Reaching Young Voters
NEXTGEN YOUTH RESEARCH 2018

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SECTION 1:
Why Young People Matter
There are a lot of them

Eligible Voters by Generation

Source: CNN
They are the most progressive generation

*Source:* Pew Research Center

### Ideology by Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Consistently Liberal</th>
<th>Mostly Liberal</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Mostly Conservative</th>
<th>Consistently Conservative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boomer</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gen X</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
They don’t turn out to vote

2016 Turnout by Generation

Source: Pew Research Center
...especially in midterms

2014 Turnout by Age

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
I kind of hate to say it, but the millennial generation is now important. Their views are becoming the dominant public views. Their attitudes about gay marriage and social tolerance are radically different than the previous generations, and they are restructuring our views.

Republican pollster Bill McInturff
SECTION 2:
Overview of NextGen Youth Program
NextGen Rising is the largest youth vote effort in history.

We are active in 11 states with:
- 8 governor’s races
- 7 US Senate races
- 33 US House races
- and more
As of Tuesday, August 8th, we have done the following in 2018:

• 542 staff members across 11 states
• Registered 82,864 young voters
• Gathered 108,114 commitments to vote
• Knocked on 364,404 voters’ doors
• Had 2,872 volunteers fill almost 10,000 shifts
Three Key Learnings from the Past

- For the vast majority of non-Republican young voters, the decision isn’t D vs. R. It’s voting vs. not voting.

- The earlier you start field organizing, the more votes you create. In each of the last four years, voters registered in-person and commitments to vote from face-to-face conversation led to increased turnout.

- Reach young people where they are: texting, online, community colleges.
NextGen Rising

• We send peer-to-peer and friend-to-friend text messages that are optimized to our audience (no emojis please!)

• We send candidate comparison voter guides in the mail and online to our voters. Young people are with us and they want to make up their own mind who to support based on the issues.
SECTION 3:
NextGen America’s Young People Research
Research Goals

1. What can we learn about attitudes that drive or inhibit political participation among Americans 18-35?

2. What attitudinal differences exist among these young Americans?

3. How should we communicate with them?
Phase One: Research Overview

**QUESTIONS**

1. What can we learn about attitudes that drive or inhibit political participation among Americans 18–35?

2. What attitudinal differences exist among these young Americans?

**PROCESS**

1. Literature review
2. In-depth interviews with wide range of experts
3. Qualitative research
4. Large scale survey, attitudinal segmentation, modeling
Phase One: Research Overview

SEGMENTATION SURVEY

1. National survey of nearly 6,000 Americans age 18-35
2. Matched to voter and consumer files
3. Excluded Republicans in order to focus on voters we’re trying to reach
4. Designed to explore core attitudes connected to voting and vote likelihood
5. Segmentation based on survey responses
6. Modeled and scored voter file
Phase One: Barriers & Segments

**Barriers to Participation**

- Thinking voting is ineffective
- Feeling unqualified to vote
- Belief that voting perpetuates a broken system

**Five Key Segments**

- Super Voters
- Engaged Optimists
- Engaged Pessimists
- Apathetic
- Revolutionary
Segments: Optimists & Pessimists

**OPTIMISTS**

- Relatively engaged
- Strongly favor Democrats
- Optimistic about the future & future of their community & country
- Feel connected to a community

**PESSIMISTS**

- Relatively engaged
- Strongly favor Democrats
- Pessimistic about the future & future of their community & country
- Do not feel connected to a community
Segments: Apathetic & Revolutionary

**APATHETIC**

- Unengaged
- Prefer Democrats to Republicans but many have no opinion
- Much less likely to have a view on wide range of issues

**REVOLUTIONARY**

- Relatively engaged
- Prefer Ds to Rs by a small margin
- Pessimistic about their future & future of their community & country
- Do not feel connected to a community
### Segment Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPTIMISTS</th>
<th>PESSIONISTS</th>
<th>APATHETIC</th>
<th>REVOLUTIONARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71% Democrat</td>
<td>65% Democrat</td>
<td>63% Independent</td>
<td>63% Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57% Female</td>
<td>57% White</td>
<td>55% Male</td>
<td>56% Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28% Hispanic</td>
<td>53% White</td>
<td>53% White</td>
<td>25% Hispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25% Black</td>
<td>25% Black</td>
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</table>
Vote likelihood and Democratic support for 2018

Net Support for Democrat on generic congressional ballot

- Super Voters
- Optimistic
- Pessimistic
- Apathetic
- Revolutionary
Segment Attitudinal Differences

Super Voters  Optimistic  Pessimistic  Apathetic  Revolutionary

Percentage who...

Voted in 2016

Will definitely vote in 2018

Identify as Democrats

Are optimistic about the country

Fell like they are part of a community
By voting, community can create change
Elections have real impact on my community
Voting perpetuates a broken system
Trump proves system doesn’t work
Not worth voting for the lesser of two evils

Segment Attitudinal Differences

Super Voters
Optimistic
Pessimistic
Apathetic
Revolutionary

Percentage who agree...
Phase Two: Questions

**QUESTIONS**

1. Should we talk to the segments differently?

2. Can we find themes or messages that resonate across segments and demographic groups?
Phase Two: Goals & Process

**GOALS:**

1. Develop messages & themes that resonate with our target voters
2. Learn whether we need to develop very different themes for different audiences, or can find a unifying theme

**PROCESS:**

1. Qualitative research
2. Message survey
Phase Two: Qualitative Research

Brilliant Corners conducted six focus groups in June:

Las Vegas: Optimist, Pessimist

Miami: Apathetic, Revolutionary

Philadelphia: Optimist, Pessimist
Phase Two: Qualitative Research

**KEY FINDINGS**

1. Little generational identification but strong desire for community

2. Across groups there is high skepticism to all systems, specifically political systems’ ability to effect their lives

3. Multiple barriers reduce participation levels

4. Power in Numbers overcomes the barriers, reinforces the power of their vote
Little Generational Identification

“I don’t really like being called a millennial because it feel like we just get blamed for everything. When I hear it I just think of something bad.”

