



**To:** NextGen America Allies and Supporters  
**From:** Heather Hargreaves, Executive Vice President  
**Date:** November 9th, 2017  
**Re:** **UPDATE** - NextGen America's Efforts in the 2017 Virginia Election

## **NEXTGEN VIRGINIA 2017: BY THE NUMBERS**

TOTAL SPEND: **\$3.3 million**  
TOTAL STAFF ON THE GROUND: **60**  
TOTAL DOORS KNOCKED: **350,000+**  
TOTAL TEXTS SENT: **300,000+**  
TOTAL VOLUNTEERS: **1,100+**  
TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS: **20,169**  
TOTAL COMMIT TO VOTE CARDS COLLECTED: **10, 454**  
TOTAL CAMPUSES WITH PROGRAM: **26**  
TOTAL YOUNG VOTERS REACHED WITH DIGITAL ADS: **1,825,805**  
TOTAL PIECES OF DIRECT MAIL SENT: **700,000+**

The results are in, and it's clear young people and people of color made the difference in this historic election. Not only were Tuesday's results in Virginia and across the country a clear and tangible rejection of Donald Trump and the GOP's dangerous and divisive agenda; it was a true testament to progressive power and the change that can happen when we campaign on issues that matter and utilize smart, effective, peer-to-peer organizing.

[As \*The Atlantic\* noted:](#) ". . . Sixty-nine percent of those young people gave their votes to Northam, and 75 percent gave their votes to Murphy. That's a chilling trend for Republicans, given that more Millennials will be eligible to vote than baby boomers in 2018 and 2020."

Our fight is far from over-- but momentum is on NextGen America's side. We're going to build on what we started in 2017, [and go into 2018 stronger than ever before.](#)

## **Young Virginians Turned Out to Vote in Record Breaking Numbers**

Based on exit polls, young voter (18-29) turnout reached a [record high of 34% in Virginia](#), up 8 points over 2013 levels and a complete doubling of turnout levels from 2009 (see chart below). For a group of voters that typically votes at 20-21% in midterm elections, these levels are unheard of. Even in the Democratic wave election of 2006, only 26% of young people turned out. These increases in turnout are found in both [non-student millennial precincts \(turnout up 7.5 points\)](#) and [student precincts \(up 8.4 points\)](#). And in many of the eight "[Millennial Indicator Precincts](#)" we tracked throughout election day, turnout was even higher!

If anger at Donald Trump and the GOP continues to drive turnout up through the 2018 election cycle, when young people will be the largest bloc of eligible voters, we could be looking at a progressive wave powered by millennial voters. Importantly, this sort of young voter revolt requires mass investment like

NextGen’s in Virginia, as young people in New Jersey didn’t increase their turnout, as the chart below shows. Progressives must capitalize on this opportunity to increase young voter turnout and NextGen looks forward to leading the charge.

Turnout Rates for Young Voters (18-29) in Statewide Generals

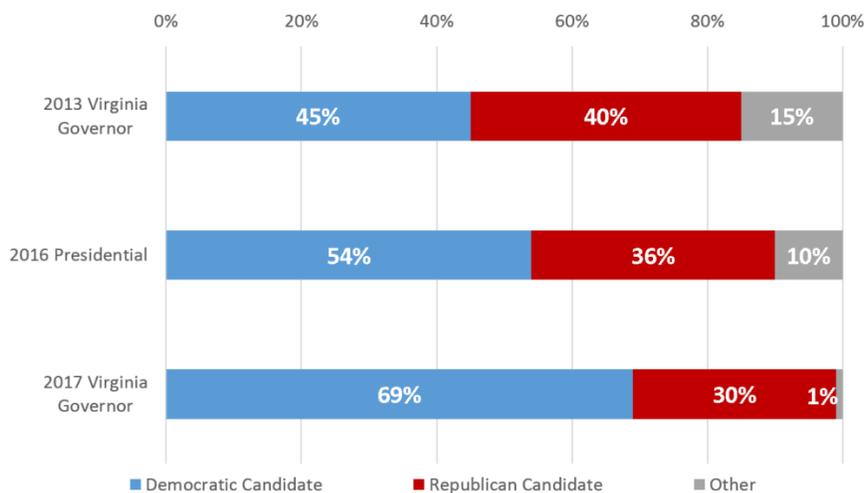
	2009	2013	2017
New Jersey	19%	18%	18%
Virginia	17%	26%	34%

**Young Virginians Supported Democrats Up and Down the Ticket**

Young people didn’t just turn out to vote in droves, they swung their votes hard towards progressive candidates, giving Ralph Northam [a lopsided 69-30 advantage](#) over Ed Gillespie. This +39% margin is startlingly large, compared to a +18% margin for Hillary Clinton in Virginia last year or Terry McAuliffe’s +5% in his 2013 victory.

