to systems-level political change works to build cultural recognition of farmworker and immigrant justice through political representation.

PCUN has expanded the reach of their institutional work by continuously seeking alliances. PCUN's participation in political coalitions at the state and federal level have included partnerships with the UFW, Causa, and broad "labor parties, social justice groups, worker

advocates, immigrant rights representatives, and economic justice organizations” that work together to increase the power of political claims for farmworker and immigrant justice (PCUN n.d. c). While many of these coalitions take an institutional approach to their economic redistribution, political representation, and culture recognition work by targeting policymaking at the state and national level, others use non-institutional grassroots methods for farmworker and immigrant justice. For example, as of 2020 PCUN and Causa are both members of a coalition called the Oregon Workers’ Relief Fund, which provides financial relief to undocumented workers who are not eligible for COVID-19 stimulus payments or unemployment compensation (PCUN n.d. c). The Oregon Workers’ Relief Fund provides economic redistribution through the fundraising efforts of over one hundred community partners (Oregon Workers’ Relief Fund n.d.). PCUN’s coalition-building efforts can be classified as both institutional and non-institutional social justice action aspiring towards political representation, economic redistribution, and cultural recognition.

PCUN builds legitimacy for some of their institutional political claims at the state and national level through the Healthy Workplaces program. The Healthy Workplaces documentation and response program documents testimonies from farmworkers in toxic workplaces to both promote legislative awareness of the lived experiences of farmworkers facing labor abuses and to stage interventions intended to begin healing through community intervention (PCUN n.d. a). By amplifying farmworker voices, the Healthy Workplaces program includes elements of political representation and cultural recognition. Additionally, the Healthy Workplaces program could be categorized as both institutional and non-institutional activism in that PCUN acts outside of the national Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to document workplace labor abuses through grassroots activism (PCUN n.d. a). Given PCUN’s

age and political reputation, they have been able to leverage expertise gained from decades of farmworker advocacy to create robust institutional programming that furthers legislative action for farmworker justice aimed at redistribution, recognition, and representation.

Though PCUN's political work has expanded to engage formal legislative institutions in the pursuit of farmworker labor justice, their activism remains rooted in non-institutional social movement approaches to social justice. PCUN's non-institutional social justice activism includes union member organizing for strikes, vigils, and political protests as well as community building through worker outreach (PCUN n.d. a). As a labor union, PCUN organizes its members to protest oppressive labor conditions, raise wages through labor strikes, secure collective bargaining agreements at individual farms, mobilize marches and protests for immigrant rights, and stage vigils for workers who died as a result of unsafe labor conditions (PCUN n.d. c). PCUN's grassroots union organizing efforts serve economic redistribution by working to increase farmworker wages. PCUN's grassroots union organizing efforts also give farmworkers the opportunity to represent themselves as political individuals while promoting cultural recognition of the importance of Latinx farmworkers to Oregon agriculture and society through public demonstrations.

Communication and community building are at the heart of PCUN's union organizing efforts. PCUN keeps their members and the community at-large tuned in to their work through Radio Poder, a project that broadcasts news and information in Spanish for the farmworker population of the Willamette Valley (PCUN n.d. a). Radio Poder furthers cultural recognition for farmworkers by providing a media platform to affirm their stories, inform them of their rights, and create a sense of connection through a unified discourse for workers in isolated, dispersed work environments. Radio Poder and other forms of informational outreach promotes PCUN's

institutional and non-institutional political organizing efforts. PCUN has developed extensive programs to further social justice through redistribution, recognition, and representation for farmworkers and immigrants while creating both an institutional and non-institutional presence for Oregon's Latinx farmworkers at the local, state, and national level.

Mano a Mano Family Center.

As grassroots farmworker resource hub, Mano a Mano's social justice activism is non-institutional, with the notable exception of a successful institutional legislative claim in 2021-2022 for farmworker overtime pay in Oregon. Mano a Mano filed a lawsuit with the Oregon Court of Appeals on behalf of two farmworkers against Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) to enact overtime pay requirements for farmworkers (Terry 2022). The lawsuit's success promotes equitable economic redistribution for farmworkers and demonstrates cultural recognition through lawmaking that acknowledges the necessary social labor that Oregon's primarily Latinx farmworker community provides to the state.

