

Building Power, Organizations, and Leaders

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

ALLIANCE
FOR
YOUTH
ACTION

ALLIANCE
FOR
YOUTH
ORGANIZING



Letter From Our Executive Director



I am excited to embark on this journey as the Alliance's Executive Director, and begin the process of implementing my vision and our new strategic plan. But first, I would like to thank all the people who have poured into my leadership since I was a child, and to the elders and ancestors who fought to make it possible to have a Black and Indigenous national Executive Director. The next five years will be a thrilling ride as young and emerging leaders step up rightfully into leadership to fight for our communities, our futures, and our values.

For my inaugural annual report letter, I offer a reflection of what organizing is and how those of us who make up the Alliance family can commit to one another in this work.

Organizing is the process of weaving together a liberated community in which people connect to a network of significant relationships, and agitate to summon their power and potential. As we travel into 2022 with a new strategic plan, we will begin weaving together our network to not only fight for electoral victories but to fight for the needs of the communities we organize in, with an emphasis on following the lead of young Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) leaders and activists.

We are doing this because we share a common belief that through the power of youth organizing, we have the potential to create a liberated community. But to do that, we must build a deeper relationship with one another that makes clear our commitment to one another.

When I think about the next five years of the Alliance, the most important piece of what we do is committing ourselves to each other in a deep and meaningful way. As we grow as a network, let's not forget what first brought youth organizers together: unifying under a national strategy to grow youth power.

Dakota Hall



Welcome, Dakota!



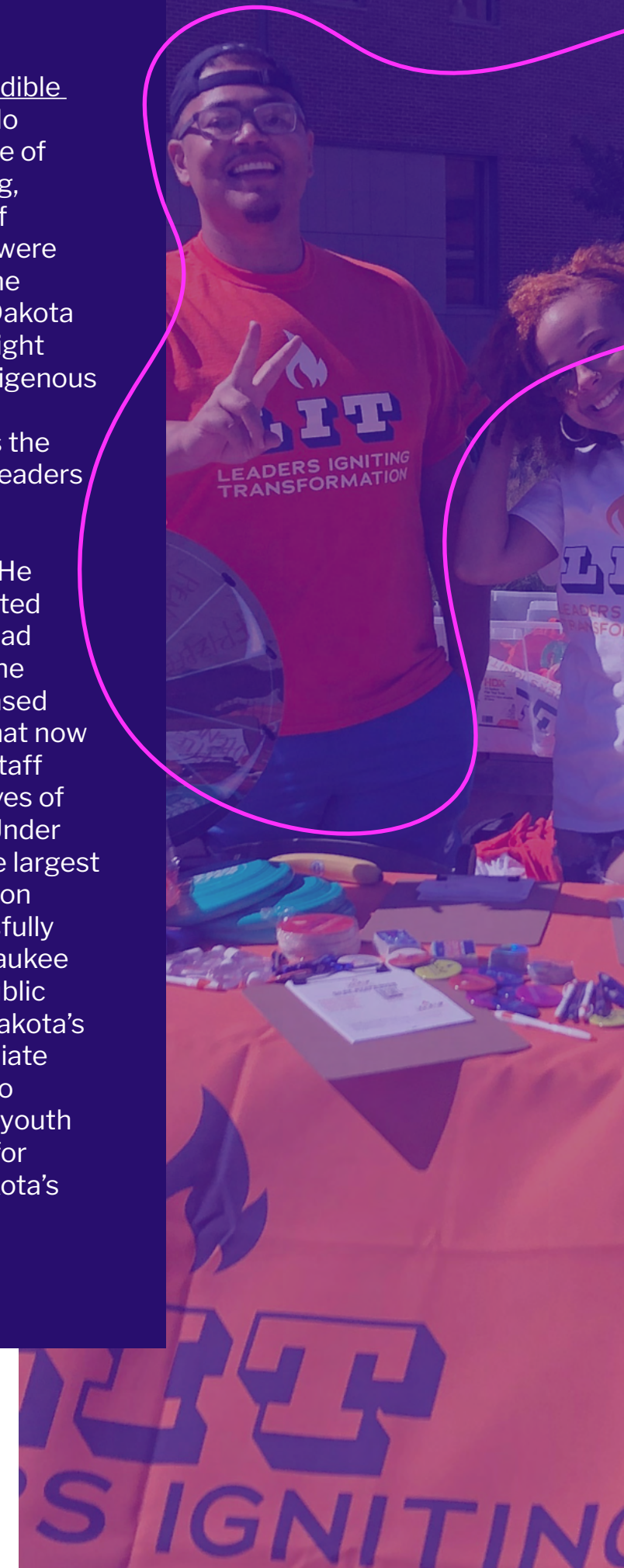
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I'm so excited to bring my perspective and lived experiences building a better future for Black and Brown Wisconsinites to the national stage as the Alliance's new Executive Director. I will work alongside our incredible network of local youth-led organizations from Washington to Florida to continue fighting for change, delivering on the issues that young people care about the most, and building youth power nationally at this pivotal time in our country's history. There is a lot of work to be done and I'm ready to get started.

DAKOTA HALL

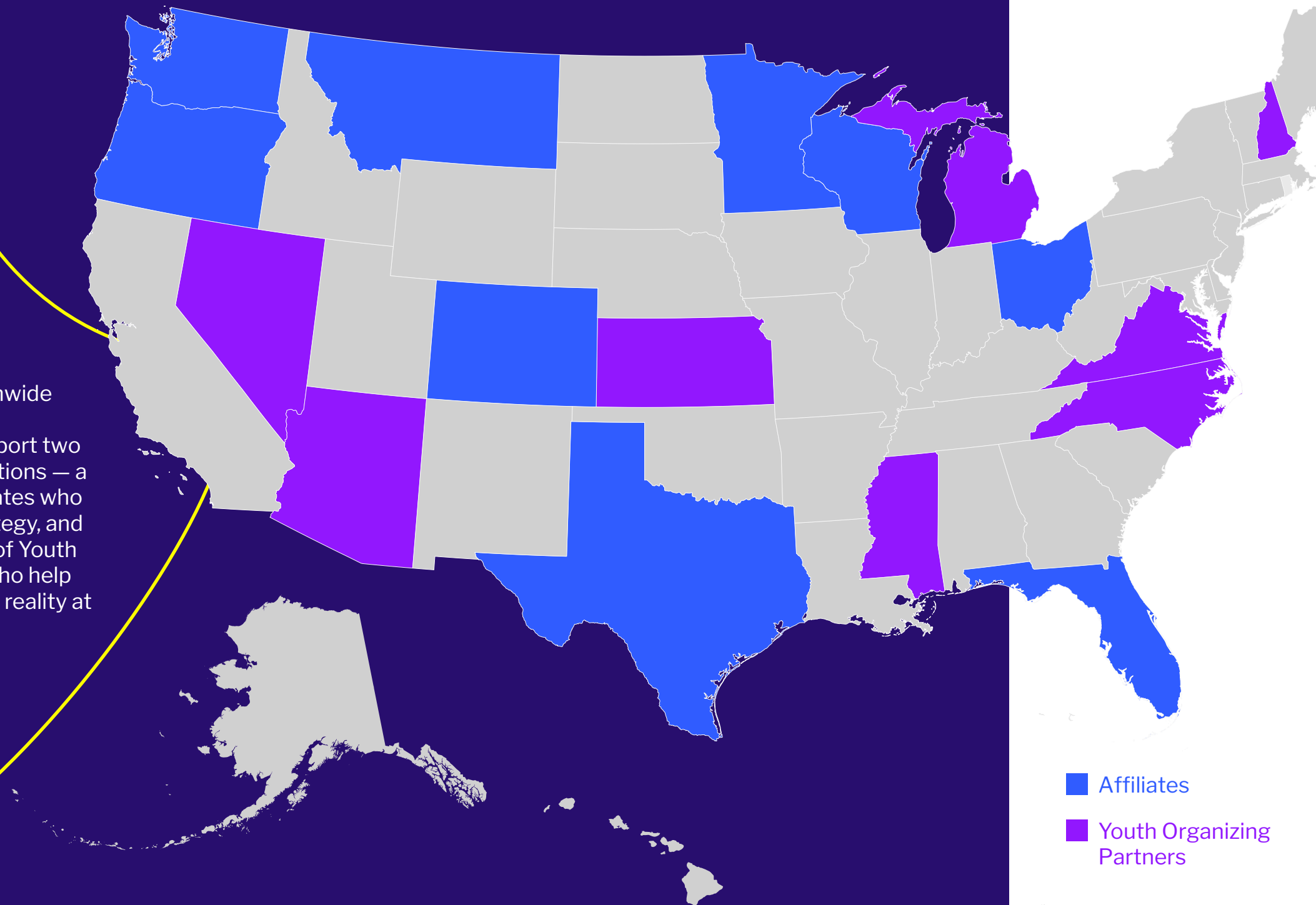
In the summer of 2021, after four incredible years leading the Alliance, Sarah Audelo announced her transition out of the role of Executive Director. After a months-long, nationwide search led by a taskforce of Alliance staff, board and Affiliates, we were thrilled to name Dakota Hall as ED of the Alliance as of November 30th, 2021! Dakota became the third ED in the Alliance's eight year history and the first Black and Indigenous leader of the organization. Dakota has been an integral part of our network as the transformative Executive Director of Leaders Igniting Transformation (LIT).

