ON THE GROUND IN 2020
Dear Friends,

The past few months have given us a great opportunity to reflect on the challenges, successes, and lessons from 2020. We are entering an exciting year, and we enter it with a feeling of great appreciation. Appreciation for our partners and the tremendous work they did to lead and heal their communities through a trying year; appreciation for our staff, which has grown tremendously in 2020; appreciation for our fiscal sponsor, State Voices, and to our many state and national partners, funders, executive committee, and allies.

In 2021, Michigan Voices is excited to become an independent 501c3. As an independent organization, we will remain a part of the State Voices network, but we will have our own board of directors. We have planned this transition for years, but the table is finally in a place where it makes sense to move forward. This transition is also a chance for us to rebrand Michigan Voices as a new organization. In the next few weeks, we will share more about the transition and roll out our vision for the organization.

We are no longer simply “rebuilding” a table. We are creating something new, and we are turning the page from the past. We are a team, committed to building and investing in progressive BIPOC leadership and organizations; to respond to the needs of our communities; to build stronger and deeper relationships with our partners; invest in relationship-based, year-round, multi-cycle organizing; and creating sustainable growth for a statewide, progressive movement in Michigan.

As an organization dedicated to supporting the civic access, civic representation and civic engagement goals of our partners, we know it is important to allow these organizations to tell their own story. Therefore, we’ve created space in this report to allow many of them to introduce themselves, share their work, and how the work of our team helped them in a critical election year.

We believe in the power of Black and brown people to change our communities from the ground up. We are inspired by our partner grass-seed organizations that have persevered through a pandemic to provide resources to struggling neighbors while doing COVID response, census work, voter registration, and reminding people to vote. That type of organizing showed us what we always knew: The power is in us. It’s a reminder of who we are, and why we work so hard to uplift the voices of people rooted in their communities.
MEET OUR TEAM

SOMMER FOSTER, CO-DIRECTOR
TAMEKA RAMSEY, CO-DIRECTOR
SHARVIN LEE, DATA & TARGETING MANAGER

EDEN ZIMAK, DATA ASSOCIATE
LINDSAY MAAS, FIELD & DATA CONSULTANT
MELANIE MCELROY, DEMOCRACY MANAGER

ABBY CLARK, DEMOCRACY PROJECT COORDINATOR
JACINDA CASON, INTEGRATED VOTER ENGAGEMENT
MAKINI KWELI, OPERATIONS MANAGER

JORDAN BELLANT, PROGRAM & TRAINING
SHANAY WATSON-WHITTAKER, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
TANITH RICE, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
The operations team worked diligently to provide support to those on the ground by verifying regranting funds were available to our partners. Twenty-seven partners were regranted during this time. In addition, we processed over 120 regrant agreements, and regranted over $2.1 million across seven programs. This ensured not only that our partners could perform the work outlined in their agreements, but that they could also pivot to meet the challenges faced with the introduction of COVID-19. Our efforts backed the work of the following seven programs: Census, Capacity Building, Election Protection, Every Vote Counts, Get Out the Vote, Grassroots Voter Protection, and Redistricting.

Moreover, we hired several independent contractors to support our work and invested over $63,000 in their specialized services.

During this time, we also researched and purchased personal protective equipment to provide to our partners.
at no cost. We also provided additional PPE so that our partners could distribute essentials to the general public. The most common items purchased and issued are as follows:

- 10,900 disposable face masks
- 250 K95 masks
- 14,650 latex-free gloves
- 614 face shields
- 1,656 2-ounce hand sanitizers
- 32 1-gallon hand sanitizers
- 16 touchless sanitizer dispensers
- 177 sanitizing wipes

Other commonly purchased PPE items included Lysol, disposable bags and thermometers. On the day of the election, we made certain that poll workers and in-person voters had snacks and water — we contributed over $2,000 to this cause. Additionally, we monitored all forms of our partners’ social media to alert our team and the Election Protection Hotline of any issues that could potentially arise. We remained “on-call” until the election was called in Michigan.

VOTER PROTECTION

The 2020 Grassroots Voter Protection Program was an unprecedented program in an unprecedented election year. Because this was the first major election in which Michigan’s new voting reforms were in place (no-reason absentee, online voter registration and same-day voter registration, passed in 2018’s Proposition 3), Michigan Voices began earlier than ever before to prepare to help partners educate their communities on these new rules. As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, Michigan Voices' efforts pivoted to promote safe early-voting options. Since the March and August primaries showed gaps in poll worker retention and changed polling locations, extra care was taken to support these areas leading up to
November. Building off of the best practices from past cycles, Michigan Voices' voters' rights and election protection effort recruited more volunteers, held more trainings, produced and distributed more lawn signs, and responded to more incidents than ever before.

**Partners**

There were several levels of engagement around voters' rights and election protection through the Michigan Voices' table this year. The Grassroots Voter Protection Cohort, Coalition, Allies and Volunteers:

**Cohort**

The cohort was awarded funding from Michigan Voices for voters' rights education and election protection work. Members of the cohort included: Detroit Change Initiative, Our Own Wall Street, Righteous Sons, Michigan Center for Black Civic Participation, Mothers of Hope, Michigan United, Rising Voices of Asian American Families, Michigan Liberation and the Wisdom Institute. These organizations have authentic relationships in target communities across Michigan, and are trusted voices among the voters we wish to engage. They were ideal messengers to explain the new voting laws in Michigan, and to encourage safe, early voting options. They were also our first responders to incidents and confusion on Election Day.

**Volunteers**

In addition to volunteers recruited by partner organizations, individuals also came through the Michigan Voices' table and were either trained as grassroots volunteers or sent to attorney or challenger training programs within the greater coalition. This year in particular, multilingual and young volunteers were recruited with the intent of closing gaps in language access at the polls, and computer literacy on all fronts.

**Coalition**

The broader coalition consisted of any other Michigan Voices' partners who sought information on voters' rights and attended our training, whether they received funding from the table or another coalition. These include organizations like ACCESS, Oakland Forward, Detroit Action, APIA Vote, Michigan Faith in Action, Michigan League of Conservation Voters, Michigan League of Women Voters, Voters Not Politicians, and Detroit Disability Power.