Mano a Mano's ongoing core programs further social justice for farmworkers through the non-institutional redistribution of resources, cultural recognition through education and social capital, and political representation through voice and infrastructure. They take a non-institutional approach to resourcing farmworkers and community members through citizen organizing outside of the formal legal process (Gupta et al. 2017, Snow et al. 2019). Mano a Mano's community food bank and food box program provides an opportunity for redistribution by giving farmworkers and immigrants access food that may be unaffordable because of low wages, unemployment, and lack of access to state programs that require documentation of citizenship (Mano a Mano n.d. b). Their community resource navigation services help connect undocumented and Spanish-speaking workers to healthcare, housing, employment, and legal

representation, thereby improving access to cultural recognition through social capital (Mano a Mano n.d. c). Mano a Mano's Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) provides peer mentorship, afterschool activities, and graduation and employment support (Mano a Mano n.d. d). This program uses Mano a Mano's grant funding and community connections to ensure that Latinx students have equitable access to learning resources that improve the likelihood of academic success. YEP provides cultural recognition by improving Latinx students' access to learning and skill-building opportunities. Mano a Mano's also improves cultural recognition and political representation by hiring staff members who can translate and notarize legal documents for Spanish-speaking or non-citizen members of Salem's Latinx community (Mano a Mano n.d. e). The document assistance program also helps with filling out family law documents to submit to the Marion County Court, thereby connecting Spanish-speakers with social capital and administrative infrastructure to have voice in their legal affairs (Smaal et al. 2020, Mano a Mano n.d. e). Finally, Mano a Mano offers a scholarship for parents who require supervised visitation to cover the costs of paying for a parental supervisor (Mano a Mano n.d. f). Mano a Mano provides these resources to farmworkers and other Spanish-speaking or undocumented members of Marion County who may not be able to access state-provided resources through their fundraising and grant writing efforts.

Mano a Mano is also able to participate in non-institutional economic redistribution and through their financial sponsorship within the AP network. Mano a Mano uses grant money and donations to support PCUN's Radio Poder as well as LUS and Causa's programming (Mano a Mano. n.d. a). As a resource center and social movement organization, Mano a Mano gathers and strategically deploy resources to provide community support for farmworkers, their families, and other members of the Oregon farmworker justice movement. Their social movement activism

uses institutional approaches when necessary, as in the example of the farmworker overtime lawsuit, but primarily remains non-institutional. The community resources and cultural recognition that Mano a Mano provides for Marion County's Latinx population demonstrates movement work aspiring to just access to social services that would otherwise be inaccessible through income or citizenship rights.

Farmworker Housing Development Corporation.

FHDC's activism for farmworker justice takes non-institutional approaches and largely focuses on redistributing resources and providing access to cultural recognition for non-citizen and Spanish-speaking members of the Marion and Polk Counties in Oregon. FHDC redistributes access to land by providing low-income housing for 1,300 individuals at eleven different developments in six cities in Marion and Polk Counties (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. a). Their housing developments also act as resource centers for residents, many of whom are farmworkers, immigrants, and/or undocumented laborers. FHDC provides free preschool and after school programming, an initiative that furthers redistribution through physical infrastructure, as well as cultural recognition through access to education (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. c). FHDC also builds cultural recognition through programs like health care insurance enrollment assistance, a support group for seniors, and onsite health resources that provide knowledge and social capital to residents as well as community members (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. b, F Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. d). Like Mano a Mano, these services use grant-funding and money generated from tenant rent to provide culturally significant resources that might otherwise be difficult for farmworkers and their families to access.

FHDC also engages in non-institutional forms of cultural recognition and political representation through citizen organizing. FHDC housing developments feature mural projects depicting community stories and values that employ resident-artists to further cultural recognition of the Latinx residents and to build FHDC's community identity (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. e). Having art that celebrates Latinx culture while telling the stories of the Oregon farmworkers' movement builds a cohesive community understanding of the FHDC as a project that extends from and serves the greater movement. FHDC connects to the political imperatives of the farmworker justice movement by housing the Promotores Leadership Development program. FHDC uses its space as a resource for the Promotores program, which works to build more political representation for farmworkers in local government through grassroots opportunities to develop community leadership (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. d). In addition to cultivating leadership, the Promotores program organizes members of FHDC housing to take political action for farmworker justice. FHDC houses and organizes farmworkers and their families to engage in non-institutional social justice activism that spans Fraser's (2003, 2008) three R's. Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas.

MLP, as an interdependent branch of PCUN, creates economic, cultural, and political opportunities for non-institutional social justice activism through its Christmas wreath project. This project provides a platform for the women of MLP to organize themselves to acquire more access to resources like funding for projects, personal income, and entrepreneurship training (MLP n.d.). The women of MLP report that participation in planning and executing the Christmas wreath project increases confidence, improves public speaking skills, and builds the skills necessary to engage in citizen organizing (Stephen 2007, 255). The women of MLP also

write and host “Mujeres de la Comunidad”, a radio program run on Radio Poder that provides information on women’s health in Spanish (MLP n.d.). Members of MLP who develop strong leadership skills can become involved in the leadership of other AP groups, especially PCUN (Stephen 2007, 255). MLP approaches social justice by organizing farmworker women to access more financial resources (economic redistribution), build their social capital and skills (cultural recognition), and have a greater voice in decision-making in their community (political representation) (MLP n.d.). Though MLP does act as a leadership incubator for PCUN and other AP organizations, their activism is community-based and non-institutional.

Causa.

