



To: NextGen America Allies and Supporters
From: Heather Hargreaves, Executive Director
Date: November 1, 2018
Re: NextGen America's Efforts in the 2018 Midterm Elections

"Young people tend to vote for Democrats, but they also tend to stay away during midterm elections. It's a perennial frustration for the party — one they are trying to overcome as they seek to take control of Congress. NextGen America, formed by billionaire activist Tom Steyer, hopes to be a game changer. Steyer is investing more than \$30 million in what's believed to be the largest voter engagement effort of its kind in U.S. history."
— "[\\$30 million poured into effort to energize young voters](#)" Associated Press, September 3, 2018

On Tuesday, November 6, Americans will head to the polls to vote in the most important midterm election in recent history — and NextGen America played a [central role](#) in mobilizing progressives, young people, people of color, and working Americans to make their voices heard this year. This cycle, NextGen America set out to expand democracy through [grassroots organizing](#), elect progressive candidates up and down the ballot, and put our country on course towards a more socially, environmentally, and economically just future.

NEXTGEN RISING 2018: BY THE NUMBERS *

TOTAL SPEND: \$33 Million
STATE STAFF: 750
VOLUNTEERS: 14,499
CAMPUSES WITH PROGRAM: 419
YOUNG VOTERS REGISTERED: 257,857
PLEDGE TO VOTE CARDS COLLECTED: 301,744
DOORS KNOCKED: 853,898
TEXTS SENT: 3,078,480
PIECES OF DIRECT MAIL SENT: 10,204,316
YOUNG VOTERS REACHED WITH DIGITAL ADS: 6,714,794
SPEND ON DIGITAL ADS: \$10.6 Million
TARGETED STATES: AZ, CA, FL, IA, MI, NC, NH, NV, PA, VA AND WI

*(as of 10/30/2018)

Young people are the largest eligible voting bloc in the country, and they are overwhelmingly progressive. NextGen America has organized young people since 2013, and we know that when they turn out, Democrats win. Following the election of Donald Trump, NextGen America [launched](#) NextGen Rising to register, engage and mobilize young people between the ages of 18 and 35 in August 2017. Following its success in the [2017 Virginia elections](#), NextGen expanded the Rising program to 11 battleground states, and at \$33 million, it became the largest youth organizing program in American history. Over a year and a half, NextGen hired 750 staff in the states, built teams [on 419 college campuses](#), registered over a quarter of a million young Americans to vote, and built a volunteer army of over 14,000. To reach young people on and off campus, NextGen sent over 10.2 million pieces of mail and ran a [\\$10 million digital ad campaign](#), one of the largest of the cycle, encouraging over 6.7 million young Americans to vote on Tuesday.



Below are a few highlights from our state youth vote efforts (with state-specific memos linked):

In [Florida](#), NextGen broke with tradition and made [its first endorsement](#) in a Democratic primary since 2013. NextGen endorsed young, progressive Mayor Andrew Gillum and campaigned heavily to turn out young voters for his candidacy through field, digital, and mail efforts. Mayor Gillum won his primary in large part due to [sky-rocketing youth turnout across the state](#), and NextGen is doubling down on its promise to carry him across the finish line.

In [Arizona](#), NextGen registered over [21,000 young people](#) as part of an effort to elect Kyrsten Sinema and Democrats up and down the ballot. NextGen America is one of the only national organizations investing heavily in building progressive infrastructure in Arizona this year, a state where NextGen hadn't done work in previous cycles.

In [California](#), NextGen ran [a six figure GOTV primary program](#) to stave off a Democratic lockout in seven competitive Congressional Districts by [increasing youth turnout](#). Three times as many young Californians voted in the 2018 primary, compared to the 2014 primary, and NextGen is continuing to build progressive infrastructure in historically conservative parts of the state through Election Day.