**Allies**

Michigan Voices' allies consist of local
leaders, elected officials, small businesses and faith leaders who wanted to collaborate to promote voters’ rights and the 866-OUR-VOTE hotline. These leaders spanned from Detroit and surrounding suburbs, to Saginaw, Flint and west Michigan, and spanned from the Secretary of State and her staff to local mom-and-pop businesses.

**Election Protection Coalition**

Michigan Voices worked as part of a statewide coalition with the ACLU, NAACP, America Votes, Michigan League of Conservation Voters and Voters Not Politicians to plan and execute the Election Protection program. The coalition partnered with the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law to promote and provide volunteers for the 866-OUR-VOTE support hotline.

**Regrants**

Michigan Voices regranted to the following organizations for grassroots voter protection:

- APIA Vote
- APRI Detroit/Downriver
- Detroit Change Initiative
- Michigan United
- Michigan Coalition on Black Civic Participation
- Michigan Liberation
- Mothers of Hope
- Oakland Forward
- Our Own Wall Street
- Righteous Sons
- RVAHF
- Wisdom Institute

**Deliverables**

**Voters’ Rights Education**

Michigan Voices held monthly Voters’ Rights Q&A meetings for its broader coalition from March to October. These sessions had a member of the Secretary of State’s team speak to any mandates and recommendations surrounding voting during a pandemic. The meetings were a way for Michigan Voices to ease uncertainties and bring organizers up to speed on early voting options. Printed guidelines of important dates were distributed statewide to clarify the new timeline for deadlines to register, request and vote absentee ballots.

**Language Access**

Michigan Voices worked closely with the Secretary of State’s office throughout the election on voters’ rights education and COVID-19
recommendations. The SOS office launched a language access program in 2020, providing voting information, applications and sample ballots in Arabic, Bangla, Burmese, English, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog and Urdu. Michigan Voices' partners assisted in providing these translation services as part of the Voter Protection program.

**Hotline Promotion**
The voter protection cohort used press conferences, TV interviews, food distribution events and social media to promote the nonpartisan 866-OUR-VOTE hotline in target communities across the State of Michigan. Two thousand lawn signs featuring the hotline number in a new, easy-to-read design were distributed and placed around neighborhoods in over 20 Michigan cities.

**Volunteer Recruitment**
Organizations in the voter protection cohort recruited over 160 poll workers and over 350 poll monitors and challengers. Due to the influx of poll worker sign-ups, most positions were filled early. Many of these recruits were diverted to volunteer positions. Eight trainings were held virtually, with an average of 50 participants in each, outlining best practices for ensuring that all voters are respected at the polls and
able to safely cast their ballots. In coordination with the ACLU and the organizations within their coalition, Michigan Voices placed volunteers in target precincts in Detroit, Saginaw, Flint, Kalamazoo, Dearborn, Hamtramck, Warren, Southfield, Grand Rapids, Lansing and more.

**Early Voting Support**
Michigan Voices identified early on that there was confusion and misinformation across the state about absentee voting. Depending on the city, some voters had limited access to their city clerk and received their ballots late. Because of delays in the USPS mail service, there was confusion around when a ballot had to be received in order to be counted. Michigan Voices' voter protection cohort and broader coalition helped to debunk these myths and normalize voting absentee.

Because 2020 was the first major election in which no-reason absentee voting was allowed, there was a great need for messaging support for partners at the table. In cities like Detroit where secure ballot drop boxes were available for voters to deliver their ballots, Michigan Voices' partners put up lawn signs directing voters to the nearest drop box. Partners also participated in national actions like Party at the Drop Box by going live on social media to promote the practice of voting early.

**Election Day**
When Election Day arrived, Michigan Voices' partners were willing and ready to serve as the eyes and ears on
the ground, and reported any incidents through the 866-OUR-VOTE hotline network. Due to the increased promotion of the hotline in target communities, the hotline received more calls than ever before (leading up to and on Election Day).

Because 30 polling locations in Detroit changed abruptly for the August primary election, Michigan Voices prioritized warning voters about these changes in November. “Polling Place Changed” lawn signs were put up at both old and new locations where changes had been made, and the public found them to be helpful.

**Rapid Response**

**Coverage**

Rapid response coverage began over a month before the election, with the full-time staffing of the Lawyers Committee’s 866-OUR-VOTE hotline. By Election Day, calls were processed smoothly into regional teams, all based in Michigan, with networks of rapid responders on the ground. Most issues were caused by confusion and clerical errors, as was anticipated. Issues ranged from polling places not opening on time to poll workers giving misinformation and machines breaking down temporarily. The passage of late and same-day voter registration in Michigan improved many polling place issues, because a voter can ultimately go re-register to vote if they are not showing up on the rolls.

**Volunteer Placement**

The Michigan Voices Election Protection team played a critical and integral role in assigning both poll monitors and challengers to thousands of priority precincts across the state, in coordination with the ACLU’s statewide coalition. Placing volunteers and communicating those placements to them was an enormous logistical undertaking that warrants greater investment and advance planning in the future.

**Post-Election**

**TCF Center**

On election night, due to the influx of absentee ballots this year, and the highly contested presidential election, there was a greater focus and greater tensions at the absentee counting board at TCF Center in Detroit. Michigan Voices’ partners stepped up and came out in the middle of the night to serve as observers and challengers to the process. The count lasted several days, during which members of the voter protection cohort and coalition were trained on
Clear distinction of roles and responsibilities is necessary between statewide entities in coalition with one another. Legal, grassroots, c3 and c4 organizations must coordinate while staying in their respective lanes and respect the expertise and relationships of each, in order to optimize effectiveness.

**Board of Canvassers**
During the heated Wayne County Board of Canvassers meeting to certify the results of the general election, Michigan Voices' partners played an important role in giving testimony during the public comment period. Again, during the State Board of Canvassers meeting to certify the election for Michigan, Michigan Voices' partners recruited unique voices for public comment in defense of our democratic process.