Causa’s legislative activism uses both institutional and non-institutional approaches for redistribution, recognition, and representation. The organization takes an institutional approach to economic redistribution for immigrants by using grant funding to provide legal services through programs like the Universal Representation deportation defense program (Causa n.d. d). This program provides access to legal services for immigrants facing deportation regardless of their income or citizenship status. Causa approaches institutional forms of political representation by promoting Latinx candidates in electoral campaigns and by engaging in policy advocacy at the local, state, and national level (Causa n.d. c). Causa also participates in several statewide and national coalitions to promote immigrant legal justice through political representation. Their goal in policy advocacy is to achieve full access to the rights of citizenship for all immigrants, which can be categorized as aspiring toward cultural recognition by building social capital (Causa n.d. d, Smaal et al. 2020). Additionally, Causa’s voter education and engagement programs further cultural recognition by providing access to learning that then empowers Latinx voters to achieve greater political representation through informed voting



(Causa n.d. f). Though Causa’s legislative activism targets all immigrants, the organization was sponsored by Mano a Mano and recognizes that immigrant justice connects to farmworker justice.

Causa participates in non-institutional forms of redistribution, recognition, and representation. The Oregon Worker Relief Fund provides community-based economic support to immigrant Oregonians, who cannot access federal COVID relief benefits like stimulus checks and unemployment (Causa n.d. e). Causa’s voter education and engagement program takes a non-institutional approach to furnishing voting education and access as a form of institutional cultural recognition and political representation. As such, their voter education program can be categorized both as institutional and non-institutional. Finally, Causa participates in non-institutional methods of political representation through grassroots citizen organizing for protests, vigils, and rallies (Causa n.d. c). Though Causa acts as the legislative arm of AP their methods have roots in the non-institutional protest activism of Oregon’s farmworker justice movement.

Latinos Unidos Siempre.

LUS’s social activism is non-institutional and pursues redistribution, recognition, and representation. The members of LUS organize and fundraise for an annual Thanksgiving dinner that is open to any member of the community, thereby redistributing community food resources to those in need while providing space for community members to gather (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a). LUS also organizes youth in support of the DREAM Act by collecting testimonies from DREAMers, who are the US-born children of noncitizen immigrants that seek citizenship (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. b). By collecting and giving testimonies, the youth of LUS take a non-institutional approach to both cultural recognition and political representation.

Gathering DREAMer testimonies creates social capital and gives DREAMers and LUS members representation through political voice. LUS members create public art projects that build cultural recognition around the DREAM Act as well (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a). LUS also stages protests, rallies, and demonstrations around the DREAM Act, giving their members the opportunity to participate in another form of non-institutional political representation (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. b). Finally, by training youth in protest and political engagement, LUS Acts as a youth leadership incubator for AP, which furthers cultural recognition and political representation through access to learning (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a, Smaal et al. 2020). Though LUS's social justice work is non-institutional, their programs aspire to build the capacity for Latinx youth to acquire the skills necessary to impact the legislative process, particularly regarding immigrant populations.

Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality.

SKCE's approaches to social justice activism are non-institutional and span the categories of redistribution, recognition, and representation. SKCE's only core project that redistribute resources to Latinx farmworkers and their families is the Early Learning Program, which in 2017-2018 used grant funding and donations to provide over \$20,000 in child development toys and activities (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. e). The Early Learning Program also promotes cultural recognition by providing access to education and skill-building for both students and parents, which then contributes to Latinx families' access to social capital (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c). Over the years, SKCE has expanded their programming to take a holistic approach to social justice activism with and for Latinx parents and their students.

SKCE's social justice activism is primarily focused on recognition and representation through grassroots organizing between parents, teachers, staff, and the Salem/Keizer school board. SKCE's Parent Organizing Project has two initiatives that improve both recognition and representation through non-institutional activism: the first is the Parent Leadership Group with school board members and the second is the Forming Strong Families Program (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c, Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. f). The Parent Leadership Group with school board members is SKCE's longest-running program and was developed to provide parents with the tools necessary to actively participate in their children's education through "school board meetings, forums and focus groups, and informational events for the school district" (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. b). Parents who choose to participate in the Parent Leadership Group have improved access to social capital, knowledge, and political voice within their school district.

The Forming Strong Families Program focuses on helping parents build a trauma-informed perspective on their students' mental health and social well-being (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. f). To this end, the Forming Strong Families Program sponsors classes on difficult conversations, strengthening families, and parent training along with mentorship and support groups (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. f). Much of SKCE's parent curriculum is reflexively developed in conjunction with parents who attend SKCE class and work with SKCE. By taking a reflexive and student-inclusive approach to social justice work, SKCE programming continues to build social capital, knowledge, and voice.

