

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

6 November 2020

**CONTACT:** Rachel Weber, [rachel.weber@nextgenamerica.org](mailto:rachel.weber@nextgenamerica.org)

or 845-825-6528

## **NextGen North Carolina Activated Record #YouthVote Turnout in Unprecedented Election Year**

*After NextGen ran the largest youth voter registration and mobilization campaign in the state, young voters went to the polls in record numbers*

### **NEXTGEN NORTH CAROLINA 2020: BY THE NUMBERS**

TOTAL SPEND: **\$6,476,203**

TOTAL STAFF ON THE GROUND: **70**

TOTAL VOLUNTEERS: **1,475**

TOTAL CAMPUSES WITH PROGRAM: **33**

TOTAL YOUNG VOTERS REGISTERED: **14,202**

TOTAL PLEDGE TO VOTES COLLECTED: **45,711**

TOTAL YOUNG VOTERS REACHED WITH DIGITAL ADS: **689,164**

TOTAL CALLS MADE: **1,077,608**

TOTAL TEXTS SENT: **2,886,730**

TOTAL PIECES OF DIRECT MAIL SENT: **1,442,342**

TARGETED RACES: President, U.S. Senate, Governor, State Legislature

**RALEIGH, N.C.** — While we continue to await final vote tallies, early data shows that NextGen North Carolina played a decisive role in achieving record-breaking turnout among young voters this year, powering Gov. Roy Cooper to reelection and providing critical ballast for former Vice President Joe Biden. More young Americans voted in the 2020 election than ever before, and here in North Carolina NextGen mobilized young people to vote for Joe Biden, Cooper, Cal Cunningham and their Democratic allies at huge margins, despite a series of unprecedented challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

“2020 will be remembered as the year of the youth vote. We’re done with the tired narrative that says young people don’t care, or young people don’t vote, because it’s just plain wrong. Young North Carolinians are leading the charge for progress, and we showed up in record numbers to prove it,” said **Harrison Peel**, the **State Director of NextGen North Carolina**. “Through our organizers, volunteers, mailers and digital ads, NextGen reached out to over 1.3 million young North Carolinians. At every step of the process, we were there to motivate, mobilize and guide young voters — from understanding the stakes of the election, navigating the state’s voting rules, and registering to vote, to requesting a mail-in ballot, making a plan to vote, and learning about the candidates.”

With North Carolina still too early to call in several key races, the [Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement](#) estimates that young people aged 18-29 accounted for 16 percent of the electorate in North Carolina this year, above 14.5 percent in 2016. In a stinging rebuke for Donald Trump and his allies in the state, they broke for Joe Biden at huge margins, with 57% voting for the President-elect and helping him amass an estimated net gain of 140,000 votes for Biden in a state where Donald Trump's margin currently stands at less than 80,000. Young Black North Carolinians in particular showed up in stunning margins for Biden, with 97% supporting the President-elect. Young North Carolinians also supported Cunningham by a 6-point margin in efforts to make Thom Tillis a one-term senator.

Young voters also propelled Governor Cooper to reelection, which was a central goal of NextGen North Carolina's \$6.4 million investment in the state this year to energize young North Carolinians. From ballot guide mailer to "College Kids for Cooper" phonebanks, talking to young North Carolinians about the stakes of Cooper's reelection campaign was a key part of NextGen's organizing strategy, and based on polling throughout the cycle, young voters supported Governor Cooper above Dan Forest at margins higher than any other age cohort. As in his first term, young voters know Governor Cooper will continue to fight for the values and issues that young voters care about, from climate action to affordable healthcare, while serving as an important check on the GOP's regressive agenda.

Young North Carolinians also celebrate Democrats' pick up of two congressional seats with Deborah Ross and Kathy Manning's election to the second and sixth districts. NextGen heavily targeted college campuses and youth-dense precincts in these two districts, where fairer maps allowed young voters to harness the true power of their vote. In NC-6, for example, North Carolina [A&T students](#) finally were united in one district, and student voter turnout helped propel Manning to a decisive victory.