**Lessons Learned**

- Clear distinction of roles and responsibilities is necessary between statewide entities in coalition with one another. Legal, grassroots, c3 and c4 organizations must coordinate while staying in their respective lanes and respect the expertise and relationships of each, in order to optimize effectiveness.

- Foreseeing and planning for challenges such as the TCF counting process, and having volunteers scheduled to cover shifts there, must be equally prioritized as coverage at the polls.

- Michigan Voices' partner organizations that received regrants from other in-state funders for election protection were in large part confused by the parallel programs. Some came back to Michigan Voices for training and volunteer placement, impacting the planning process.

- Organizations that stepped up their voter protection programs significantly from years past include Detroit Change Initiative and Michigan United. DCI held more events and was physically present in a way that exceeds its capacity from past years. Michigan United recruited a record number of volunteers and played a major role in building capacity on the spot at TCF Center not only on the night of the election, but in the days following.

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

Many of our partners are Black and brown-led organizations, and in the time of COVID-19, they each have a unique approach to community engagement. APIA (Asian & Pacific Islander American) Vote Michigan's Rebeka Islam develops young APIA leaders through her internship program like she was when she first
joined her organization. Quiana Pittman, executive director of the Michigan Coalition for Black Civic Participation, connects with Black voters in Saginaw through year-round outreach and engagement.

Kermit Williams’ Oakland Forward dedicates itself to increasing civic engagement through food and PPE giveaways in Oakland County communities often ignored by politicians. The Wisdom Institute, led by Ms. Gwendolyn Winston, uses doll making for her mentorship program to further her goal of a Black woman-centered Detroit city government. Our Own Wall Street, another Detroit-based partner, led by Chenita Gary, also takes a holistic approach to healing with events featuring psychologists and dance.

Norman Clement’s Detroit Change Initiative sponsored food giveaways and engages youth in Detroit high schools and middle schools. Stephanie Moore’s Mothers of Hope, founded by her mom, has in-person programs like laundry detergent giveaways to help improve the lives of Kalamazoo residents. Finally, A. Philip Randolph Institute Grand Rapids President Kathi Harris is the GOTV expert of Grand Rapids.

She and the organization led the charge to make Kent County, Michigan, a pivotal county in the 2020 election. We were able to support these organizations with capacity-building grants.

Building trusted relationships with these partners gave Michigan Voices an opportunity to address some of the immediate needs of our organizations in 2020. Michigan Voices regranted $44,749 to our partners for capacity building, for staffing and technology. Looking back on the impact of the regrant, one partner noted that the capacity-building grant “funds used helped us to grow capacity by allowing for sufficient resources and training for a group of new interns and paved a way for continuing educational and volunteer outreach.”

Michigan Voices is assisting this partner in creating the next generation of leaders. Another partner shared that the capacity-building grant for technology “helped grow our platform and
organization to connect with other groups online.” This grant allowed one of our partners to hire staff and gave her the flexibility she needed to speak to her constituents directly. The capacity-building grant “took a lot off of me. I was able to recruit more volunteers,” she said.

Through our capacity-building regrants, Michigan Voices helped take our partners to the next level by giving them the freedom to focus on their communities, invest in young talent, and build an online presence. In 2021, we hope to help more partners grow.

**VOTER REGISTRATION**

The Michigan Voices’ Voter Registration Program 2020 was carefully planned, funded and ready for execution.

Our program was set to start in March, after our three-person team started working together in February. After a weeklong training session in Florida, we started preparing a statewide voter registration program.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 covered the entire world in one month and interrupted everyone’s life as we knew it. Our partners pivoted from a field-based voter registration effort to an online voter registration operation and a COVID-19/protest response. The response from our partners inspired our staff to work harder to make sure we were filling the needs of the communities represented by our table partners.

The Michigan Voices’ table partners represent marginalized communities and the unheard who know how to make a way out of no way. Understanding the enormity of the 2020 election/loss of jobs/racial killings/closure of schools/food scarcity, our partner organizations immediately met the community where they were and provided basic necessities for survival. Taking advantage of the opportunity at hand, they related what
was happening in their clients’ lives to the importance of voting and allowing their voices to be heard.

This is how Michigan Voices stepped in and provided tools, technology and personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure that they could safely be in the community. The following is a breakdown of what we accomplished:

- Michigan Voices assisted 23 organizations across the state, ranging from small, service-based nonprofits to large civic-minded organizations.

- Michigan Voices provided 28 trainings and led eight voter registration workgroups on a biweekly basis.

- 16 table partners participated in COVID-19 response activities such as:
  1. Laundry soap giveaway
  2. Gift card giveaway
  3. PPE giveaway
  4. Food giveaway and distributions
  5. Personal item giveaway
  6. Children educational giveaway

These organizations did all of this on a weekly basis at the height of the pandemic; knowing the importance of serving their community in a time of need. Our partners helped us to learn how to safely operate a civic engagement program in person. Safety meant providing PPE to all staff and volunteers, making sure they were protected while working. Michigan Voices Program provided over $20,000 of PPE to our partners. That equipment was delivered across the state and helped many of our organizations return safely to working in person. Beyond the PPE, Michigan Voices' Voter Registration Program provided our partner organizations with seven different tools to aid in digital organizing and new ways to connect with their communities and membership:

- ThruTalk (Dialer program)
- ThruText and Hustle (Text message platforms)
- Rock The Vote URL and QR codes (1,104 created)
- NEAT (Third-party dialer and phone banking service)
- Vote Tripling (Relational organizing tool)
- Paper Voter Registration Forms (2,745 completed)
- Michigan Voices created three voter registration videos along with recording training and creating easily accessible training materials.

- Michigan Voices provided over 200 phones and 50 hotspots to meet partner’s needs for technology.
- 37 regrants totaling $331,750 for voter registration.

**GOTV**

In the final two weeks before the election, our work transitioned to leading the table’s Get out the Vote (GOTV) program. The goal of GOTV was driving turnout and highlighting voting access by way of early voting, voter registration and increased voter education.