Though SKCE mostly operates through non-institutional grassroots organizing, their work aspires towards institutional political representation at the local level for Latinx students and their families. SKCE's leadership equity projects include an annual Parent Leadership

Institute that affords parents the opportunity to “learn about the structure of the school district and the policies that impact the education of their children, and gain an understanding of equity, historical oppression, and the need for representation in the institutions and systems that govern our communities” (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. d). Graduates of the Parent Leadership Institute are then invited to participate as parent leaders, who participate in local systems-level change through testimony to the school board with the intent of informing “policies, processes, and practices” through an equity lens that includes the cultural wisdom of the Latinx community in the Salem/Keizer School District (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. d). By organizing parents to receive the necessary skills and training to actively participate in the politics of the local school system, SKCE uses non-institutional methods to create opportunities to make institutional changes for cultural recognition through social capital and learning and political representation through transparency, voice, and access to political infrastructure.

CAPACES Leadership Institute.

CLI’s programming approaches redistribution, recognition, and representation using non-institutional organizing methods with the intention of developing movement leadership capable of one day also creating institutional change through legislative activism. CLI’s preliminary work as the CAPACES Network was to coordinate and host educational opportunities for AP members on topics like social justice, social movement organizing strategy, and how these frameworks can be applied to alleviate the struggles that workers face in agriculture and related industries (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. d). CLI has expanded into an independent organization that provides civic leadership training to aspiring members of Oregon’s farmworker justice movement through their People’s Representatives Program, which focuses on public

service training with a social justice perspective (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. c). In the spirit of movement unity CLI has included a peer mentorship component (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. c). Graduates of this program often go on to leadership positions in other AP organizations, thereby creating a more unified framework for social justice activism across the members of the alliance (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. c). By connecting the leadership of AP, CLI helps perpetuate the strategies, lessons, and organizing tactics of the farmworker justice movement.

As a movement-rooted leadership training program, CLI's People's Representative Program improves cultural recognition by developing an activism network for social capital and by providing learning opportunities through social justice workshops and mentorship. CLI expands the reach of their leadership cultivation through TURNO, a program that shares CLI's civic leadership and social justice frameworks with high school students through workshops, volunteer opportunities, and academic support (CAPACES Leadership Network, n.d. e). Both programs work towards improving political representation by affording participants access to transparent knowledge about the social systems they are engaged with, opportunities to have a voice in decision making, and access to infrastructure that affords them power in the political process (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. c, CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. d). While the political processes that People's Representative participants initially have access to are located within non-institutional movement organizations that are a part of the AP network, CLI's leadership training aspires to encourage movement leaders capable of making systems-level institutional legislative change (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. c). Overtime, CLI's leadership programs have the potential to sustain AP organizations' capacities to grow together as a movement.

CLI also builds movement identity while working toward economic redistribution and cultural recognition by coordinating the Anahuac Farm and Cultural Center. The Anahuac Farm and Cultural Center started as the Anahuac Culture Program, which taught traditional indigenous Mexican languages, cooking, gardening, seed saving, and herbal medicine using FHDC and Evolve land, resources, and volunteers (Farmworker Housing Development Coalition n.d. f). As of 2022, the Anahuac Farm and Cultural Center has started to take shape on sixty acres of organic-certified land in Turner, OR (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. b). CLI states that the purpose of Anahuac is to participate in the unification of the “indigenous communities of America, in the dominant culture known as farmworkers, whose labor has been exploited throughout the food system” (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. b). The Anahuac Farm and Cultural Center serves economic redistribution by providing land and affordable food to participants and the extended community at FHDC developments (Farmworker Housing Development Coalition n.d. f, CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. b). Anahuac serves cultural recognition by building social capital around traditional indigenous Mexican farming practices and providing opportunities for learning (Farmworker Housing Development Coalition n.d. f, CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. b). The Anahuac Farm and Cultural Center is a non-institutional project that uses grassroots organizing, movement resources, grant funding, and donations to promote farmworker and immigrant justice.

Evolve.

Evolve, as a non-profit property management company that manages FHDC housing, is a non-institutional part of AP and approaches social justice through redistribution and recognition. To this end, Evolve provides workforce training for affordable housing property management and maintenance, particularly for former farmworkers seeking access more stable, higher paying

careers (Evolve n.d. b.). Evolve furthers social justice by creating opportunities for economic redistribution through job creation and job training that helps farmworkers and the immigrant community access fair wages (Evolve n.d. b.). Evolve works towards social justice through cultural recognition by providing farmworkers and the immigrant community with pay that shows their labor is respected, social capital, and access to learning (Evolve n.d. b.). Evolve's work does not directly engage with the formal legislative process or directly work to improve political representation.

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**Institutional Social Justice Action**

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- Redistribution
- Soliciting campaign contributions through PCUN’s Electoral and Political Action Program (PCUN n.d. b)
  - Oregon farmworker overtime lawsuit (Terry, 2022)
  - Creating political coalitions for immigrant and farmworker labor justice (Causa n.d. d, PCUN n.d. a)
  - Securing investment for Universal Representation deportation defense (Causa n.d. d.)