Northam’s margin over Gillespie with young voters was [even larger](#) than Barack Obama’s margin over John McCain. If that doesn’t strike fear into the heart of every Republican elected official, they aren’t paying attention. [NextGen has already put them on notice](#) and this week’s results are yet one more warning.

**Virginia Youth Vote Choice in Recent Elections**



Source: CIRCLE Analysis of Edison Research Exit Polls

## Unprecedented Down-Ballot Victories

In addition to the top of the ticket, young voters are responsible for some of the down-ballot victories in the House of Delegates last night. Just a couple examples:

- In Southwest Virginia, Chris Hurst defeated Del. Joseph Yost by about 2,000 votes in HD12. NextGen organizers at Radford University and Virginia Tech registered 3,580 student voters in this district, almost double the margin of victory. Safe to say, students propelled Del.-Elect Hurst to victory.
- In Richmond's HD68, Dawn Adams won a major upset in GOP-leaning district, eking out a victory by just over 100 votes and becoming the first out lesbian elected to the House of Delegates. NextGen registered 417 students at the University of Richmond in this district. NextGen also targeted 6,325 young people in the district with digital ads to motivate them to vote for progressives, as well as three waves of direct mail.
- Around the commonwealth, young candidates were successful, with millennials like Chris Hurst, Danica Roem, Jennifer Carroll Foy, and Lee Carter all ousting incumbent Republicans. Young people are turning out to vote in droves -- and winning office themselves.

## Immigration is a winning issue

Last night was an outright rejection of the Trump/Gillespie racist playbook and a clear win for a more inclusive, progressive vision of the future. Through grassroots, bottom-up mobilization efforts and a pro-immigrant persuasion campaign, [the partnership, between NextGen America, America's Voice, Center for Community Change Action, and CASA in Action, helped elect Democrats down the ballot.](#) The wins didn't just include Northam, Fairfax, and Herring: all six of CASA's endorsed House of Delegates candidates won. This includes Elizabeth Guzman and Hala Ayala, the first two Latinas elected to the Virginia House, as well as Kathy Tran who arrived to this country as a refugee.

Overall, the program knocked on 58,000 doors, made 55,000 phone calls, and sent 20,000 texts to mobilize communities of color. CASA's canvass program led to nearly 71% Election Day vote share for Democratic House of Delegate candidates, an increase from 58% in 2013, and a 72% Election Day vote share for Ralph Northam compared to 62% in 2013.

Leaning into immigration policy and standing against xenophobic and racist campaign tactics is a winning strategy for Democratic candidates. In the run up to the election, NextGen America, along with our three partner organizations, conducted two polls, including an election eve poll, to test the issue of immigration. The [poll results](#) showed that Ed Gillespie's reliance on anti-immigrant race-baiting like his MS-13 ads and mailers backfired, contributing to a Northam win and Democratic sweep.



### **A Win for Working Families**

For Virginia's Future, a partnership between NextGen, organized labor and local progressive organizations, ran a \$1.5 million coordinated electoral program focused on electing progressive candidates for Virginia Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, and to the House of Delegates. In doing so, For Virginia's Future targeted voters who are crucial to electoral success year after year and prioritized voter contact in regions where existing progressive capacity needs strengthening (Central/Southwestern Virginia and Hampton Roads), while also filling program capacity gaps in Northern Virginia and metro Richmond-- all of which showed strong support for Democrats.

### **Major Returns on Investments**

Through GiveGreen in the States, a partnership between NextGen and the League of Conservation Voters, a total of \$4,114,080.48 was raised and contributed to candidates in Virginia in 2017. The entire slate of Give Green in the States candidates, in Virginia, New Jersey, and Washington-- won their elections - 11 in all. As one GGS candidate said: "When someone donates to my campaign, I know they support me, but when someone donates through GiveGreen in the States, I know why they support me. And that makes all the difference."

*"There's a lot of energy we see with the kind of numbers and enthusiasm that I haven't really seen in my time organizing in Virginia," said Bristol. "I think there are a lot of students who realize how much this election matters to them, and when you talk to them you're hearing a lot about college affordability, but also a lot of about local issues like racial justice and housing in addition to things that are affecting their lives in college." -Hannah Bristol, NextGen Virginia Organizing Director, in BuzzFeed News, 11/7/2017*