Changes to Michigan’s election law allowed for improved ballot accessibility. During a global pandemic, many citizens wanted the opportunity to vote by mail and apply for an absentee ballot. This became critical to our work, making sure that oft-ignored and marginalized communities had fair voting access across the state. With that goal in mind, the table organized a statewide effort that was likely the largest coordinated c3 GOTV program in the state of Michigan.

In total, 53 partner organizations participated, in a variety of ways: As a regranted organization with direct table support, an organization that provided coverage into parts of the state not covered by our directly supported partners, and through turf coordination to maximize the reach of our partners and allies.

- By phone or text, using ThruTalk, ThruText, Spoke, VAN and phone banks run by NEAT.

- By increasing awareness on issues related to the election, checking registration status, and emphasizing the importance of voting.

- Through social media advertising, online and in-person events, door-to-door canvassing and literature drops.

The program focused on voter contact:
By partnering with When We All Vote to host 10 in-person events focused on early voting and voter engagement. Those events drew thousands of people to events at early voting sites and ballot drop boxes around the state (six events in Detroit, and one each in Flint, Grand Rapids, Pontiac and Saginaw).

- 26 partner organizations were regranted for their work and participated in direct coordination with table staff.

- Those 26 organizations were regranted $708,000 for GOTV.

By Election Day, our 53 partner organizations had made over 3 million contact attempts (by phone and text message), logged 175,000 conversations, hit 25,000-plus doors, and saw their efforts lead to the highest voter turnout in history for a Michigan election.

The work, however, did not stop on Election Day. Because of the coalition building and network we created through GOTV, we were able to activate organizations to respond to election challenges in Detroit and Wayne County. Those challenges started at the City of Detroit’s counting board on the night of the election.

They extended to the State Board of Canvassers’ meeting to certify the election results. Our efforts were a catalyst to the high-voter turnout. That work continued to make sure everyone felt their vote was counted and voice was heard.
DATA AND TARGETING

The Michigan Voices' data team provided ongoing data and tools support to the over 60 partners that participated in a strategic, layered, statewide program throughout the year. Through weekly skill building and VAN training, staff supported partners in running data-driven and effective campaigns that built on the organizing and outreach around several campaigns including:

- Redistricting
- Issue Advocacy/Education
- Census
- COVID Response
- Voter Registration
- Election Protection
- Absentee Chase
- Get Out the Vote

The data team also managed innovative tools including peer-to-peer texting, auto dialers, and voter registration and relational organizing tools to maximize efficiency and data retention. Through ongoing engagement, partners were able to build a relationship as trusted messengers and reach over 2.5 million voters through nearly 6 million voter contact attempts from phone calls, text messages and door knocks. 71% of our contacts were to voters of color, 60% were women and 37% were under the age of 35.

Over 221k of those conversations centered on the Census and over 1.4 million of those focused on voter registration resulting in 21k voter registrations recorded by partners and in-state vendors. Of the voters Michigan Voices' partners engaged throughout 2021, over 68% voted in the 2020 general election, 26% had a vote propensity score below 70 and 238,590 had no previous vote history at all.

These layered field programs culminated in a massive and successful targeted Get Out the Vote Program where over 55 partners focused their energy and efforts to turn out infrequent and non-voters in BIPOC communities, younger voters and single women. Within the last two weeks before the election, nearly 3.3 million attempts were made to 1.6 million voters and over 435k conversations were had across the state to mobilize infrequent voters. Over 70% of our contacts through our coordinated field program were to BIPOC voters and half had no or irregular vote history. We saw historic turnout in the 2020 election including a large increase in voters utilizing absentee voting. Michigan Voices' partners implemented a strong absentee chase program with 279k voters in our shared universe voting early. Partners educated and engaged over 347k members of our communities about the importance of making their voices heard while running field programs with creativity and adaptability during a time of great uncertainty under a global pandemic.
BY THE NUMBERS
(DATA FROM THE FIELD)

2020: TOTAL

2.5M
CONTACTS

6M
ATTEMPTS

CALLS AND TEXTS

119,000
CONTACTS

2.1M
CONVERSATIONS

940,000
ATTEMPTS

2.7M
ATTEMPTS
## 2020 Partner Program: Statewide

(60+ Partners Participating)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advocacy/Education</th>
<th>Census</th>
<th>Voter Registration</th>
<th>GOTV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14,356</td>
<td>667,142</td>
<td>2,701,423</td>
<td>2,608,066</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Voters Contacted</strong></td>
<td>2,902</td>
<td>220,710</td>
<td>1,782,800</td>
<td>343,361</td>
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</table>

### Totals

- **5,991,007** Attempts
- **2,349,773** Voters contacted
- **1,574,648** Contacts
- **67%** Votes

(Continued)
### 2020 Voter Contacts: Statewide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>Total Contacts</th>
<th>Score: Vote Propensity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berrien</td>
<td>38,192</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genesee</td>
<td>97,756</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ingham</td>
<td>58,306</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<td>Kalamazoo</td>
<td>59,934</td>
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<td>Kent</td>
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<td>Macomb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saginaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Clair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washtenaw</td>
<td>83,459</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>388,701</td>
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### 2020 Field Tactics: Contact Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calls and Texts</th>
<th>10.3%</th>
<th>5.6%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attempts</td>
<td>2.97M</td>
<td>3.02M</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contacts</td>
<td>305K</td>
<td>168K</td>
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2020 PARTNER SPOTLIGHTS
The Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) strives to enable and empower individuals, families and communities to lead informed, productive and culturally sensitive lives.

We have had to grow and pivot to meet the new challenges community members are facing. One of the biggest challenges has been making sure our community has access to testing and can understand the information around COVID-19.

We provide weekly testing at an ACCESS location, in addition to an educational campaign for our constituents to understand how to stay healthy and where they can get resources for themselves and their families. We are also making sure that the vaccine is rolled out in an equitable way. In terms of voter engagement work, we had to change to reach communities in new ways since we could no longer do it in person. We did this through drive through events and tabling outside of businesses and Mosques.

Michigan Voices gave us the tools we needed to reach our community through virtual efforts and campaigns, as well as provide safe outreach through in-person efforts by providing us with PPE and training. Funding through MV was essential to increasing our capacity to hire volunteers to reach our community in new ways and expand our efforts.