Dakota is from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He started organizing in 2012 with the United Council of UW Students (UC). Dakota had a vision to build an organization from the ground up — turning the Milwaukee-based group into a state-wide powerhouse that now has nearly 40 full-time and part-time staff members focusing on improving the lives of Black and Brown youth in Wisconsin. Under Dakota's leadership, LIT carried out the largest youth civic engagement and mobilization effort in the state in 2020 and successfully advocated for the removal of the Milwaukee Police Department from Milwaukee Public Schools. No stranger to the Alliance, Dakota's experience as a founding ED of an Affiliate organization gives him unique insight to what is needed to help build a national youth organizing movement. We are thrilled for the new heights we will reach with Dakota's leadership.



THE ALLIANCE NETWORK

The Alliance is a nationwide network of youth-led organizations. We support two kinds of local organizations — a core group of 10 Affiliates who drive our national strategy, and an extended network of Youth Organizing Partners who help make our campaigns a reality at the local level.



Affiliates

Chicago Votes

Engage Miami

[Forward Montana](#)

Leaders Igniting

Transformation

Minnesota Youth Collective

MOVE Texas

[Next Up](#)

New Era Colorado

Ohio Student Association

Washington Bus

Youth Organizing Partners

Asian Community
Development Council

Detroit Action

Florida Student Power Network

Loud Light

Michigan Student
Power Network

Mississippi Votes

New Hampshire Youth Movement

North Carolina
Asian Americans Together

Poder in Action

Virginia Student Power Network

Building Power

Every. Election. Counts: Municipal Election Highlights

At the Alliance, we know that there is no such thing as an “off” year when it comes to elections and civic engagement. In 2021, Alliance Network organizations were some of the only organizations engaging their communities ahead of important municipal elections. We tested new strategies, revised and enhanced our tactics, and continued to build momentum for elections in 2022. And all across the nation, young people turned out to vote for some of the most important elections in their communities including those for city councils, mayors, ballot measures, and more.



MOVE Texas created a musical Deep Cut Voter Guide informing young people about the constitutional amendments on the ballot, helped get out the early vote in six counties across the state, organized a Pedal to the Polls event with bicyclists, and hosted a Party at the Polls for Halloween. See? Civic participation can be fun.



Minnesota Youth Collective (MNYC)

worked on two local ballot initiatives in Minneapolis and St. Paul. As a part of the Yes 4 Minneapolis coalition, MNYC helped get an initiative on the ballot that would have redesigned community safety by replacing the Minneapolis Police Department with a new Department of Public Safety. In St. Paul, MNYC worked alongside Housing Equity Now to help fight for and win rent stabilization. This ballot initiative will put a 10% limit on annual rent increases allowing housing in St. Paul to stay affordable — one of the strongest rent stabilization efforts in the country.



Leaders Igniting Transformation (LIT)

ensured young people were informed about what was at stake in Spring municipal elections, including key local school board and judge races in Milwaukee and La Crosse counties in Wisconsin. LIT sent over 360,000 text messages, mailed out 22,000 pieces of voter information packets, and held four Virtual Community Forums with local candidates.



Forward Montana organized a door-knocking weekend of action, hosted GOTV phone banks, distributed over 23,000 voter guides, and chased ballots that were marked undeliverable in Bozeman — this was crucial work as 10% of ballots in Bozeman were undeliverable. Forward Montana Voter Fund also endorsed five candidates in local and municipal elections, of which three won!



Poder in Action has focused on eroding the power that police unions have over local elections in Phoenix since 2018. Their sister organization, AZ Poder urged candidates to reject police union endorsements and forced a conversation around police violence, immigration enforcement violence, and racism into their city council elections. In the two March run-off elections, voters rejected the city council candidates who were backed by the police and who ran on a pro-police platform.



New Hampshire Youth Movement Action Fund (NHYM) endorsed 18 candidates in six different cities across the state, of which 13 won their races! Those candidates included city councilors and school board members. Astonishingly enough, two of their endorsed candidates won by fewer than 40 votes. We really mean it when we say, every vote counts. NHYM will meet with the newly elected officials to discuss affordable housing, education, public transit, and other issues impacting the young people that helped elect them.

Despite many ongoing challenges in 2021 that impacted typical on-the-ground organizing, our network moved tens of thousands of young voters to action across the country, through on-site and mail voter registration, pledge to vote card collection, political education around local elections, and hundreds of thousands of call and text conversations.



Campus

Takeover

Campus Takeover is a nationwide effort by the **Alliance for Youth Organizing** to mobilize students around elections and to create a culture of civic engagement on college campuses during the Civic Holidays. In 2021, we joined forces with the Students Learn Students Vote Coalition for our fourth annual Campus Takeover. We supported virtual and in-person events at over 600 colleges and universities and moved \$55,000 in mini-grants to help cover the costs.

Across the country, the network made sure young people were #VoteReady during the Civic Holiday season.

Mississippi Votes took over campuses for a week of voter registration drives and celebrations and a panel about voting rights. The **Asian Community Development Council in Nevada** hosted a “Be the Goat, Register to Vote” registration drive (with goats) as well as virtual voter registration events on Animal Crossing and Pokemon Go.



virtual and in-person events at over

600

colleges and universities

\$55,000

in mini-grants to help cover the costs

Still Celebrating Georgia Making History

We can't forget that we kicked off 2021 with a resounding victory in the Peach State. Georgians elected Senators Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff (the first Black Senator and first Jewish American Senator from the state of Georgia) after a jaw-dropping effort by incredible organizers to turn out the vote. According to our friends **Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)** [more than 90% of young Black voters backed Warnock and Ossoff.](#)

In an effort to support local work and help close infrastructure gaps, the **Alliance for Youth Action** ran a text, mail, and call program from mid-November to Election Day to a universe of nearly [1mm young Georgians](#).