In [Iowa](#), NextGen is helping to elect young progressives, like Abby Finkenauer and Deidre DeJear, to office by organizing students on over 40 college campuses. NextGen organized rallies and protests against intolerant Iowa Republicans, like [Steve King](#) and [Rod Blum](#), and collected over 14,000 young voter registrations to help flip the heartland back to blue.

In [Michigan](#), a team of 60 staff registered nearly 40,000 young people to vote and is [working to elect](#) an all female Democratic statewide slate led by Gretchen Whitmer and Debbie Stabenow.

In [Nevada](#), building off our 2016 success in [electing Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto](#), NextGen is fighting tooth and nail to oust Dean Heller and elect Jacky Rosen to the Senate. This year, NextGen registered over 11,000 young Nevadans and did work on 10 campuses statewide.

In [New Hampshire](#), NextGen built off its successful 2016 youth program, which helped [elect Maggie Hassan](#) to the Senate by a mere 1,017 votes. This year, the team fought against Governor Sununu's [voter suppression bill](#) and pledged over 18,000 Granite Staters to vote.

[North Carolina](#) was the eleventh and final state added to the NextGen Rising program. NextGen is working to [engage and mobilize](#) young voters in Republican-held NC-09 and NC-13, which both have large populations of young and minority voters.

In [Pennsylvania](#), NextGen [defeated](#) a pro-Trump, anti-immigrant, anti-choice Democrat in the PA-07 primary in May, and is [working](#) to defend Bob Casey and Tom Wolf in the general election by registering over 39,000 voters on 125 campuses.



In [Virginia](#), NextGen [doubled down](#) on its historic 2017 efforts registering over 20,000 young Virginians on 26 campuses. This year, NextGen exceeded its 2017 totals and registered [25,000 young voters](#) on 30 campuses to increase youth turnout and flip four Republican-held Congressional Districts and defending Senator Kaine's seat.

In [Wisconsin](#), NextGen mobilized against Scott Walker on over 30 college campuses and pledged nearly 50,000 young people to vote for Democrats, like Tony Evers and Tammy Baldwin, up and down the ballot. In the Wisconsin Supreme Court special election, NextGen ran a GOTV program for Judge Rebecca Dallet, [increasing youth voter turnout](#) and propelling her to victory.

"Mr. Steyer's extended foray into Florida politics will test his personal strategy for the Democratic Party's comeback, as well as the reach of the millennial-powered left more broadly. Mr. Steyer and his aides said that they had foreseen a path to victory for Mr. Gillum in the Democratic primary, despite his underdog status, because of his distinctive appeal to young people and African-American voters."

— ["Tom Steyer to Spend Millions Backing Andrew Gillum in Florida,"](#) *New York Times*, September 25, 2018.

[Black Lives Rising](#)

In September, NextGen launched [Black Lives Rising](#), a \$1 million effort to increase turnout among young Black voters in thirteen cities across six battleground states: Florida, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Virginia. Black Lives Rising collaborated with organizations run by and for young Black people, like Color of Change PAC, WokeVote, and Black Futures Lab, to host events and canvasses and create unique digital ads to [boost Black youth turnout](#).

[Keeping Up With The Candidates](#)

During the Democratic primaries, NextGen America [hosted](#) 12 "Keeping Up With The Candidates" events with Democratic candidates in several competitive primary races across the country. At the events, young voters had the opportunity to ask candidates questions on issues such as immigration, cost of college, and climate change and to see a [lighter side](#) of candidates with questions like "What would be your superhero power?" and "What is your current Netflix binge?" Actors [Alyssa Milano](#) and [Josh Gad](#) hosted candidate events in CA-25 and AZ-02 respectively, and Tom Steyer quizzed candidates in [NH-01](#) and VA-10. The events raised money for local organizations such as Planned Parenthood of Southern Arizona and CASA in Virginia and gave young people a chance to hear which candidates best align with their values and priorities.