- Recognition
- Policy advocacy for immigrants and farmworkers at state and national levels (PCUN n.d. a Causa n.d. d)
  - Creating political coalitions (Causa n.d. d, PCUN n.d. a)
  - Healthy Workplaces documentation and response program (PCUN n.d. a)
  - Campaigns to build voter engagement (PCUN n.d. a Causa n.d. f)
  - Organizing youth in support of the DREAM Act (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. b)
  - Immigration reform advocacy at the national level (Causa n.d. d)
  - State level education policy advocacy for Latinx and immigrant students (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c)

- Representation
- Policy advocacy for immigrants and farmworkers at the state and national level (PCUN n.d. a Causa n.d. d)
  - Healthy Workplaces documentation and response program (PCUN n.d. a)
  - Campaigns to build voter engagement (PCUN n.d. a Causa n.d. f)
  - Creating political coalitions (Causa n.d. d, PCUN n.d. a)
  - Youth political leadership development (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. c)
  - Organizing youth in support of the DREAM Act (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. b)
  - Legal rights education for immigrants and farmworkers (Causa n.d. c)
  - Immigration reform advocacy at the national level (Causa n.d. d)
  - Parent Organizing Project (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. b)
  - State level advocacy (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c)
  - Statewide education alliance for people of color (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c)

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**Non-institutional Social Justice Action**

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- Redistribution
- Farmworker Labor Union organizing for fair wages and workplace protections (PCUN n.d. a)
  - Community food bank (Mano a Mano n.d. b)
  - Supervised visitation scholarship (Mano a Mano n.d. f)
  - Mano a Mano community programs sponsorship
  - FHDC housing (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. a)
  - Free preschool and afterschool services (Farmworker Housing Development n.d. b)
  - Early Learning Program education kits (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. d)
  - Christmas tree wreath project (Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas n.d.)
  - Oregon Worker Relief Fund (Causa n.d. e)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce training for affordable housing property management and maintenance (Evolve n.d. b)</li> </ul>
Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmworker Labor Union organizing for fair wages and workplace protections (PCUN n.d. a)</li> <li>• Radio Poder programming (PCUN, n.d., Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas n.d.)</li> <li>• Campaigns to build voter engagement (PCUN n.d. a, Causa n.d. f)</li> <li>• Healthy Workplaces documentation and response program (PCUN n.d. a)</li> <li>• Sponsorship of Radio Poder (Mano a Mano n.d. a)</li> <li>• Community resource navigation services (Mano a Mano n.d. c)</li> <li>• Document assistance (Mano a Mano n.d. e)</li> <li>• Free preschool and afterschool services (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. b)</li> <li>• Healthy Workplaces documentation and response program (PCUN n.d. a)</li> <li>• Workforce training for affordable housing property management and maintenance (Evolve n.d. b)</li> <li>• Social justice leadership development for Alianza Poder (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. d, Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. a, Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas n.d.)</li> <li>• Culturally informed mural projects depicting community stories and values (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. e)</li> <li>• Free preschool services (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. b)</li> <li>• Free after school program (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. b)</li> <li>• Health care insurance program enrollment, support group for seniors, onsite health resource assistance (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. c)</li> <li>• Promotores Leadership Development (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. d)</li> <li>• Youth art projects in support of the DREAM Act (Latinos Unidos Siempre, n.d. b)</li> <li>• Partnership with Salem Keizer School District to build cultural recognition (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c)</li> <li>• Parent Organizing Project (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c, Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. f)</li> <li>• Anahuac traditional Mexican cooking, gardening, and herbal medicine program (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. b)</li> <li>• Parent Organizing Project (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. a)</li> <li>• Social justice leadership development for Alianza Poder (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. d)</li> <li>• Early learning literacy and parenting programs (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. b)</li> <li>• Workforce training for affordable housing property management and maintenance (Evolve n.d. b)</li> </ul>
Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worker outreach and member organizing for protests, vigils, and rallies (PCUN n.d.)</li> <li>• Healthy Workplaces documentation and response program (PCUN n.d. a)</li> <li>• Campaigns to build voter engagement (PCUN n.d. a, Causa n.d. f)</li> </ul>

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- Farmworker Labor Union organizing for fair wages and workplace protections (PCUN n.d. a)
  - MLP Christmas wreath project (Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas n.d.)
  - Document assistance (Mano a Mano n.d. e)
  - Community organizing for protests vigils and rallies (Causa n.d. C, PCUN n.d., Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c)
  - Healthy Workplaces documentation and response program (PCUN n.d. a)
  - Social justice and leadership development within Alianza Poder (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. d)
  - Promotores Leadership Development (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation n.d. d)
  - Organizing youth for protest, rallies, and demonstrations in support of the DREAM Act (Latinos Unidos Siempre n.d. b)
  - Parent Organizing Project (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c, Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. f)
  - Involvement in statewide education alliance for people of color (Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality n.d. c)
  - People’s Representative Public Service Training Program (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. c)
  - Social justice and leadership development coalition Alianza Poder (CAPACES Leadership Institute n.d. d)
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Table 1. AP Members’ Approaches to Social Justice Work