The coronavirus pandemic brought on unprecedented challenges for the organizers and fellows on 33 college campuses throughout the state, but youth vote turnout numbers before Election Day prove the remarkable impact NextGen had in a broad-based campaign to educate young voters on mail-in voting, encourage people to get their ballots in with plenty of time to spare, and ensure that they had the resources they needed to make their voices heard. When NextGen shifted its program to a 100% digital strategy in March, our nearly 50 campus fellows played a critical role in mobilizing students and guiding their peers through a particularly confusing and challenging election process. By the time early voting had ended, young North Carolinians aged 18-29 already accounted for 93% of their total 2016 turnout, showing that this massive information and mobilization campaign worked to get young voters to vote early in-person and by mail.

"You haven't seen the last from young North Carolinians. Continued investment in this crucial voting bloc is going to make the difference for years to come, and the margins and turnout this year prove it," said **Rachel Weber**, the **NextGen North Carolina Press Secretary**. "From climate action to racial justice, youth-led movements are growing more powerful by the day. Our

generation is leading the charge for progress from the ballot box to the streets, and we're going to keep fighting for the change we deserve.”

### **About NextGen North Carolina**

NextGen North Carolina is the state affiliate of the NextGen America youth vote program, an inclusive coalition of young voters and activists in 11 battleground states with the goal of winning elections for progressive candidates. NextGen North Carolina mobilized young voters in North Carolina to turn out in record numbers for Democrats up and down the ballot in 2020. In 2018, NextGen North Carolina knocked on over 32,000 doors, sent over 226,000 texts to young voters, and organized on 16 campuses to boost young turnout and broke the Republican supermajority in the legislature. For more about NextGen's 2020 plan, please visit [www.nextgenamerica.org](http://www.nextgenamerica.org).

###

For another time:

<b>Precinct - County</b>	<b>Nearby Campus</b>	<b>Youth Density</b>	<b>2016 Total</b>	<b>2020 Total</b>	<b>2020-2016</b>
Cullowhee - Jackson	Western Carolina	72%	4124		
141 - Mecklenburg	UNC-Charlotte	91%	3262		
Northside (NS) - Orange	UNC-Chapel Hill	75%	444		
East Franklin (EA) - Orange	UNC-Chapel Hill	87%	279		
55-49 - Durham	NC Central	96%	359		
Boone 2 (6) - Watauga	App State	95%	398		

NextGen utilized every tool in the toolbox to reach young voters, from phonebanking, peer-to-peer texting, and a nearly \$2 million digital ad campaign, to new and inventive methods to counter the challenges brought on by the pandemic. NextGen organizers hosted virtual webinars and days of action, caught students' attention with mobile billboards during early voting, and aided young voters in voting absentee by mailing nearly a half million young voters mail-in ballot request forms. NextGen also doubled down on relational organizing, using staff and volunteers to systematically reach out to personal networks of friends, coworkers, family and professional contacts to amplify our GOTV messaging through trusted channels. With a massive network of volunteers, NextGen brought new voters into the civic process at astounding rates, seeing huge outreach numbers across several marquis days of action, including the Final Five Days of Action — where NextGen organizers and volunteers reached out to over **XXX,XXX** voters in North Carolina.

NextGen proudly celebrates the several young North Carolinians who were themselves elected to serve in the North Carolina General Assembly this year, making the body slowly but surely younger and more representative of the state's largest and most diverse and progressive voting bloc. DeAndrea Salvador (Senate District 39), Ricky Hurtado (House District 63), and Brian Farkas (House District 9) all flipped seats in the legislature, running on issues that matter most to young North Carolinians, such as expanding affordable healthcare and protecting the environment. In House District 9, where unofficial results show the race coming down to just

several hundred votes, NextGen targeted East Carolina University and Pitt Community College and significantly increased early youth voter turnout.