Alliance National Runoff Work Included:

1.53
MILLION
text messages sent



830k
PIECES
of mail delivered

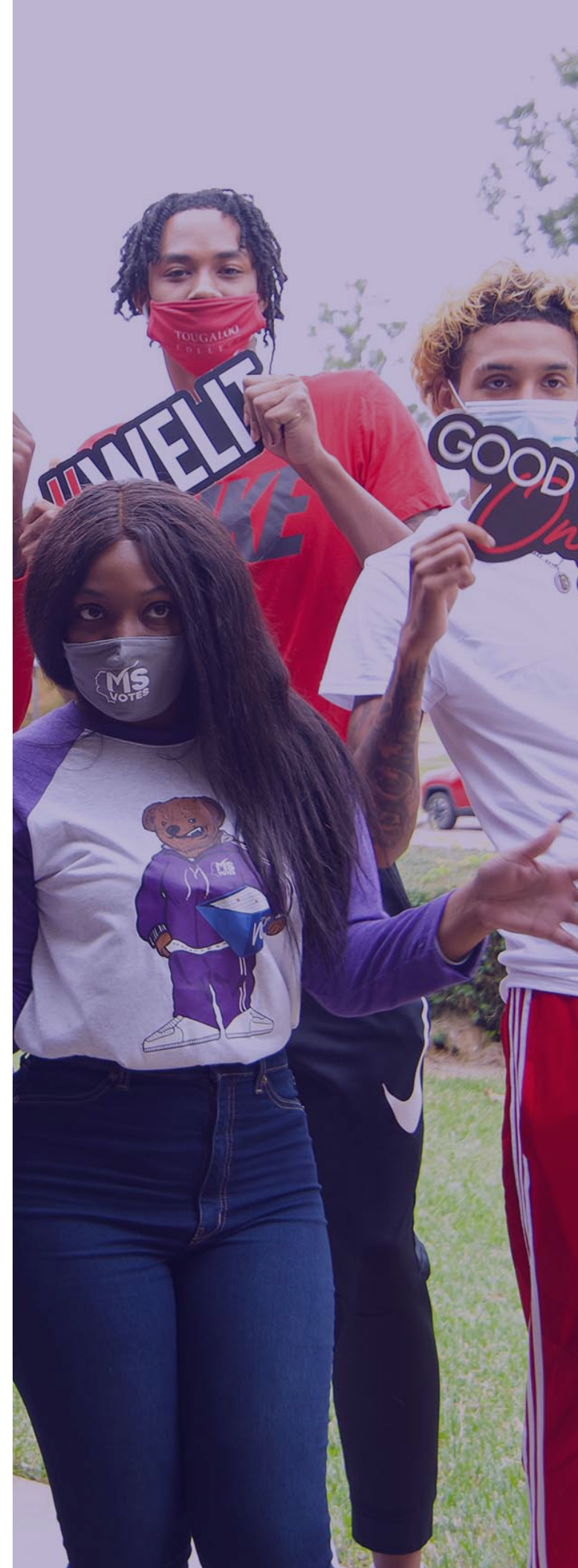
We found that our work helped contribute to 238,170 young Georgians to vote early or absentee, nearly 17,000 of whom did not vote in the November general election.

Community Care

2021 was a difficult year for so many reasons — an ongoing global pandemic, worsening economic conditions for middle and working class people, ongoing state and police violence, and the intensifying impact of climate change. Organizations in our network made sure communities were connected to resources and aid when in times of crisis.

When unprecedented winter storms hit Texas causing devastating blackouts in February, **MOVE Texas** responded by getting in touch with their people to provide support and vital information. They mobilized over 100 volunteers and made 70,298 contact attempts to Texans and connect them with emergency resources. Similarly, **Mississippi Votes** prioritized connecting their community with support and resources when winter storms shut down water infrastructure for months in Jackson and surrounding areas, leaving thousands without access to safe and clean water.

Over in Michigan, **Detroit Action** provided financial support and direct services through their Service & Mutual Aid Program to help community members navigate the daily obstacles posed by the pandemic and financial crisis. All said, Detroit Action distributed over \$43,000 to 168 families in need as a result of the economic shutdown from the COVID-19 pandemic this year.



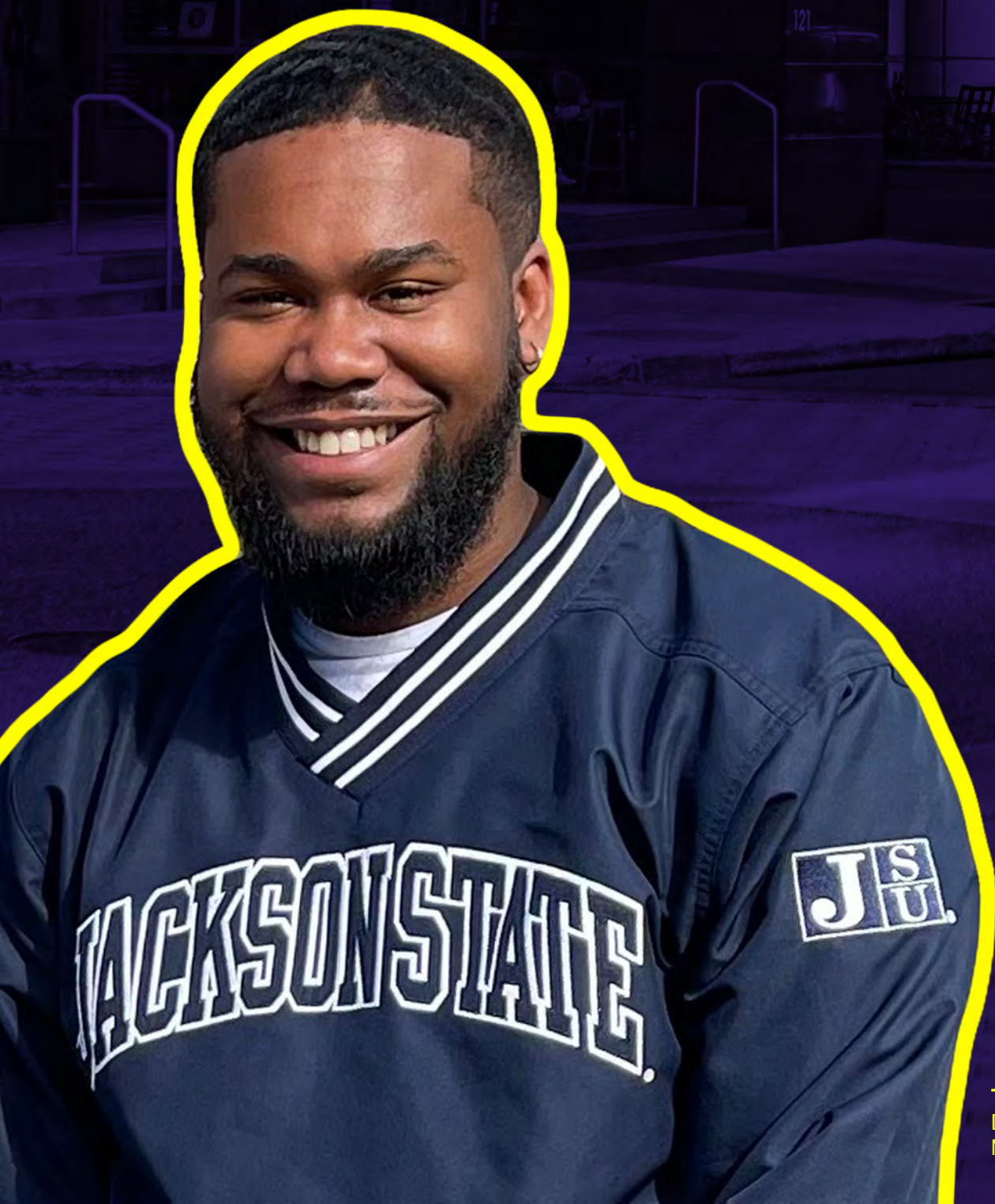
Recognizing the toll that the chaos of the last few years have taken our physical and mental health, the Alliance and our network also prioritized taking care of our own by closing offices for a break in the summer and winter, providing wellness stipends, and additional financial support to help ensure a comfortable work from home set up as the pandemic continued.