We honor our Arab American heritage through community-building and service to all those in need.
APIAVote-Michigan is a 501(c)3 nonpartisan organization committed to justice and equity for the Asian American community through grassroots mobilization, civic engagement, leadership development, and coalition building.

We uphold a vision of justice and equity that asserts people power and community connectedness as the framework for democracy, decision-making, community engagement, and service.

COVID-19 presented several challenges for our organization, including job loss; and navigating the online platforms. Before the pandemic, we naturally held more in-person events.

Our biggest challenge is currently capacity building. We are working with funders to receive financial support, which would allow us to hire more staff.

Meanwhile, Michigan Voices has assisted us every step of the way to run our programs.

Despite unforeseen setbacks, we are most proud of our community turnout to make their voice heard in the presidential election.

In 2021, we would like to continue to grow and expand our programs for the constituents we serve. Continued assistance from MV will help support our goal to grow capacity building.

People, power and community connectedness [are] the framework for democracy.
APRI Greater Battle Creek is a 44-member family who believes in meeting the community where they are. We proudly serve the Greater Battle Creek community constituents and organizations.

Due to COVID-19, we couldn’t be hands-on as we need to be, but we did not let it hinder us from staying in contact with the community. What we did, however, for greater Battle Creek did change.

People are facing hardships so, we partnered with local organizations to pass out food boxes to the seniors in our community, we drove seniors to appointments and helped them pick up their prescriptions.

Elections are cyclical, but the community engagement should be sustaining. Funding for organizations like APRI Greater Battle Creek has not always been accessible. There were election years that we did not receive any funding to pay staff or volunteers.

And so, we started asking the hard questions about why we weren’t being recognized. We decided to educate people about A. Philip Randolph.

Every year, we host a movie night. We show “10,000 Black Men Named George” and “Keep the Faith, Baby.” A. Philip Randolph’s name is finally being mentioned along with other prominent civil rights leaders.
Better Men Outreach (BMO) is an organization that aims to enhance the physical, social, and ethical growth of young men and women and to improve our community through regular service projects.

COVID-19 impacted our program because our gyms were closed, in addition to Detroit Job Corps being shut down. This caused our programs to not be as effective with the young men and women we typically would serve in person.

Not being able to connect with all our members and losing some contracts were some of our biggest challenges brought on by COVID. Our sites serve as a safe haven to our members, helping them with conflict resolution, find employment and other areas of need.

To adapt, we started doing Zoom calls with our members and students; and sending out more emails and text messages updating them on jobs, COVID; and providing them with motivation during this challenging time. Instead of coming to us, we started meeting members at their homes providing them with food and PPE supplies.

Working with Michigan Voices since 2016, BMO has educated three districts on the community advisory committee, redistricting and the Census. Through our civic engagement program and our partnership with MV, we have been able to create over 70 jobs for our community members.
Black Women’s Roundtable-Eastern Michigan (BWR-Eastern MI), is an intergenerational civic engagement statewide network; and the women and girls empowerment arm of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP) that champions equitable public policy on behalf of Black women and girls nationally.

Members of BWR-Eastern MI are primarily located in cities across Genesee (Flint), Macomb (Warren), Oakland (Pontiac), Saginaw (Saginaw) and Wayne (Detroit) counties.


From February to Election Day, we held a series of virtual and in-person events to educate the communities we serve on the Census, voting rights, COVID-19, etc. We also provided those in need with masks and other PPE, household items like laundry detergent, diapers; and turkeys for a Thanksgiving holiday meal.

In the immediate weeks following November 3, 2020, we hosted a Self-Care Sunday virtual event to encourage the women who had been on the ground to ensure every voice was heard in the election, to take a moment to exhale, reflect and celebrate ourselves.
The purpose of Dayenu is to secure a livable and sustainable world for all people for generations to come by building a multi-generational Jewish movement that confronts the climate crisis with spiritual audacity and bold political action. Launching in April 2020, we serve Jewish communities across the country.

Our biggest challenge has been establishing ourselves as the voice of the Jewish community on climate change. Due to COVID-19, we were unable to engage in in-person advocacy and mobilization.

All our activities have been digital, including phone and textbanks, part of our Chutzpah 2020 campaign.

We have done a pretty good job making our volunteers and supporters feel like they were part of a growing movement and community. We see civic engagement as part of the cycle of advocacy on climate change.

Michigan Voices helped us to reach tens of thousands of Jewish climate voters in Michigan ahead of the 2020 elections, a key part of our effort to engage the Jewish community on this issues.

In 2021, we will continue to advocate for climate action at the state and federal levels, which may include mobilizing the Jewish community in Michigan on these critical issues.

[We confront] the climate crisis with spiritual audacity and bold political action.
The purpose of Detroit Action Education Fund is to build the power of individuals and families to challenge the root cause of poverty, advance justice, and promote human development through neighborhood-driven community organizing and civic engagement.

When COVID-19 hit, we lost three member-leaders of our organization, two of our staffers came down with the virus; and other staff members had family members contract the virus. In terms of policy, COVID created extreme challenges amongst the homeless community, for renters; and for young people at K-12 schools.

Our biggest challenge has been bridging the technology gap - making sure that our members are able to access virtual events and making sure that staff have necessary understanding and access to digital tools.

We have purchased work phones and laptops for all of our staff and pay for data. We are also working through planning to educate our member leaders on how to use Zoom and other digital tools.

Michigan Voices has assisted us with technology resources and PPE.

We hope to get back out into the field and use the lessons learned from 2020 to run the best field program in the state and influence local elections and policy.
Detroit Change Initiative’s purpose is to educate people about resource that available in their community; and to inform them on other non-profit programs that may meet a temporary need.

Challenges brought on by COVID-19 include the lack of services for child care and income aid. Many have questioned: What does there future look like? Our people have lost multiple sources of income by no fault of there own; and have endured so much loss during the past nine months.

