



**To:** NextGen America Allies and Supporters  
**From:** Heather Hargreaves, Executive Vice President  
**Date:** November 5th, 2017  
**Re:** NextGen America's Efforts in the 2017 Virginia Election

*" . . . This is the race of the year," Tom Steyer said. "It seems like there is a struggle for the hearts and minds of Americans right now, and it's taking place as much in Virginia as anyplace else in the United States of America." - [The Washington Post, August 22, 2017](#)*

On Tuesday, November 7, 2017, Virginia is holding the year's most important election — and NextGen America could not be more proud to have played a pivotal role in [driving Virginians to the ballot box to stand up for progressive values](#). Building on lessons learned in 2016, the newly rebranded NextGen America ran one of its most aggressive grassroots efforts to date in Virginia. In an effort to both broaden our electorate and ensure every Virginian could make their voice heard, NextGen worked hard to build political power in often overlooked communities. These efforts are crucial to Democrats' success up and down the ballot.

With so much at stake in this election, NextGen America has invested over 3 million dollars, staff time, resources, and energy to ensure that Virginia Democrats are successful on Election Day. With four different programs in Virginia, and over 4,000 GOTV volunteer shifts booked, NextGen America by far has the largest non-candidate campaign presence in the state. And our work won't stop on Election Day—NextGen has built an infrastructure that will allow us to continue working towards a more progressive commonwealth and country through 2018 and beyond.

## **NextGen Rising**

*" . . . Presidential elections are typically high-turnout affairs that fire up college students more than local elections. But this year, third-party groups like NextGen are engaging students en masse." - [The Roanoke Times, November 3, 2017](#)*

Young people are the future, and next year will be the nation's largest eligible voting bloc — but they are often overlooked and under-engaged in non-presidential years. In June, NextGen America launched NextGen Rising — a nationwide campaign to engage and organize thousands of young people in key 2017 and 2018 elections. As a part of that initiative, [NextGen Virginia ran the campus and student vote program for the Virginia Democratic Coordinated Campaign](#) — turning out young voters to elect Democrats up and down the ticket.

With a **2 million dollar spend**, NextGen's **60 paid staff** and over **1,000 volunteers** [focused on registering, motivating, and turning out youth voters both on and off campus](#). This includes programming at **26 colleges** across Virginia, including **five community colleges and four HBCUs**. To ensure the broadest reach to young people possible, NextGen also embarked on an aggressive digital and direct mail program to reach those off-campus by spending [six figures on effective and creative digital ads](#), sending over **700,000 pieces of direct mail**, and close to **300,000 text messages**. NextGen volunteers



knocked on **more than 50,000 doors**, with another **50,000** expected during the final five days of the election.

These efforts contributed to a remarkable number of new voter registrations in just over a two month period. From August 1st through the voter registration deadline on October 16th, NextGen volunteers and staff [had registered 20,169 new voters and had collected 10,454 “Commit-to-Vote cards.”](#)

[In the 2013 Virginia election, 26% of young voters \(18-29\) turned out to vote.](#) This year, NextGen Virginia aims to increase young voter turnout far above 26%. While Gov. McAuliffe [only received 45% support from young voters in 2013](#), NextGen’s work will enable Ralph Northam, Justin Fairfax, and Mark Herring to receive over 50% support from that youngest cohort.

On Election Day, NextGen Virginia will track turnout in key youth-dense precincts at [nextgenamerica.org/turnout](http://nextgenamerica.org/turnout).

## **Immigrant Rights Program**

*“The \$1 million will help advocates turn out the vote in immigrant communities through mailers, door-knocking and social media campaigns that will target Fairfax and Prince William counties, focusing on the races for governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general.” -[The Washington Post, September 12, 2017](#)*

From early on, Republican Ed Gillespie and many VA House of Delegate candidates followed Donald Trump’s playbook by [vilifying the immigrant community and using race-baiting campaign tactics](#). To counter these attacks, NextGen America launched a partnership with Center for Community Change Action (CCCA), CASA in Action (CASAiA) and America’s Voice (AV) to mobilize and engage people of color, with a focus on Latinos and immigrants, in Northern Virginia.

With a **1.2 million dollar spend**, NextGen’s joint immigrant rights program sought to not only turn out immigrant communities to vote, but to act as a counter to the GOP’s racist attacks by showcasing Virginia immigrants as key members of our society. Through the program, volunteers are knocking on **over 90,000 doors**, making **15,000 calls**, and sending **thousands of text messages**.

The program also worked to counter the GOP’s racist narrative around Latinos and immigrants by launching a multitude of bilingual video and static digital ads on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Google ads, reaching over 750,000 people. To build a positive narrative around the contributions and power of the immigrant community, the program has elevated local voices, featured in outlets like [Huffington Post](#) and [Blue Virginia](#), and posted on the [Reform Immigration for America Facebook page](#) (with nearly 1 million followers), [CCCA’s blog](#) and [CASA’s blog](#).

## **For Our Future**

*“If you look at what our organization is devoted to, it really is grassroots. It’s very important that their voices be heard. We’re talking here about mobilizing the immigrant community. We’re*



*going to be going door to door with eight unions to talk to people who are sporadic voters. Our goal is to have many people engaged as possible. You don't get any of that from a 15-second TV ad.” Tom Steyer in [Politico, September 28, 2017](#)*

Now more than ever, the rights of working people are under attack. For Our Future, a partnership between organized labor and NextGen America started in 2016 — exists to empower people and community based-organizations to drive real change and advance issues important to working communities. In Virginia, For Our Future ran a **1.4 million dollar** statewide electoral program to support Democrats up and down the ticket, and to build infrastructure that will stay in the state past 2017.

Virginia For Our Future knocked on over **230,000 doors** with help from community partners. In addition to the voter contact, For Our Future funded and helped partner organization New Virginia Majority execute a **six-figure radio campaign** aimed at reaching African-American voters in Tidewater, Richmond and Northern Virginia. For Our Future also sent direct mail to **African American households**, and sponsored newspaper ads in African American and Latino weekly newspapers.

### **Give Green in the States**

*“The campaign from NextGen America is part of an effort to organize young voters to elect Northam and help other Democrats to victory in the state legislature.” -[The Hill, August 22, 2017](#)*

We need to build a progressive coalition from the local level up, and that’s why NextGen America not only invested in the top of the ticket with Dr. Ralph Northam, but worked hard to ensure that progressive candidates in state legislature races had the resources they needed to get their message out to voters. 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.

Through this program, NextGen was proud to support Dr. Ralph Northam, Justin Fairfax, and Mark Herring for statewide office, as well as 7 House of Delegate candidates: Jennifer Carroll Foy, Chris Hurst, Brent Finnegan, Kathy Tran, David Reid, Hala Ayala, and Schuyler VanValkenburg.