Flexing Our Power on the Issues

What makes our electoral organizing work so powerful is the issue organizing that happens in between election cycles. Young people vote to make change in their communities, whether it's the presidential election or a local school board election. When voting ends is when our network continues the fight for progressive policies in state legislatures, city council chambers, and school board meetings. You'll find our groups championing issues like democracy reform, student loan forgiveness, affordable housing, reproductive health and justice, immigrant justice, divestment from police, and revisioning public safety (just to name a few).

In 2021, our network got to work and defeated anti-trans legislation, removed the worst components of voter suppression bills, and engaged in litigation to protect the right to vote. You can read more about this incredible work [here](#) and [here](#).

DEMOCRACY DONE RIGHT



Tim Young
Digital Content Creator
MS Votes

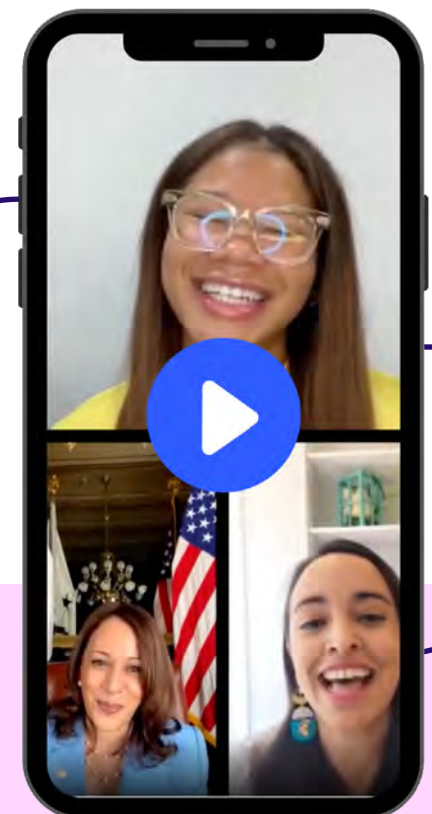
Democracy Done Right is our national campaign focusing on protecting and expanding voting rights to ensure young people and all eligible voters can safely and conveniently access the polls. Our dual-track strategy leverages the state and local work that our network leads on voting rights to ensure national policy making reflects the real needs of voters.

The violent insurrection of January 6th was a sobering reminder of the work that remains to realize the just democracy our people deserve. [As a network, we condemned the violent insurrection of January 6th and called for the impeachment and removal of President Trump.](#)

Throughout the year on the federal level, we uplifted the important work that our groups championed in their local communities to expand access to voting through Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) to key stakeholders in the White House. We advocated on behalf of our network to gain federal approval for Medicaid programs to participate in the innovative AVR program to ensure no one is left out of our democracy. We also co-authored a grassroots letter to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) eliciting sign-ons from relevant organizations, and helped host informal policy meetings with both

the Domestic Policy Council and HHS. We're honored to help ensure that the implementation of state-level democracy reforms spearheaded by our network can move forward with the federal support necessary.

As a part of the Declaration for American Democracy Coalition, the **Alliance for Youth Action** has continued to push for federal action to [Protect Our Freedom to Vote](#) including calling on Congress to end the filibuster and pass the [John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](#) to help combat racial discrimination in voting by restoring the protections of the gutted Voting Rights Act building towards the democracy we deserve. In August, we were thrilled to join **Vice President Kamala Harris** along with actress and activist **Storm Reid** in [a conversation about young people and the fight for voting rights](#). Much of the conversation focused on uplifting the incredible democracy work youth-led organizations in the Alliance Network are spearheading.



Democracy Done Right

Week of Action

The Alliance's **Democracy Done Right Week of Action** in April dedicated to engaging young people coast-to-coast as we rallied for fair democracy practices. During this week, our network held town halls with lawmakers and shared stories of young people to highlight the importance of making our democracy accessible to all. Together as a network, we sent letters to Senators Chuck Schumer, Amy Klobuchar, and Jeff Merkley asking them to strengthen language related to Automatic Voter Registration in the For the People Act (S. 1).

The Fight for Democracy in the States

Since the 2020 election, which saw seriously historic youth turnout despite a global pandemic, there has been a slew of efforts (over 400 bills introduced!) across the nation to suppress the vote. The majority of these restrictions disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and young voters. Despite being out-resourced by efforts to constrain voting rights, our network has held the line challenging anti-voter efforts, and bolstering election protection, and leading pro-voter reforms at the state and local level.

MOVE Texas successfully sued the state for violating the National Voter Registration Act to mandate that the online drivers license renewal/change of address webpage would simultaneously function as a voter registration portal as well. **As a result of that lawsuit, nearly 1 million people have been registered to vote online.** Congrats to MOVE and the entire coalition for this massive win!

Loud Light reached out to almost 10,000 Kansans asking them to call their legislators to support a veto of dangerous voter suppression bills moving through the legislature in the spring. **Almost 1 in 3 voters they talked to committed to contacting their legislators!** Loud Light alongside other state partners filed a lawsuit against the voter suppression laws that passed in May 2021. Loud Light has been unable to register voters in the field because of these harmful policies but the team keeps fighting on.

Chicago Votes continued to run their Cook County Jail Votes program that has coordinated voter registration drives in the country's largest jail since September 2017, **registering over 5,000 new voters.** The program has since evolved into the Unlock Civics initiative which addresses the disconnect between voting rights, access, and the legal system. Check out [Silenced: An Unlock Civic Documentary](#) for a deeper dive into this incredible and innovative work.

Next Up in Oregon worked to educate and engage young voters on bills that would restore voting rights to citizens currently serving prison sentences for felony convictions. Building off of Chicago Votes' work in Illinois, Next Up released [a report](#) that provides historical context, arguments in favor, addresses myths, and cements how racism in policing has disproportionate impacts on the disenfranchisement of communities of color. They also championed efforts to allow **17 year-olds to vote in primary elections and allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in school board elections.**

Mississippi Votes worked to defend against over 70 voter suppression bills in the 2021 legislative session. For example, they organized a Call to Action against SB 2588, a bill that would have allowed voter purges but died in committee instead. In Mississippi, 9.36% of citizens are disenfranchised. That's nearly 1 in every 10 adults. **Last year, Mississippi Votes supported 52 voter suffrage applications** through the state legislature and are leading voting rights restoration efforts based on their [recent policy report](#) co-authored with the Advancement Project and One Voice.