Our current biggest challenge is funding. As a small non-profit we don’t have access to multiple funding sources or money to pay grant writers. So when funding is not released on time, it puts our operations at a halt, which so many people are dependent during these challenging times.

With the funding we do have, we organized better around limited funds by asking for more volunteers to send sms messages out on census and voter registration. Our leadership team also took on multiple roles to step up and fill in the gap while funding was limited for our organization.

Michigan Voices believed in Detroit Change Initiative and helped us grow our presence in the State of Michigan. Co-directors Sommer Foster and Tameka Ramsey advocate on our behalf and have supported our efforts.
Detroit Disability Power's mission is to leverage and build the organizing power of the disability community to ensure the full inclusion of people with disabilities in Metro Detroit.

Our primary constituents are people with disabilities (across the disability spectrum) in the Detroit area. We also do work with caregivers and other allies.

We were only a year-and-a-half old when COVID-19 hit in March 2020. We were a young and scrappy organization that was focused on getting our structures and priorities solidified so we could strategically organize our community to make much needed change in Detroit.

People with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by COVID for multiple reasons, including high levels of poverty, discrimination in healthcare, underlying health challenges, lack of ability to social distance from caregivers, and the need to touch things to move around. Yet, we've been overlooked during the emergency response.

Our biggest challenge is engaging and building relationships with newly activated people. We hold virtual events and support groups and use social media to reach them.

Michigan Voices has enabled us to expand our GOTV program to identify more people to organize.
The mission of A. Philip Randolph Institute is to continue to fight for Human Equality and Economic Justice, and to seek structural changes through the American democratic process. Our members are involved in voter registration, political and community education, lobbying, legislation action and labor support activities. COVID-19 reduced our hands-on approach with our community members. To adapt, we increased our virtual meetings and classes and social media communications, while still engaging with our community members that have limited technology access. Instead of person-to-person contact, due to the pandemic, we supplied educational door hangers for those not able to afford the internet or mobile phones with Internet accessibility. Ahead of Election Day, our chapter sponsored a voter registration community car wash event, in addition to phonebanking and conducting civic engagement Zoom classes. Michigan Voices assisted us with frequent resource sharing via virtual meetings, on-the-ground assistance, conference calls and training. In 2021, our goal is to provide spread knowledge of basic civics to those in our communities; and other protocols of the electoral process.

Our goal is to ensure knowledge of basic civics to those in our communities.
The Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation is a community-based, nonprofit organization, founded in 1997, whose mission is to make a difference by creating life-changing opportunities for youth and their families by providing quality, innovative and culturally appropriate services, primarily in Southwest Detroit.

COVID-19 has exposed many health and social inequities that have existed in communities of color for a long time, but now are stark because of the pandemic. In particular, undocumented immigrants that do not have a social or economic safety net to safely navigate this pandemic and face linguistic barriers. Those community members who are undocumented or mixed status families are not eligible for unemployment or economic stimulus funding.

Michigan Voices' partnership was instrumental in ensuring that we had the tools and knowledge we needed to engage our Latinx community members across the state to get out to vote.

In 2021, DHDC will work in our community and with Latinx leaders across the state to ensure our community voices are heard during the Michigan redistricting process. We hope Michigan Voices can continue to assist us with training, data, and tools to aid our efforts.
Emgage seeks to educate, engage and empower Muslim American communities through educational events, voter initiatives, and leadership development for the purpose of creating a community of equitable, knowledgeable, and motivated citizens.

We understand the importance of bridging the gap between elected officials and their constituents. We strive to build the political awareness and capacity of Muslim Americans to engage on key policy issues that affect all of us as Americans, but especially as Muslims.

The biggest challenge during 2020 was how we were going to effectively communicate without constituency without canvassing and in-person events due to restrictions as a result of COVID-19.

We quickly moved all of our operations to digital including our GOTV work. We were fortunate that it was all successful, because of partners like Michigan Voices. We realized that having virtual events are more accessible for people and we got a larger audience. Our GOTV operations were very successful as well.

The MV team was very instrumental in providing us with funding, training; and even helped us target our universe during GOTV. They have been a valuable resource to us.
The purpose of Southeast Michigan Jobs with Justice is to:

1. Organize support for multi-racial, working-class groups fighting for social and economic justice.
2. Build unity of the larger progressive movement and overcome siloism.

We serve leadership and activists from labor union, community and faith-based groups.

Prior to COVID-19, we held monthly Steering Committee and 80% Project meetings, marched, picketed and rallied publicly. Now we hold monthly meetings by Zoom; and wear masks, social distance and avoid congestion at outdoor events.

Our biggest challenges have been learning how to use the Zoom technology, and lack of funding to hire staff. We have applied for funding, but with little luck.

Michigan Voices co-director Tameka Ramsey has been a regular attendee at our our monthly 80% Project meetings during which she shares her thoughts.

In 2021, we hope MV can help us organize red-blue dialogues with union members and churches where those who voted for Trump can sit down in civil settings with people who voted for Biden in order to find common good and overcome divisions.
The Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) is the leading national organization for Latino(a) workers and their families. LCLAA was born in 1972 out of the need to educate, organize and mobilize Latinos in the labor movement and has expanded its influence to organize Latinos in an effort to impact workers’ rights and their influence in the political process.

COVID-19 has impacted us by not allowing our members to be as visible as before, due to safety restrictions put in place. Our challenges are keeping our community informed, especially those who are not active online and depend on in-person contact.

We have also been challenged with keeping our members active during this crisis. Many are afraid to be out. We have had to cancel fundraising events due to COVID, which represented a challenge for our budget.

To adapt, we emailed and held Zoom meetings. We also shared information through calls and texts; and attended a webinar presented by our national LCLAA and MI AFL-CIO.

Michigan Voices helped our Greater Lansing Area LCLAA Chapter by providing us with grant funding, the use of their tablets to do phone texting, PPE; and informed us not to hesitate to call them if we have questions or concerns.
The purpose of LGBT Detroit is to increase awareness of and support to Detroit’s dynamic LGBT culture through education and advocacy with integrity and pride. LGBT Detroit is North America’s largest African American found and led LGBT nonprofit organization. Our primary constituents are African American LGBT+ people.