White Pessimist, Las Vegas

“I would consider myself a young person probably more then a millennial. When I look around this room I think we are all young people but we might not all be millennials.”

Latino Optimist, Las Vegas
Strength in Numbers

The system is not broken, it is just working for those that are participating in it.

“Are these numbers real? Was it similar in 2016 too? I think this is what more people need to see, that we are not heard because we are not voting. How we can we expect to get anything we want in our community if the same community is not voting.”

Black Pessimist, Las Vegas

“The system is not broken, it is just working for those that are participating in it.”

“Somebody needs to publish this graph everywhere. This is the kind of stuff that people don’t really know so it easy for them to say the system is broken rather then saying if we just voted more it might not be so broken. They cannot keep using that excuse once they see that ‘no, we just aren’t voting like that’.”

White Apathetic, Miami
Phase Two: Message Survey

Conducted in July by Global Strategy Group

- National survey of 2,194 respondents age 18-35
- Excluded Republicans
- Significant samples of each attitudinal segment
Message Survey: Aspirational or Negative?

**ASPIRATIONAL VS NEGATIVE MESSAGE TEST**

- Messages received similar ratings
- Negative message had twice as much impact on vote likelihood
- Negative at least as impactful even among groups who rated Aspirational higher
Phase Two: Message Testing

**MESSAGE TESTING**

Survey respondents rated and ranked 17 messages covering five major themes:

- Efficacy of voting
- Altruism and community
- Threats
- Rebellion
- Pragmatism
There’s power in numbers: 70 million Americans ages 18-35 are eligible to vote – more than any other age group. But since we vote at half the rate of older Americans, politicians ignore our needs. If we show up to vote, people in power will have to listen to us.
Some people think that one vote doesn’t matter. But last year, control of the Virginia legislature came down to a single vote in one single race. After Democrats gained 15 seats they were able to expand Medicaid and give healthcare 400,000 Virginians in need.
## Phase Two: Impact On Vote Likelihood

### Likelihood to vote – 0-10 scale, before and after messages

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Shift</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
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<td>Pessimistic</td>
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<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men</td>
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<td>8.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voted 2016</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Didn’t Vote 2016</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
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<th>Shift</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-College</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Grads</td>
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<td>8.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Currently Enrolled</td>
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<td>8.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phase Two: Key Takeaways

1. Young people care about the world around them, but many aren’t convinced voting is an effective way to make change

2. The voters we need to turn out strongly dislike Trump and can be motivated by the need to stop Trump and Republicans

3. Power in Numbers message reinforces importance of voting and breaks down barriers to participation

4. Lead with values, but include facts

5. There are no magic messages – need to communicate early and often
SECTION 4:

Putting Research Into Practice: Sample NGA Ads
We can win elections.
he voted to take away health care
“Chopping Block” :30
SECTION 5:
Let’s Make It Happen
Looking Ahead

Young people are engaged in 2017 and primaries. Young progressives are powering increased turnout:

• Youth turnout up 8 points in 2017 Virginia Governor’s race over 2013 levels.

• In competitive PA-7 primary, turnout in youth-dense precincts drastically up over 2014 levels. Turnout tripled in one precinct (Easton 3-3)

• In critical CA primaries, turnout increase helped Dems survive lock-out potential. Turnout increases of 8-10pp in youth-dense precincts.
Looking Ahead

By Election Day 2018, we will have:

• 724 full and part-time staff
• Knocked on 1,000,000 voters’ doors
• Organized students at 409 campuses
Looking Ahead

We will also send persuasion, candidate contrast, and Get-Out-The-Vote direct mail to a large portion of our universe.

Dear [FirstName],

NextGen Pennsylvania asked Pennsylvania voters what they would like to know about their candidates in the Democratic primary for Pennsylvania’s 7th Congressional District. Based upon those responses, we are providing information about those candidates on issues that directly affect you.

THE ISSUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Greg Edwards</th>
<th>Susan Ellis Wild</th>
<th>John Morganelli</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supports Donald Trump*</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposes using local police to deport undocumented workers &amp; break up families**</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposes tax breaks for corporations &amp; millionaires**</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports a woman’s right to make her own reproductive health care decisions**</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* Lehigh Valley Live, 12/2/16
** “Keeping Up With the Candidates”, 4/12/18

We have done our best to represent each candidate in a fair and reasonable way. To learn more, visit the candidates’ websites at <https://edwardsforpa.com>, <https://wildforcongress.com>, or <https://johnmorganelli.com>.

Sincerely,

Jarrett Smith
State Youth Director, NextGen Pennsylvania

Paid for by NextGen Climate Action Committee; nextgenamerica.org; not authorized by any candidate or candidate’s committee.
Looking Ahead

Stay up-to-date:
nextgenamerica.org/insider

THANK YOU!