Broke AF

Broke AF is the Alliance's national issue campaign that confronts the unprecedented economic challenges facing young people with bold solutions worthy of our generation. Throughout 2021, we supported local nonpartisan advocacy campaigns advancing economic justice policies like student loan borrower protection and affordable housing and worked to lift up these efforts to inform national policymaking.



Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF

We believe that higher education at every level should be accessible and affordable for all. **New Era Colorado** helped lead the passage of the Student Loan Equity Act — a trailblazing bill that will create protections for private student loan borrowers, enable greater transparency, and offer better recourse if lenders break the law.

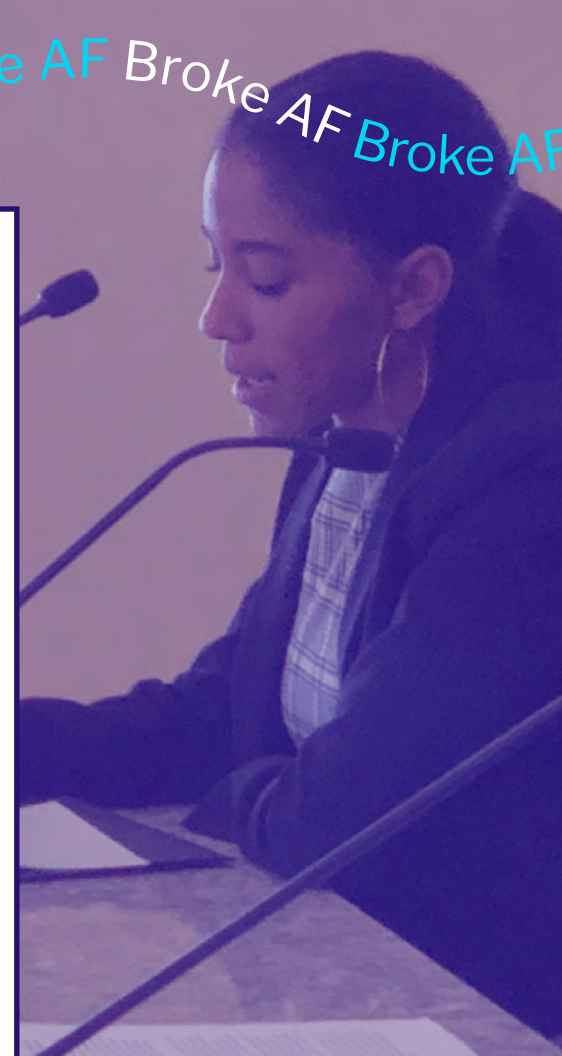
North Carolina Asian Americans Together (NCAAT) participated in Debt-Free College for All Week of Action. Through events and a digital campaign, NCAAT lifted up the stories of Black and Asian students in North Carolina with student debt and called on their representatives to demand free college and the student debt cancellation.

Ohio Student Association has worked in coalition with the Ohio Student Debt Association to call for student debt cancellation, financial aid expansion, and the end of harmful punitive policies such as transcript withholding. Check out their recent [policy report](#) with Policy Matter Ohio on the state of higher ed in Ohio.

The **Washington Bus** helped to pass the Our Colleges our Future Act! They won a \$33 million investment in Community and Technical Colleges with a focus on racial equity and investment in low-income, BIPOC students.

Student organizers with **Virginia Student Power Network** at the University of Virginia won their fight for a tuition freeze on their campus due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. VSPN also helped power a tuition equity bill that was signed into law in 2021, opening up access for undocumented students to state-based financial aid.

Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF Broke AF



Dreams Not Debt

We are dreaming of a future where young people are financially free to achieve their goals and not be held back by student debt. That's why in 2021, the **Alliance for Youth Action** launched our Dreams Not Debt campaign to collect student debt stories, gather petition signatures for student debt cancellation, connect young people to actions with local organizations, and more. Under this campaign, we facilitated meetings between our network and the White House Domestic Policy Council and the Department of Education.

In June, we hosted another Alliance Chat on Instagram Live talking to local leaders from the network about their work organizing around student debt and college affordability. [Watch here.](#)



"As a first-generation Black working class woman, I have accumulated a mountain of student debt to the tune of nearly \$80,000. No one should have to bear this much debt for just getting an education. Now, more than ever, we need the federal government to cancel student debt."

— **KALIA HARRIS**
Virginia



Supporting Local Issue Campaigns Nationwide

- **New Era Colorado's** Brazen Project has been working for years on college campuses to destigmatize abortion. After three years, they successfully passed resolutions through the student governments on each of their three campuses to condemn or ban the actions of anti-abortion counseling centers!
- After tireless months of canvassing, **Ohio Student Association** working with the Citizens for a Safer Cleveland Coalition helped pass Issue 24 in which Cleveland voters chose police accountability and civilian oversight. This initiative will create a new Community Policing Commission giving civilians final decision-making power in police misconduct cases.
- **Engage Miami** brought participatory budgeting to their community by educating, engaging, and mobilizing young people to provide input into the Miami-Dade County budget through public budget hearings both in-person

and through their Young People's Policy Platform (YPPP). Among other issues, their budget priorities called for a continued investment in and growth of the Office of Resilience to drive towards more resilient and green solutions that mitigate how climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable populations in Miami.

- **Asian Community Development Council (ACDC)** in Nevada assisted with health insurance enrollment and organized weekly Zoom civics classes, including information about and support for being a Citizen. Their EducAsian Livestream Series also became a way to talk about the issues concerning the AAPI community in light of the pandemic.
- **Leaders Igniting Transformation (LIT)** has been at the forefront of the fight to dismantle the school-to-prison and deportation pipeline. Now, LIT is calling for Wisconsin universities to divest from policing on campuses and reinvest those funds to support BIPOC communities and students through their Dare to Divest campaign.

Supporting Local Issue Campaigns Nationwide Supporting Local Issue Campaigns Nationwide



BUILDING ORGANIZATIONS



The victories and epic youth turnout that we saw in 2020 don't happen overnight. It takes years of building power in communities and smartly growing local organizations to truly impact change. And 2021 was a year of just that — building! We used this year to deepen our commitment to building organizational infrastructure and developing young leaders to continue this work for the long haul.

Isa Zuluaga
Director of Operations
Engage Miami

Sweet Suites

Engagement Services Suite

We grew our Electoral Services Suite (launched in 2020) into the **Engagement Services Suite (ESS)** program in 2021. ESS provides access to training and ongoing support for an expanded suite of electoral, data, and advocacy tools at subsidized cost to our network, including tools like Reach, ThruTalk, ThruText, and EveryAction. We've also added more programmatic capacity building support through this program, including by offering direct coaching to program staff and standardizing reporting to ensure tools are being used as best as possible.

Operations Services Suite

As the Alliance has expanded in recent years, we have integrated new technology, systems, and processes that have seriously improved our financial and operational management. Now, we support network organizations in replicating our operations and financial infrastructure in ways that work for them through the mighty **Operations Services Suite**. Under this program, we provided incentive funding and support

to Affiliates to onboard and implement up to four new tools and applications, such as those for cloud-based accounting, expense management, human resources, and more. This year, three groups used this funding to upgrade their payment platforms and help streamline financial processes. These are crucial resources for sustainability that youth-led organizations often lack access to, especially in early years.