Initially, we faced challenges in determining how to deliver relevant programming safely to constituents with as few barriers as possible. This would include finding consistent funding to continue to provide services free of charge.

We are fortunate to have had the capacity to move to virtual programming. On March 26, 2020, we piloted The Brother To Brother Lockdown. This weekly program aired virtually and aimed to keep Black Gay Men connected to each other and educated on how COVID-19 impacted their community as told by national influencers. The agency also implemented a non-partisan voter engagement and voter education program called PRIDE Decides 2020.

Michigan Voices partnered with us in the PRIDE Decides 2020 program. MV afforded the LGBT Detroit staff access to the voter engagement tool and database, Voter Action Network (VAN). This assisted with contact and education efforts in the 48221 and 48235 zip codes.
The purpose of Metro Detroit APRI is to provide a pathway to social and economic opportunities for minority and low-income workers; while performing duties that represent a lesion effort with labor movement to assist in voter education, skills trades training and leadership development in the community.

Prior to COVID-19, our organization was highly engaged in face-to-face interaction with people interested in learning about advocacy, activism, social issues and volunteering. MDAPRI had a mass moving body of volunteers in the field registering people to vote, completing the 2020 Census form, and educating people at local churches.

Our biggest challenge was training people to use Zoom or DUO and other devices to stay connected with video chat and conferencing for work purposes. The administrative staff trained volunteers on data entry and worked with teams on special projects to ensure success.

MDAPRI was excited and energized to be a table partner with Michigan Voices. MV enabled our organization to reach voters using the VAN during the 2020 census and voter registration initiative. Resources such as phones with hot spots, personal protection equipment (PPE), literature, and the leadership expertise in voter and field engagement with GOTV help to increase our work.

We serve to bridge the gap for underserved communities through civic engagement.
MiCBCP’s mission is to educate, organize and mobilize black communities. We seek to encourage our communities to participate in a fair, just and barrier-free democracy. We serve Black people ages 16+. We have chapters in three cities: Detroit, Flint and Pontiac.

Before COVID-19, we were a small organization preparing to go out in the field to get people to fill out the 2020 Census and, later, start registering people to vote in this past election. Unfortunately, we did not have the capacity to go digital.

Our biggest challenge is we lack of funding; and funders being aware of who we are and what we do. We worked with volunteers and stretched the funding that we had, but we did not do as much as we wanted.

Still, we are proud of the work we were able to do; and the communities we were able to reach out to and help, with the small amount of resources we had.

Michigan Voices has been amazing support, from introducing us to other organizations that we could partner with to providing us with capacity funding and being a great connector by directing other funders to us.

In 2021, we will be getting new leadership and need assistance as we build. We will also be using the first quarter of the year to dive deeply into training.
The Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition (MEJC) works to achieve a clean, healthy, and safe environment for Michigan’s most vulnerable residents. We envision Michigan being a place where all vulnerable communities thrive in a clean, healthy, and safe environment now and through the uncertain climate future.

COVID sent us into crisis mode. We quickly organized to help resource mutual aid networks in order to meet the needs of folks in our communities. We pivoted our advocacy to fight for essential needs like guaranteed utility service and to stop business-as-usual permitting processes from moving forward until meaningful community engagement was feasible.

Michigan Voice has assisted MEJC in lifting up our digital strategy to throw down for GOTV! For starters, having access to the VAN was critical for our GOTV strategy as we utilized census tracts to identify various Environmental Justice hotspots throughout the state of Michigan.

Secondly, MV ensured the process for getting signed up with ThruText was so simple! Had it not been for all of the awesome work that Eden and Sharvin did this election cycle MEJC wouldn’t have been able to reach as many voters as we did. Ensuring that the VAN and ThruText databases were working collaboratively made our digital strategy that much easier to track for analytics!
Michigan Faith in Action works primarily within multi-faith communities with multi-racial people of color in both urban and rural settings.

First, before looking at our challenge as an organization, we had to face the ravages of COVID-19 as it was wreaking havoc over our community. Congregations were losing families, friends and other people with whom we have all had close relationships. One congregation lost a pastor, his brother and his Bishop. No one was left untouched. Even now this challenge is still real. The biggest challenge was the restriction of meeting in person which intensified the degree of losses incurred in various congregations. There was a sense of loneliness and an inability to grieve as normal.

We embraced digital technology as much as possible. Shifting our in-person actions and meetings to Zoom, creating our Clergy RoundTables with key leaders. We conducted wellness checks using the phone and OutVote. We participated in events and supported our community with PPE giveaways such as masks and sanitizer. To a limited extent, we went door-to-door delivering water, voting guides, etc and talking to 18,000 residents.

Michigan Voices assisted us with technical assistance, PPE support, financial support, team support and training.
Michigan United organizes to build the power our communities need to win the justice they deserve. We're working for an equitable and sustainable world that reflects our values of economic and racial justice.

We shutdown our office on March 16, due to COVID-19, after successfully launching our relational and peer to peer texting programs for the year during the 2020 March Michigan Presidential Primary. We moved all meetings to video conferencing except where in person one to one meetings were required, such as immigration paperwork.

Our organization was pretty successful in pivoting to remote work. But we saw our biggest challenge as engaging our institutional members and their memberships and congregations, as they work to make the necessary changes to survive organizationally.

As a result, all of our campaigns pivoted their work to COVID resources and recovery policy.

Michigan Voices assisted us with funding for GOTV, election protection, and post-election retention. The election protection work group was essential in making sure we thought through attacks on voting access and rights leading up to and for Election Day.
Mothers of Hope empowers and strengthens women, families, and communities to rise above the effects of substance use disorders, poverty, violence and systemic inequities.

COVID-19 made it difficult to serve our core constituents, who are limited with social media, wifi access and “smart” devices which is the main source of communication now. Many do not have home Internet access or personal cell phones to communicate. Those who had access to technology did not trust conducting business or sharing personal information online. Challenges were getting the word out for some of the events we were sponsoring. We had no choice but to hit the streets, which we often did pop up locations, where the most vulnerable residents were located.