*Analysis*

Taken as a coalition, the member organizations of AP use institutional and non-institutional approaches to social justice action that span the categories of redistribution, representation, and recognition. Based on Table 1, economic redistribution was the least represented category for both institutional and non-institutional social justice action. Political representation was the most represented social justice category for AP member organizations’ institutional approaches. Cultural recognition was the most represented category for AP organizations’ non-institutional approaches to social justice. These findings suggest that AP organizations are currently focusing their social justice recognition work to sustain Oregon’s farmworker and immigrant justice movement through community-building while planning for long-term institutional social justice change by cultivating political leadership.

Most programming characterized as economic redistribution within Alianza Poder was focused on educational opportunities or financial support to compensate for economic inequities experienced by farmworkers and the immigrant community in the Willamette Valley. The educational opportunities, like Evolve's workforce training and FHDC's free preschool and afterschool programs, were all non-institutional programs arranged through movement organization and resources (Farmworker Housing Development n.d. a, Evolve n.d. b). These programs develop long-term access to wealth for farmworkers, their families, and the immigrant community by providing more equitable access to the resources necessary to make higher wages in the future. Economic redistribution for financial support through institutional means focused on fair wages for farmworkers and access to the funding necessary to continue to build political representation. Financial support through non-institutional means like PCUN's union organizing for fair wages and fundraising for the Oregon Worker Relief Fund were frequently community efforts to furnish some of the financial privileges afforded to English-speaking citizens of the US through government programs that fail to serve farmworkers and immigrants (PCUN n.d. a, Causa n.d. e). Overall, most economic redistribution efforts were directed at creating long-term economic solutions for farmworkers and the Latinx immigrant community, but some programs still addressed critical short term needs to help low-income workers subsist.

Within the category of cultural recognition, programs that addressed social capital and access to learning opportunities were most frequently cited. This suggests that AP organizations are approaching the social problem of farmworker labor exploitation by developing a robust Latinx farmworker and immigrant community that is acknowledged through social privileges like media representation, access to community resources, and access to different educational opportunities. Through AP organizations, members of the immigrant and farmworker community

can learn how to navigate the education system, connect with other immigrants and farmworkers as well as the broader community, share their skills, take on leadership roles in their community, find opportunities to celebrate their cultures, and enjoy opportunities to express their creativity. The cultural recognition programs build movement capacity by celebrating the shared identities of farmworkers and immigrants in the Willamette Valley who have settled in Oregon to seek opportunity in the face of inequitable global economic conditions that create exploitative labor relations. Cultural recognition work as demonstrated by AP directly opposes the alienation and inability to access resources that labor exploitation creates.

Political representation in AP programming focuses on creating strong movement leadership within AP organizations with the long-term goal of building more institutional political representation for farmworkers and the immigrant population of the Willamette Valley. Most AP organizations have some leadership training component that uses a systemic social justice perspective to both challenge and navigate social systems that are designed to deny farmworkers and immigrants access to equitable voice and/or decision-making opportunities. AP organizations help their communities access voice and decision-making through citizen organizing, political advocacy at the local, state, and national level, community leadership development, and legal rights education. This builds the AP network's longevity by empowering new generations of movement leaders. Political representation can also combat some of the symptoms of exploitation like political silencing while building capacity to take on the roots of labor exploitation like unjust laws around pay that favor wealthy agribusiness owners over immigrants.

AP member organizations currently take more non-institutional approaches to social justice action than institutional approaches. This is consistent with AP's roots in the farmworker

justice movement of the 1950s and 1960s. However, in regard to political representation many of the non-institutional approaches to building voice and leadership within AP aspire to contributing to institutional leadership over time. Eight of the nine sister organizations within AP have some form of leadership development program, with Evolve being the only organization without a formal leadership initiative. As AP organizations continue to grow, support for their institutional efforts will help them more directly address the immigration and labor laws that create conditions of exploitation. Currently, however AP organization can provide robust non-institutional programming that addresses symptoms of exploitation like alienation, hunger, inability to access infrastructure, and lack of voice while working towards community empowerment to make systems-level change.

## **Contribution**

This chapter explains the contribution that this Capstone makes to increasing understanding of farmworker labor exploitation and subsequent grassroots social movement approaches to addressing farmworker labor exploitation. To address farmworker exploitation, I chose to explore how the Oregon social justice movement coalition Alianza Poder emerged and what approaches AP member organizations currently take when developing cures to farmworker exploitation. My Overall Research Questions was: How does the social movement coalition Alianza Poder approach social justice within the context of the historic and ongoing activism of the Oregon farmworkers' movement? This work has led me to describe and document aspects of the grassroots social justice work of Alianza Poder and its member organizations in Oregon's Willamette Valley in a new and synthetic way using social justice and social movement frameworks.

