

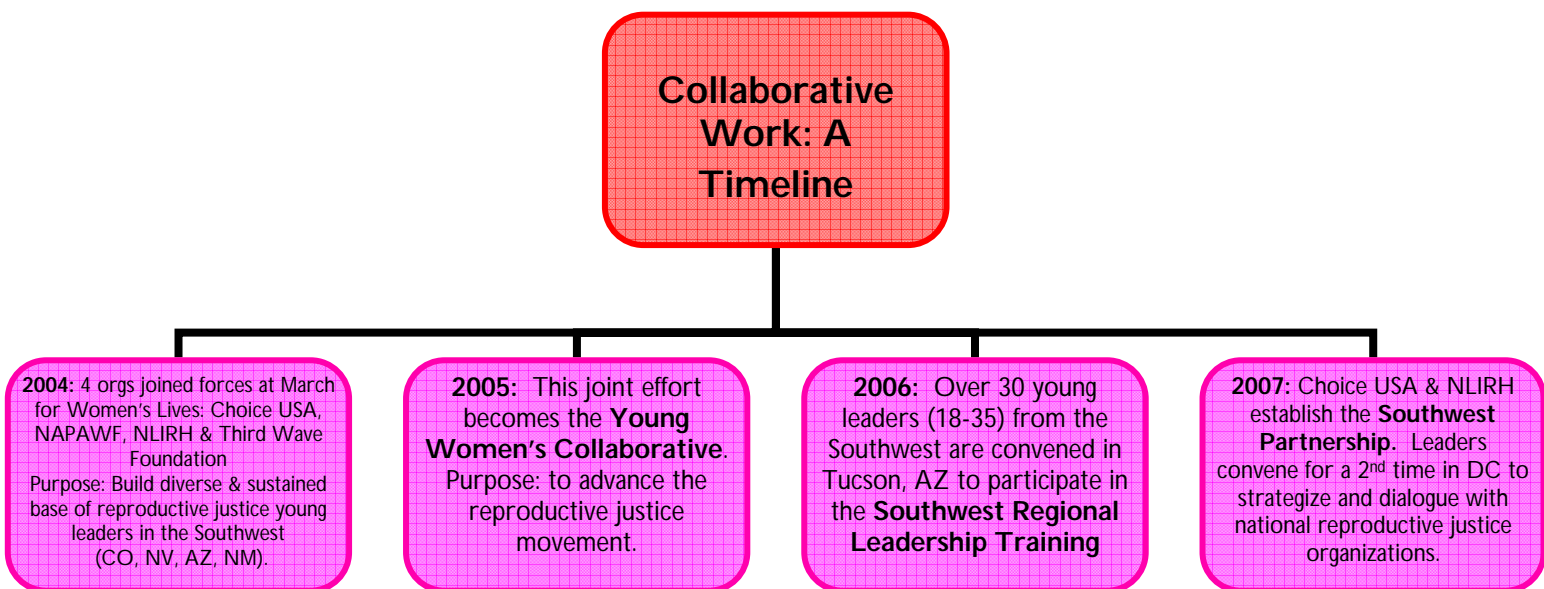


# The Southwest Partnership

Four national organizations came together through the 2004 March for Women’s Lives: Choice USA, the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF), the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH) and Third Wave Foundation. These organizations recognized the need to help build a diverse and sustained base of young leaders in the reproductive justice movement in the Southwestern United States (CO, NV, AZ, and NM).

The Southwest presents the perfect forum for real base-building and organizing. In addition to the existing grassroots work in the Southwest, there is an opportunity to create a model for supporting regional work at the National level. Additionally, **the Southwest represents the future of the United States—emerging and newer constituencies (including immigrant and youth populations) and important local politics are both reasons that these states will be major figures in the National Reproductive Justice movement.** In 2005 these organizations individually continued their leadership development and base-building efforts and worked to create a model for leadership development, grassroots organizing and advocacy campaign strategies based on reproductive justice. In 2006, over 40 young leaders (ages 18-35) from the Southwest convened in Tucson, AZ to participate in the Southwest Regional Leadership Training. The purpose of this training was to connect the young leaders’ diverse experiences to a broader vision of cross-movement change focusing on reproductive justice. In addition, activists from Nevada and Colorado organized reproductive justice roundtables and public education workshops throughout 2006.

In 2007, two of the original organizations developed the Southwest Partnership, led by Choice USA and NLIRH. **The Southwest Partnership seeks to build local, regional and national support for activists and leaders in the Southwest by facilitating trainings, ongoing technical assistance, resource leveraging and networking.** In April of 2007, Choice USA and NLIRH hosted a national convening in Washington, D.C. with young leaders from the Southwest, national reproductive health and rights organizations and donors. Plans for 2008 include further leadership development, providing skill and issue based workshops and trainings and a regional convening to discuss cross-movement campaigns.





**Choice USA** is the voice for

young people in the reproductive rights movement. **We are youth-led, controlled, focused and centered.** We give young people – who are the first to be compromised, and the most politically vulnerable – power to take into their own hands decisions that affect their lives. We place trust in young people as the sustaining force in the future of our movement and respect the diversity of their experiences as youth. By placing youth at our center and engaging their allies, Choice USA broadens our movement and builds bridges to other progressive causes.

Choice USA is also committed to embracing policies that fight for, but move far beyond, the cornerstones of the reproductive and sexual rights movement to shape a policy environment that is inherently a just one, recognizing, protecting, expanding and making readily available to each person worldwide *the knowledge, ability and tools for safe and healthy relationships; to decide when, if and how you will have sex; to decide when, if and how pregnancy will occur and once a pregnancy occurs, if it will be carried to term; and to effectively parent.*



The **National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH)** is committed to ensuring the fundamental human right to reproductive health for Latinas, their families and their communities through education, policy advocacy, and community mobilization.

We understand and celebrate the fact that we are part of a larger advocacy community. Efforts to effect systemic change are most successful when a common vision can be forged and broad support is cultivated through coalition work. **We are proud members of the Southwest Partnership, and by participating in this initiative, our organization brings to the table the unique perspectives and issues faced by Latinas, focusing on a collaborative vision for reproductive justice.**

Latinas face a unique and complex array of reproductive health and rights issues that are exacerbated by poverty, gender, racial and ethnic discrimination and xenophobia. We believe that in order to substantially improve the reproductive health of Latinas and protect their rights to exercise reproductive freedom, we must locate reproductive health and rights issues within a broader social justice framework that seeks to bring an end to poverty and discrimination and affirms human dignity and the right to self-determination.



For more information, please visit [www.latinainstitute.org](http://www.latinainstitute.org) and [www.choiceusa.org](http://www.choiceusa.org)