[Our Lives, Our Votes](#)

Following the tragedy in Parkland, Florida, NextGen America saw a movement of young people taking to the streets to demand action from their elected officials. To harness that [young voter energy](#), NextGen partnered with Giffords, Everytown for Gun Safety, and ACRONYM to launch Our Lives, Our Vote — a \$1.75 million program to empower high school-aged Americans to [make their voices heard](#) this November, and vote out politicians beholden to the NRA across ten states: AZ, CA, CO, FL, MI, MN, NV, PA, WI and VA. Our Lives, Our Vote partnered with 11 community organizations to register 63,273 high school students to vote in person, online, and through mail and host over 450 high school events.

[For Our Future](#)



Back in 2016, NextGen America and national labor unions founded For Our Future (FOF), the largest independent field operation for the progressive movement. [Fighting for the rights](#) of working families under attack by the Trump administration and its Republican allies, FOF is [running canvasses](#), digital advertising, mail, and phones to [reach voters](#) in seven states: Florida, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. As of October 22, FOF and 35 community partners have knocked on over 4.87 million doors and had 656,222 conversations. By Election Day, the partnership will have knocked on 7.5 million doors, texted 1.5 million voters, and had 1 million [conversations](#) at the doors on issues such as good paying jobs, education funding, and health care costs.

[Ballot Initiatives](#)

With a vacuum of leadership on climate action in Washington D.C., NextGen America is committed to [empowering states](#) to take steps towards a sustainable and prosperous future, with or without the White House. With our future at stake, NextGen took the case for climate action directly to the people in Michigan, Nevada and Arizona by supporting ballot initiatives that would require utilities in those states to provide more clean energy.

NextGen America worked with partners on the ground to initiate Clean Energy, Healthy Michigan, which worked to put clean energy on the ballot. In May, the campaign [reached an agreement](#) with the largest Michigan utilities to transition to 50 percent clean energy by 2030, including at least 25 percent renewable, making Michigan a national leader in reducing emissions.

NextGen America also worked with local organizations to convene [Clean Energy for a Healthy Arizona](#) and [Nevadans for a Clean Energy Future](#), which both put clean energy on the ballot this year. These campaigns have brought together diverse and progressive organizations that have been committed to advancing renewable energy policy for years and building coalitions that will last far beyond 2018. NextGen is also [supporting efforts](#) to defeat elected officials in Arizona who are helping the state's largest utility block progress on renewable energy.

[Blue Wave Volunteer Program](#)

Building off its successful 2016 distributed organizing program, in June 2018, NextGen America [launched](#) the Blue Wave Volunteer Program, a distributed organizing program to reach progressives across all 50 states and significantly expand the number of volunteers helping turnout young voters in competitive districts. Using [digital organizing tools](#) to reach previously unreachable volunteers, the Blue Wave Volunteer Program has already texted over 1 million voters and by Election Day, will text over 1 million more.

[Uniting California](#)

Last October, NextGen America, the California Labor Federation, and grassroots organizations [launched a joint effort](#) to engage California voters across seven key Congressional districts and build progressive organizing infrastructure in traditionally conservative parts of the state. Through today, organizers have recruited over 1,700 volunteers, knocked on over 580,000 doors, made over 190,000 calls and had over 350,000 conversations with voters about the issues that they care about most — like health care, taxes, education, and clean air and water — helping turn out progressives voters to ensure Democrats made it through the primary in all seven districts. In the primary, voters in key districts like CA-25 and CA-49 contacted by Uniting California turned out at rates around



10% higher than the district-wide average — and for the general election, the partnership [doubled down](#) on its effort to turn out California voters.

[GiveGreen](#)

In 2016, NextGen joined GiveGreen, a [fundraising partnership](#) between NextGen America, the League of Conservation Voters (LCV) Victory Fund, and NRDC Action Fund PAC. That year, GiveGreen raised over \$8 million for environmental candidates across the country. With a lack of leadership in Washington on climate change and the overt gutting of environmental protections, in 2018, GiveGreen has raised over \$20 million, over double the amount raised in a Presidential year for climate champions up and down the ballot.