Using a social justice framework with social movement frameworks to categorize and analyze my findings revealed not only AP member organizations' approaches, but also an institutional narrative of a social movement that has successfully established several social movement organizations to sustain movement activism. My research demonstrates the type of qualitative information for social justice and social movement research that can be discovered by synthesizing these frameworks when exploring historical and ongoing activism.

Through my inquiry I demonstrated that while many AP organizations emerged in response to legislative threats, their programming now targets long-term social change rather than reactive responses to legal efforts by capitalists to preserve conditions of exploitation through oppression. Documenting this evolution underscores the importance of supporting organizing efforts at the grassroots level, even if they do not have immediate plans to address systems change. Each of the organizations within AP have evolved and expanded over time to create a network that fosters social capital and care for farmworkers and immigrants experiencing exploitation and oppression. This network can support the growth of subsequent movement organization and promote leadership initiatives to build movement capacity to respond to threats and opportunities over time. Next, I re-articulate the contributions that each of my two CRQs has made to increasing understanding of farmworker labor exploitation below. I conclude the section with recommendations for future work.

CRQ 1 addressed emergent resources, organizational structures, and political opportunities in the history of AP organizing. By using Political Process Theory and Resource Mobilization Theory to explore the emergence of AP organizations, I demonstrated how social movement resources accrue over time and can be effectively leveraged to expand movement mobilizing capacity against facets of farmworker exploitation. Early AP organizations, like

PCUN, Mano a Mano, and SKCE started from small groups of concerned citizens who had been exposed to organizing through other farmworker justice groups like the UFW. These individuals effectively used existing farmworker justice movement tactics to organize their communities to oppose legislative threats to farmworkers in Oregon. Then, through sustained activism and long-term planning, these early organizations were able to gather resources to foster the growth of second- and third-generation organizations like the LUS and Evolve. AP organizations have therefore historically approached social justice efforts to oppose farmworker exploitation by building more resilient grassroots social justice networks. While this approach does not directly address root causes of exploitation, like the unjust socio-economic hierarchies upheld by Northern capitalism, it does afford AP organizations the opportunity to sustain growth with the intent of acquiring the movement capacity necessary to oppose legislative threats to the movement and build movement resources necessary to one day target the root causes of farmworker exploitation.

CRQ 2 focused on approaches to social justice action taken by AP, advancing an understanding of how AP organizations are currently addressing farmworker exploitation through social justice activism. Using social justice and social movement frameworks together revealed the areas and approaches to social justice activism that AP organizations' programming emphasize, as well as approaches that are less prevalent in current AP organization programming. My findings indicate that AP organizations have more ongoing programming that is non-institutional in nature. This may suggest that AP organizations are able to find more success through direct citizen organizing as mediated by movement organizations as opposed to through institutional legislative routes. One possible reason for these findings is that currently social justice activism for farmworker justice finds more success in non-institutional settings.

Another possible reason could be that social movement organizations that originate from non-institutional processes like citizen organizing and existing social movement repertoires take time to gradually develop clout in institutional settings. Given the noncitizen status of many farmworkers and the fact that many AP organizations formed in response to immediate threats, it would make sense that AP organizations would first find ways to furnish economic redistribution, social recognition, and political representation through accessible non-institutional grassroots community methods before using their growing resources to work towards long-term social change through legislation. Legislative change requires money and access to plentiful resources to access the channels necessary to make institutional change in the US legal system.

My findings from CRQ 2 also indicate that most of AP organizations' social justice activities were oriented towards political representation and cultural recognition. This could indicate that AP organizations are established enough within their communities to access adequate funding for their activism through grants, donations, and community activities rather than through establishing new programming to build movement access to economic resources. Most AP organizations were founded to address the symptoms of poverty in the farmworker population like hunger, inadequate access to housing, inadequate access to educational opportunities, and inadequate access to legal services. Their current programmatic priorities appear to be cultural recognition and political representation that will reap rewards as a form of long-term capacity-building for the farmworker and immigrant justice movement in Oregon. By investing in the cultural recognition and political representation for farmworkers and immigrants, AP organizations are making future systems-level change to reduce farmworker exploitation more possible. Therefore, if the organizing activities of AP members is indicative of some possible approaches to cure farmworker exploitation, those seeking systems-level change may



want to consider looking for ways to increasing the cultural recognition and political representation of farmworkers and immigrants.

Given the findings discussed above, I can recommend supporting both institutional and non-institutional methods of social justice action for building cultural recognition and political representation for farmworkers and immigrants as necessary steps to reducing farmworker exploitation. The long-term goal to reduce farmworker exploitation is to provide farmworkers with the means to resist exploitation by building their socio-economic power. However, if laws exist that preclude noncitizen workers from equitable access to labor rights, any efforts to provide for economic redistribution will be limited and reactionary. Instead, farmworker justice movements and their allies can work on systematically building the power of farmworkers through cultural representation and political recognition to promote reform around the cultural beliefs and laws that permit farmworker exploitation in the US. Economic redistribution is necessary to address the immediate symptoms of farmworker exploitation like hunger, poor health outcomes, and reduced access to educational opportunities, but long-term system-level change requires building legislative power.