We are resilient. With the help of some super amazing volunteers, we were able to get so much work done to help our community. Our work has inspired others to volunteer and to look after each other.

In 2021, our goal is to build organizational capacity, stronger relationship and partnership with Michigan Voices and potential funders, recruit and train more volunteers; and continue our education and outreach efforts. We cannot build momentum, generate synergy and then stop cold turkey. Our community need us.
The mission of Oakland Forward is to build power to remove economic, racial, and social barriers to opportunities for individuals with a focus on POC in Oakland County. Our goal is to expand, strengthen, and empower communities to make long-term change that improves the quality of life for those most affected.

Prior to COVID, as Pontiac Policy Council, we were able to interact more directly with the community through canvassing and events. This allowed us to build our reputation while getting to know the community and their issues.

Many of our constituents are facing multiple challenges concerning their inability to afford daily expenditures which include housing, childcare, utilities, household bills, and school supplies.

To address these challenges, we have done more social media outreach, phone and text banking and participated in virtual town halls as to reach programming goals and keep in touch with our community.

For Oakland Forward 2021 is more of a continuation from 2020. We plan on using the coming year for additional training for not only civic engagement but also for applying to local boards and commissions. With continued support and training from Michigan Voices, we know we can be successful.
PIRGIM or the Public Interest Research Group in Michigan, is an advocacy group that works to protect consumers and strengthen our democracy. We were founded by students at University of Michigan in 1973 based on the idea that students can make a huge difference for society when we pool our resources together.

Prior to COVID, we ran large on-the-ground operations on college campuses with administrators and student groups to register students and get out the vote.

We, along with many of our campuses, went entirely virtual this semester which means we needed to adapt our on-the-ground efforts for the virtual world. Instead of having tables on the quad or student union, we had to develop other ways of reaching students.

Despite organizing in a virtual world, we were able to train over 80 interns to run events online to ensure their peers knew when, where, and how to vote.

Michigan Voices helped us make sure we had everything we needed to run a successful virtual program like lists to call. The staff were a good sounding board for testing out plans and troubleshooting any obstacles each week. We were also able to fund our GOTV program thanks to Michigan Voices.

Students have the power to shape the future we will inherit.
Rising Voices of Asian American Families aims to:

- Promote the civic participation of Asian American women and families;
- Educate the AAPI community & communities at large about policies that improve the well-being of AAPI women & their families;
- Provide opportunities for youth and AAPI women leadership; and
- Serve as an organizing resource for AAPI women & families.

The impact of COVID-19 on our communities cannot be overstated. AAPI communities are at risk for high COVID-19 transmission rates, due in part to a myriad of reasons.

Michigan Voices has assisted us in the following ways:

- Ensuring that we had access to the infrastructure that our staff needed to do the work from home;
- By helping us coordinate our efforts to maximize our impact, especially when it came to our GOTV mailers;
- By leading the coordination on election protection efforts so that we knew where to plug in and where our volunteers could add the most capacity.

The AAPI community also faced rampant xenophobia and discrimination, as evidenced by racism fueled attacks across the country they call home.
The Student Advocacy Center of Michigan works collaboratively with underserved students, and their families, to stay in school, realize their rights to a quality public education, grow and experience success.

Students and families that we support and advocate for were already being pushed out of school and have often experienced significant set backs and trauma in their lives. Covid has made things even more difficult for our students and families and it’s also much harder for us as an organization to support these families given all of the limitations.

We focused on the immediate needs of our families and securing food and services. We worked to develop a support group for caregivers because we understood the immense stress our families have been experiencing. We delivered food and supplies to door steps and worked to stay connected and engaged with our families.

We were able to work with Michigan Voice to identify which of our families were registered to vote. We worked with MV staff to set up a phone bank and determine who in our client database is also in VAN. Also being at a table with other 501c3s we were able to learn more about GOTV related activities and tools we could use to help us with outreach to our families and supporters.

SAC supports organizing and advocacy to lift up the voices of students and their families.
MICHIGAN VOICES PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

ACCESS
ACLU
American Federation of Teachers MI
A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI)- Statewide
APRI-Battle Creek
APRI-Downriver
APRI-Flint
APRI-Grand Rapids
APRI-Kalamazoo
APRI-Lansing
APRI-Metro Detroit
APRI-Muskegon
APRI-Saginaw
Arab American Heritage Council
Asian Pacific Islander American (APIA) Vote MI
Better Men Outreach
Building Movement - Peoples Platform Detroit
Detroit Action
Detroit Change Initiative
Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation
Economic Justice Alliance of Michigan (EJAM)
Empowered Voices
Greater Kingdom International
Hip Hop Caucus
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
League of Women Voters of MI
LGBT Detroit
M.A.D.E Institute
Michigan Coalition on Black Civic Participation
Michigan Education Justice Coalition (MEJC)
Michigan Faith in Action
Michigan League For Conservation Voters
Michigan League for Public Policy
Michigan Liberation
Michigan Nonprofit Association
Michigan United
Mothering Justice
Mothers of Hope
Natural Resources Defense Council

Nazarene Community Outreach
One Love Global
One Michigan for the Global Majority
Our Own Wall Street
Planned Parenthood Advocates Michigan
Pontiac Policy Council
Oakland Forward
Progress Michigan
Student PIRGs (Public Interest Research Group) MI
Southeast Michigan Jobs with Justice
Southwest Michigan Urban League
United Way
Western Wayne County NAACP Branch
Wisdom Institute
WMEAC

MICHIGAN VOICES FUNDERS

ACLU of Michigan
AFT Michigan
Arca Foundation
Charlottesville Area Community Foundation
Collaborative for Gender & Reproductive Equity
Count MI Vote dba Voters Not Politicians
Fund for Non Violence
Healthy Democracy Fund
Hopewell - Impact Project
Michigan Civic Engagement Fund
Movement Voter Fund
NEO - State Infrastructure Fund
Park Foundation
Planned Parenthood- Michigan
Progress Michigan
State Democracy Project
State Voices
Voter Participation Center
When We All Vote Foundation
Women's Donor Network