Professional Services Suite

The Alliance's tried and true **Professional Services Suite (PSS)** continued to provide our Affiliates year-round access to and funding for a suite of direct professional services that support running a nonprofit organization. This included things like coaching services, management training, legal counsel, data security, digital design, anti-oppression, financial consulting, communications and media capacity building, and strategic planning facilitation. For the third year in a row, we provided \$15,000 in annual funding per Affiliate for PSS.

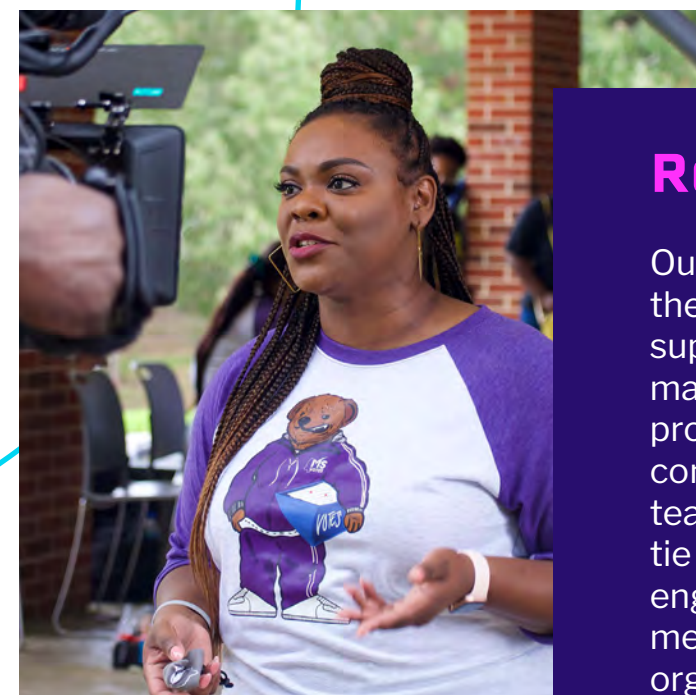




Strengthening Data

Since launching our Data Department in 2020, we've conducted a network-wide audit of data infrastructure, done deep training and coaching work with network staff, and created a suite of new resources and materials for everyone in our network to use. We've also provided direct resources to the network to support hiring and retaining data staff, running data experiments, and funding for data (and non-data!) staff to attend external trainings. Since 2020, we've supported nearly half of our Affiliate organizations in hiring state-based data managers.

Better data has meant better program analysis to help guide the work our network does going forward. For example, we saw higher turnout among young voters who were contacted early on in election years. This reinforces what our network has known to be true: traditional engagement efforts often miss new young voters.



Refining Communications

Our Communications Department helps build the comms savvy of local organizations by supporting local media strategy generation, managing relationships with key reporters and producers, and advising the network on all things communications to help amplify the work. The team worked alongside leaders in the network to tie their legislative work to the importance of civic engagement, refine communications goals and messaging, and more to raise the profile of each organization in 2021.

re:power Training

The circumstances of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic deepened collaboration among Communications, Program, and Data staff as teams have had to work together to deploy safe and effective base-building and mobilization strategies. To further develop the network's digital organizing prowess, the Alliance hosted a cross-team multi-week digital organizing and mobilization training series for network organizations in July 2021.

We partnered with [re:power](#) to develop a tailored curriculum for our network that centers BIPOC leadership and supports them in weaving digital organizing and mobilization tactics into the fabric of their overarching strategy and program. This effort trained 38 staff across 16 network organizations on topics including digital narrative and storytelling, relational organizing, digital media campaign strategy, data collection, analytics and testing, and more, as we work to develop the next generation of data and digital strategists.

Monthly Member Competition

An oldie and a goodie: the Alliance's Monthly Member Competition is an annual, week-long tradition of friendly and collaborative competition to convert small one-time donors to recurring supporters, increase digital engagement, and create a sustainable monthly donor program. This year's competition was the biggest yet with twelve total organizations competing (including four Youth Organizing Partners for the first time!). **This year's competition resulted in 177 new donors, \$27,064**

raised in monthly dollars per year, and over 2,390 calls made to engage donors. Participating organizations also unlocked grants from the Alliance for reaching certain benchmarks or outperforming on certain tactics such as by growing sustainer programs by at least 20%, engaging the most non-staff, and more. This year's grants totaled over \$57,000 — the highest in Alliance history!



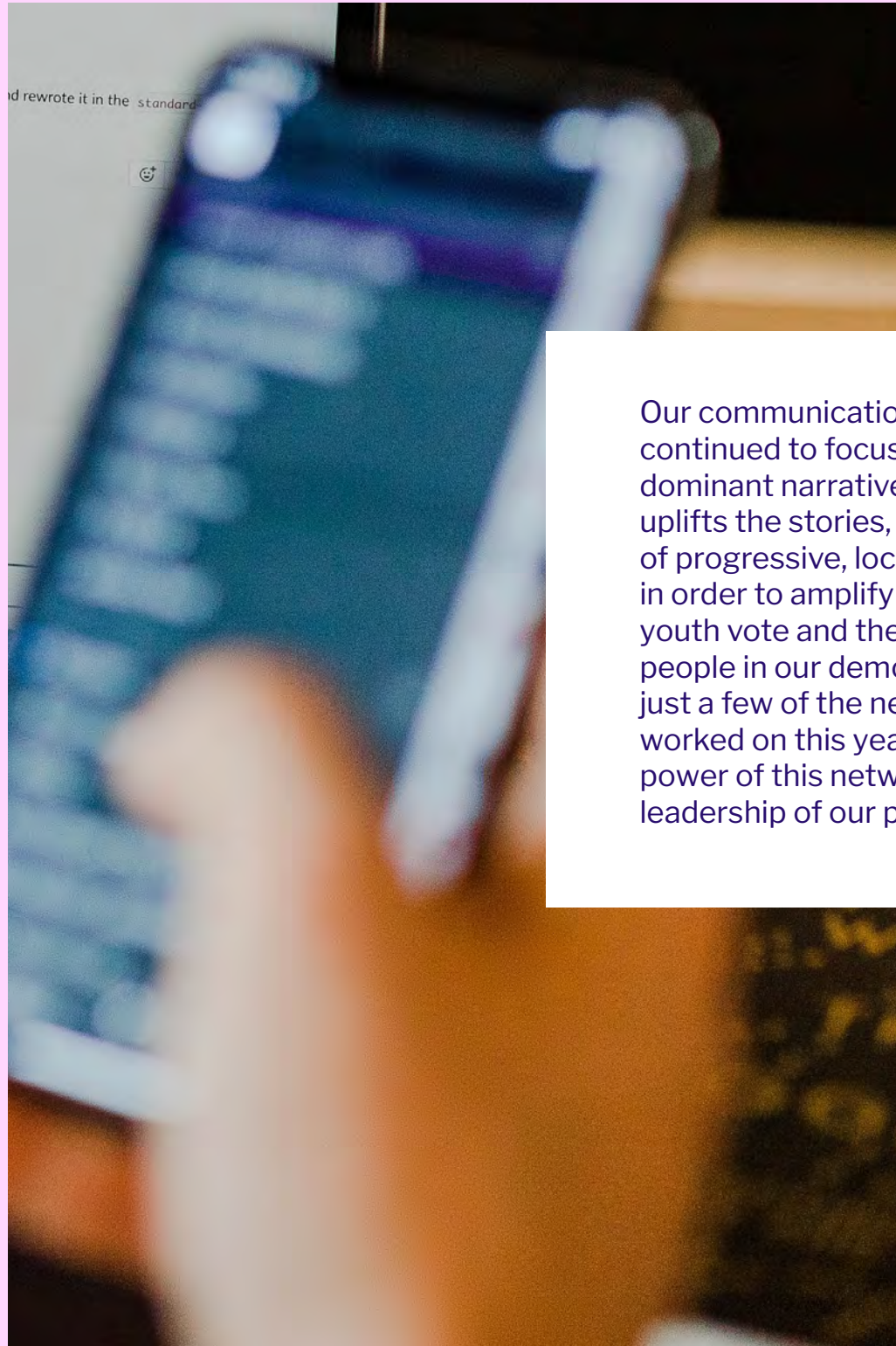
Moving Money

Over \$3.1 MM to State and Local Organizations!