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In summary, this chapter explored and synthesized the finding of my research into farmworker labor exploitation through the lens of historic and ongoing AP movement activism. I first discussed general findings before moving on to an analysis of findings generated by my two Constitutive Research Questions. My research found that combining social justice and social movement frameworks yielded qualitative data that contributed to an understanding of the histories and priorities of the Oregon farmworker and immigrant justice movement. Taken within the context of the historic farmworker justice movement, these findings indicated how the

Oregon farmworker and immigrant justice movement formed and how their priorities have shifted over time to focus on long-term, systemic approaches to social justice change. In what follows, I conclude this Capstone by sharing what I have learned about social justice, social problems, and the role of inquiry in addressing social justice problems in food systems and society by engaging in research.

## Five—Conclusion

This final chapter provides an overview of what I learned about food systems, society, social justice, and critical inquiry during the process of this Capstone research. First, I summarize my approaches and the social problem that this research addressed. Then I share general findings about social justice and research that this work revealed, focusing on critical inquiry, the food system as a social construction, and social movement activism.

This Capstone used critical inquiry to learn more about social justice in the context of food systems and society. Specifically, I explored farmworker exploitation with an overall research question focusing on how the social movement coalition Alianza Poder approaches social justice within the context of the historic and ongoing activism of the Oregon farmworkers' movement. While I do not directly experience farmworker exploitation as an individual, I am implicated in systems of oppression when I unknowingly purchase food produced with unjust labor standards. By exploring the history of social movements, I have found that social justice activism is often an intersectional and collaborative effort. The older organizations within AP, like PCUN and Mano a Mano, supported the emergence and growth of new organizations like MLP when it became apparent to organizers that instances of gender oppression were intersectional with farm labor exploitation. Social movements that have grown out of oppression, like the farmworker and immigrant justice movement of Oregon, support and create possibilities for other social justice actors and organizations to take action. Through this intersectional inquiry and as a worker in the food system, I can now see that I am both a part of the social problem of farmworker exploitation as an individual consumer and impacted by broad practices of labor exploitation as a worker in the food system.

By examining conditions within the food system as social constructions, or products of society, I was able to engage in inquiry that questioned the oppressive farm labor system in the US. Using critical inquiry as a research paradigm during this Capstone has taught me how to use academic research methods to question existing social structures in a way that uncovers opportunities for activism. As Paulo Freire stated, “That which had existed objectively but had not been perceived in its deeper implications (if indeed it was perceived at all) begins to ‘stand out,’ assuming the character of a problem and therefore of challenge” (2000, 83). Freire (2000) is describing the process of engaging with the world as a learner engaging in critical inquiry to find possibilities for social transformation through thoughtful exploration (83). Framing and making farm labor exploitation “stand out” as a social problem allowed me to explore the ways groups like Alianza Poder approach developing solutions. Through this research, I came to the understanding that farm labor exploitation is not a fixed and necessary part of the food system, but a condition that society, and individuals as a part of society, can change. AP describes itself as a social justice coalition, and their work demonstrated an impressive scope of approaches to promoting a more just society through grassroots activism that grew into a cohesive social movement.

In the process of learning more about AP’s work, I used the work of social justice and social movement scholars to guide my inquiry. The research and writing that Fraser (2004, 2008) has engaged in to create categories for social justice action was a particularly useful framework for understanding AP’s approaches to social justice. Combining Fraser’s work with the language of social movement theory revealed the historical context of AP as a social justice movement coalition with lineage extending back to the United Farm Workers’ movement in the 1950s. These frameworks helped me understand AP as an example of long-term social movement

activism sustained by the structure of social movement organizations. While my research does not examine all facets of the work that has gone into sustaining AP organization activism over time, it does provide some historical context around how AP organizations have been able to foster mutual growth through collaboration, shared messaging, and an interconnected leadership-development structure. This research can be used by other social movement actors seeking to learn more about how to engage in sustained social movement activism, as well as how to work in collaboration with other social movement groups seeking to achieve the same goals.

While farmworker and immigrant labor exploitation is a daunting and deeply-rooted social problem, social justice activists continue to work together to create a society that does not rely on oppression to feed its people. Scholars can support these activists' work by joining in direct movement activism or by amplifying the stories of social justice movement work and documenting successful organizing practice for future generations. Social justice work takes time to build the numbers, commitment, legitimacy, resource caches, and political influence necessary to make social change. Alianza Poder provides one example of how individuals seeking a more just society can come together as an alliance of power to make significant changes to conditions of oppression over time.

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