At the Alliance, we know just how critical resources are to building organizations and fueling their powerful work. Following the historic 2020 presidential election, the Alliance has doubled down on our efforts to help resource the sustainability of youth-led and focused organizations in our network. If we want to see progressive victories — the investment has to match.

In 2021, we moved over \$2.8MM in c3 funds and over \$260,000 in c4 dollars — over \$3.1MM combined! — to support network organizations' programming and infrastructure. These numbers include funding through our various suites and as much general operating support as we can provide. We strive to help build organizations that are healthy, sustainable, and able to retain and empower young people from all backgrounds well into the future. And in July, our outgoing ED, Sarah Audelo, called on grant makers to follow our lead and fund the big dreams of the youth movement in this [Fulcrum article](#).

PRESSED FOR PRESS



Our communications strategy continued to focus on driving a new dominant narrative in the media that uplifts the stories, demands, and work of progressive, local, youth organizers in order to amplify the power of the youth vote and the vital role of young people in our democracy. These are just a few of the news stories we worked on this year that feature the power of this network and the thought leadership of our people.

THE CHRONICLE
OF PHILANTHROPY

If You Want to Hire an Executive
Director of Color, Don't Set Us Up to Fail



How Young Voters Are Fighting Back
Against Voter Suppression

The 🔥 Forge

Progressive Organizers Must Redefine
Success in Conservative States

BUILDING LEADERS

ED Bootcamp

Our Executive Director (ED) Onboarding Bootcamp supported four leadership transitions in the network this year with a space dedicated to digging in with our national team on operations, fundraising, management, compliance, and more. New EDs also received a one time \$30,000 grant to encourage coaching and overlap between the outgoing and incoming leadership. In 2021, we hosted bootcamps for **Washington Bus, Minnesota Youth Collective, MOVE Texas, and Next Up.**

“

Having a team like the Alliance that is dedicated to our success and able to identify gaps and provide real skill development where it's needed has made all the difference in our ability to lead our staff and figure out where we need to dig in.

CLAUDIA YOLI FERLA

Executive Director, MOVE Texas



Amanda Avalos and Cendi Tena, Leaders Igniting Transformation (LIT)

Amanda Avalos and Cendi Tena became interim co-Executive Directors of LIT at the end of November of 2021 after years of being instrumental in shaping the organization into the powerhouse it is today.

Amanda was a founding board member before she joined LIT's staff two years ago. Since then she has shown grace and fierce leadership during the pandemic while running the largest youth engagement effort in the state. Cendi has been at LIT almost as long as their founder, and has overseen their high school and college programs. Cendi played an integral role in making schools safer for students of color and getting police out of schools in Milwaukee. Cendi and Amanda are excited to work toward expanding LIT's footprint across the state and continuing to bring year round organizing, leadership development, and advocacy and electoral victories to Black and Brown communities across the state. We love to see it.



Elona J Wilson, Next Up

Elona became Next Up's Executive Director in July of 2021 bringing deep experience and commitment to fighting for the issues Next Up passionately works towards such as youth justice, racial justice, and voting rights. From coalition building at the Coalition of Communities of Color and Stand for Children to powerful campaign work as a leader in the Reimagine Oregon project, Elona brings a strong knowledge of the Portland landscape and a deep commitment to building power in local communities of color. We can't wait to see what's next for Next Up under Elona's leadership.



Rahhel Haile, Minnesota Youth Collective

Rahhel helped co-found the Minnesota Youth Collective in 2017 and became the Executive Director in May of 2021. Rahhel helped start MNYC with the hope it would be a political home for young people — a place where those who don't typically see themselves represented could co-create a path to living in the world we wish to see. We're excited to keep building that space alongside Rahhel and the fierce leadership they brings to MNYC.



Kelsey Rodriguez, Detroit Action

What does a loving, safe, just, and thriving future for Black youth look like?

A loving, safe, just, and thriving future for Black youth would be a world where life isn't a privilege. We won't have to worry about being killed by the police, or by incompetent doctors, or unsafe environments.

Program cohorts met jointly to discuss the successes and lessons learned from state legislative session work. We love joint cohort spaces as a way to facilitate cross-department strategy and synergy for more courageous campaigns. This year, we also saw groups taking initiative outside of the cohort structure to connect and strategize with each other — like when **Chicago Votes** and **Next Up** teamed up to amplify their voting in jails work. [Check out the IG live they did together!](#) **The Washington Bus, Next Up, and Forward Montana** also linked up for a [State of Voting in the West event](#).

Over 60 network staff have participated in cohorts, spending hundreds of hours together in learning communities!

Community and Collaboration through Cohorts

We launched cohorts as a space for communications, program, operations, data, and development peers to meet regularly and work through challenges together, learn from each other, and be trained by experts in their respective fields.

This year, we built upon our cohort offerings, expanded the program to include staff from YOPs, and launched an advocacy cohort. Cohorts have allowed us to invest in and support the skillbuilding and development of more staff beyond the ED-level, particularly young BIPOC staff. In May, our Communications and



Rita Carmona, Chicago Votes

How does your heritage and background influence your organizing?

For me, being Latina influences my organizing because it influences the way that I do everything...And I feel like the more that I show up and who I am as a Latina as, you know, as all that I am, the more that I can be in community with others.

Networks that Learn Together, Stay Together

Last year, the Alliance began curating spaces for the network to come together and do deep learning collectively. Continuing this speaker series, we were honored to host a space with organizer, educator, and curator **Mariame Kaba** for a conversation with our network about organizing, abolition, and the powerful moment that we are in. Mariame Kaba is the founder and director of Project NIA, a grassroots organization with a



Ziya Joy, North Carolina Asian Americans Together (NCAAT)

When speaking with young AAPI voters, what do they say are the most important issues to them? What matters to you?

A lot of young Asian Americans that we work with have told me about their desire to be in solidarity with other communities of color in working towards racial justice, their passion for environmental justice, and their broader hope for a more socially just world...More than anything, I wish to see a world where all of us can be safe, have our needs met, and thrive.


vision to end youth incarceration as well as the author of *We Do This 'Til We Free Us*. It was a restorative and energizing conversation to kick off further learning in abolitionist activism and organizing.

Building Local Leaders Network-Wide

Throughout the year, Alliance orgs fostered the leadership development and civic education of young people in their communities through internships, fellowships, and other organizing programs. Our network graduated over 200 young people through local programs in 2021!

Every. Single. Organization in the network hosts powerful training programs to help build the bench of the next generation of leaders. **Leaders Igniting Transformation's** famous Black Hogwarts program in Wisconsin prepares young people to be leaders and breakers of oppressive systems through the magic of community organizing. **North Carolina Asian Americans Together (NCAAT)** focused on hands-on training throughout the year by hosting 26 youth workshops and events in addition to 3 weeks of youth-focused action on environmental justice, democracy reform, and student debt and free college.

Building Leaders Building Leaders
Building Leaders Building Leaders
Building Leaders Building Leaders



The Future of Youth Organizing: *Our 5-Year Strategy Roadmap*

After engaging in learning and assessment processes in 2020, the Alliance kicked off a collaborative strategic planning process at the top of 2021 led by a taskforce of staff, Board, and Affiliate EDs. We engaged with so many of our stakeholders (thank you!) as we grappled with key questions related to governance, fiscal sponsorship, capacity building, serving as a funding intermediary, our role in the sector, and more. After a nearly year-long process, our strategic plan was approved in September!

Our mission has not changed. This strategic plan reenvisioning how we will fuel the growth and sustainability of year-round grassroots organizing and local power building. As a network, we are shifting away from being seen as a place for youth civic engagement and voter registration to truly building young people's long-term political power as a network of local and state movement organizations. Our strategic plan directs us to strengthen the network by doing what we do best — centering capacity building for youth-led and focused organizations, raising and distributing funds to the network as a funding intermediary, and expanding the network with a focus on bringing in orgs led by and centering BIPOC young people. Our team will begin the process of implementing our more refined vision in 2022.



[Read more about our strategic plan here!](#)

Alliance Growth

To better support the ever evolving needs of our network, the Alliance grew in size and in expertise. Although we are bigger than ever with 18 at the end of 2021, we continue to be intentional about maintaining our culture (even if it's through virtual happy hours). Whether on Zoom or in person, we welcomed new faces to the team and celebrated current staff's professional growth.

Communications

The Communications Team welcomed a Content Manager (a new position) to produce engaging content across our platforms. Our Communications Manager was also promoted to Digital Director!

Data

In early 2021, our Senior National Data Director, was promoted to Deputy Executive Director of Network Strategy where he manages the data and program teams and helps guide the network forward. So we welcomed a new Senior Data Director and a Data Manager to better support the growing data needs of the network.



Development

Our Development Director was promoted to Senior Development Director, leading our stellar fundraising team (which also grew to three in 2021). We added a Grants and Development Manager in the Summer and our Development Coordinator was promoted to Individual Giving and Development Manager.

Operations

We welcomed a new Senior Operations Director to lead our Operations Team and ensure our internal systems are running smoothly. Our Operations Manager was also promoted to Operations Director and hired a Fiscal Sponsorship Associate to add support for our fiscal sponsorship program.



Alliance Staff and Board

Alliance Staff:

Amit Mistry, Deputy Executive Director of Network Strategy
Billy Koontz, Senior Finance Director
Carmel Pryor, Senior Communications Director
Dakota Hall, Executive Director
Daniela Mrabti, Digital Director
Eliana Reed, Content Manager
Erika Jaimes, Fiscal Sponsorship Associate
Gnora Gumanow, Director of Network Capacity
John Serpas, Senior Operations Director
Julian Iriarte, Finance Manager
Kenny Myers, Director of Network Capacity
Maddie Love, Senior Data Director
Mariella Villacorta, Development and Individual Giving Manager
Marisa Slifka, Operations Director
Rebecca Gorena, Senior Program Director
Sara Vernon, Data Manager
Scarlett Jimenez, Senior Development Director
Whitney Celestin, Development and Grants Manager

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Mollie Ruskin, Vice Chair
Catherine Lerza, Treasurer
LiJia Gong, Secretary
Steven Cole-Schwartz
Liba Wenig Rubenstein
Alexis Anderson Reed
Amy Faulring
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Resha Thomas, Secretary
Chris Sloan
Ben Wessel
Jonathan Paik
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Paola Ramos
Juan Escalante
Tracey Corder
Daniel Gonzales



Thank
YOU
TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

Alliance for Youth Organizing

FOUNDATION PARTNERS & MAJOR DONORS

- Airlift Fund
- Anonymous Donors
- Battery Foundation
- Compton Foundation
- Donald and Carole Chaiken Foundation
- Donors of Color Network at Amalgamated Charitable Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Franklin Philanthropic Foundation
- Gasner Charitable Gift Fund
- Hartwell Family Charitable Gift Fund
- Hearthland Foundation
- Hull Family Foundation
- Institute for Cultural Exchange
- Jonathan Logan Family Foundation
- KITH Retail, LLC
- Laura and John Arnold Fund
- Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund
- MacArthur Foundation

Alliance for Youth Action

FOUNDATION PARTNERS & MAJOR DONORS

- Anonymous Donors
- Battery Foundation
- Chambers Initiative
- Democracy Fund Voice
- Groundswell Action Fund
- Group Health Foundation

- Matt Glickman and Susie Hwang Fund
- The Meier and Berlinghof Familes Fund
- NEO Philanthropy's State Infrastructure Fund
- NEO Philanthropy's Youth Engagement Fund
- Panta Rhea Fund
- Proteus Fund
- Rafiki Foundation
- Rockefeller Family Fund
- Rosenthal Family Foundation
- Silver Giving Foundation
- Skoll Foundation
- Stevenson-Cannon Family Fund
- The JPB Foundation
- The San Francisco Foundation
- Tides Foundation
- Tomkins Family Foundation
- Viacom
- Wallace Global Fund
- Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Windward Fund

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

- Abigail Chapin
- Alexandra Acker-Lyons
- Alison Stump
- Carlos d'Avis
- Carol Pencke and Mary Laumer
- Catherine Lerza
- Christopher Avery
- Cindy Kang
- Etienne Gabel
- Houston Harte
- Jessica Fisher
- John Davolio
- Jonathan Dorsey
- Kathleen M Caputo
- Kelley Robinson
- Miccaela Montague
- Mollie Ruskin
- Robert Mitchell
- Robert Woods

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

- Ameet Ravital
- Carol Gross
- Charlie Stein
- Matt Singer

Alliance for Youth Organizing

INCOME

SOURCE	ACTUALS
FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS	\$9,313,814
INDIVIDUAL DONORS	\$163,241
CORPORATE & LABOR UNION.....	\$20,536
OTHER INCOME.....	\$14,904
TOTAL INCOME.....	\$9,512,495

EXPENSES

SOURCE	ACTUALS
PERSONNEL	\$1,345,065
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.....	\$619,764
OFFICE & SHARED EXPENSES.....	\$91,259
TRAVEL & EVENTS	\$47,940
MATERIALS.....	\$12,735
GRANTS & AFFILIATE CONTRACTS.....	\$2,862,121
FISCAL SPONSORSHIP PROJECTS	\$4,551,407
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$9,530,291

Alliance for Youth Action

INCOME

SOURCE	ACTUALS
FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS	\$1,235,000
INDIVIDUAL DONORS	\$508,307
CONTRACT FOR SERVICES.....	\$60,761
OTHER INCOME.....	\$112
TOTAL INCOME.....	\$1,804,180

EXPENSES

SOURCE	ACTUALS
PERSONNEL	\$471,424
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.....	\$405,018
OFFICE & SHARED EXPENSES.....	\$42,687
TRAVEL & EVENTS	\$14,640
MATERIALS.....	\$24,045
GRANTS & AFFILIATE CONTRACTS.....	\$250,661
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,208,474