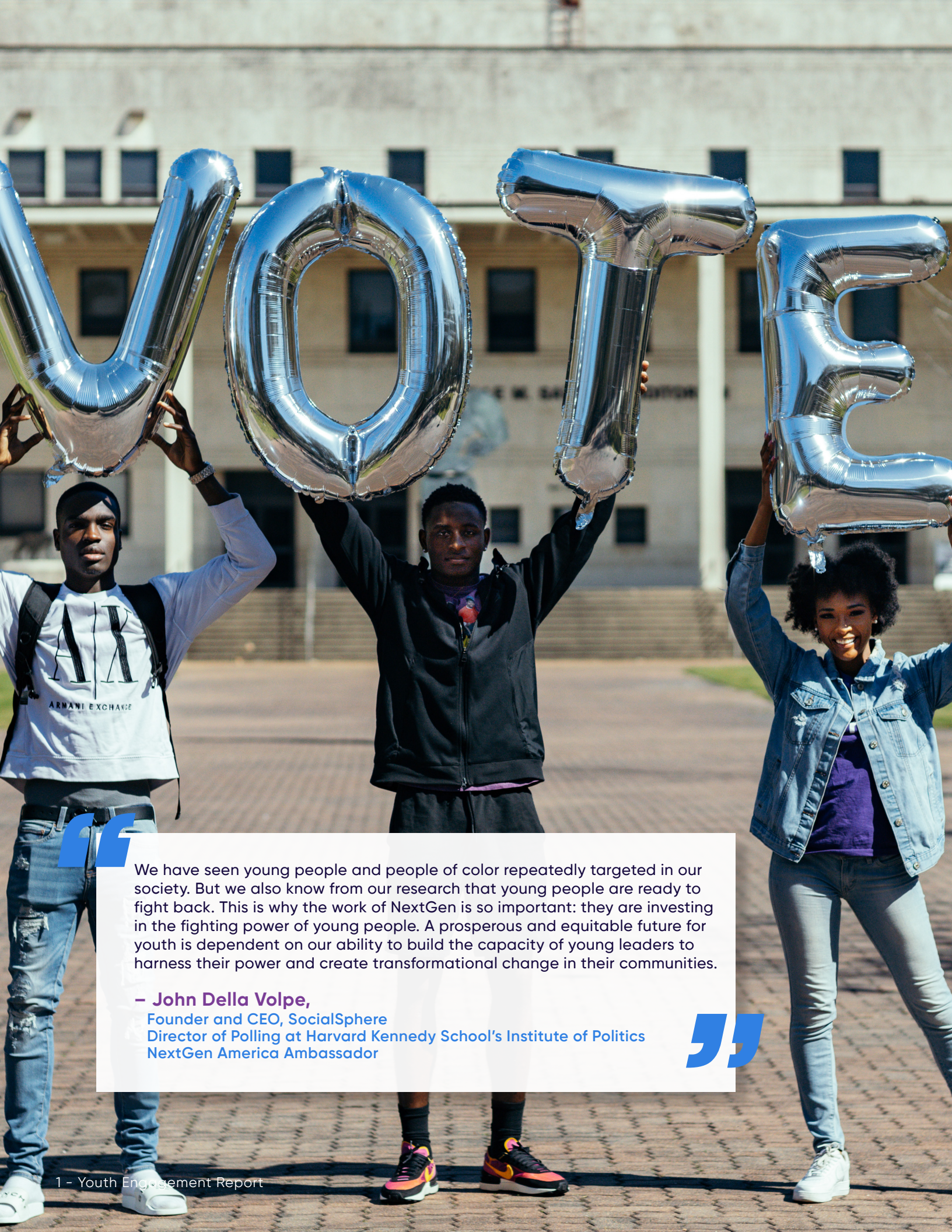


2022

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT REPORT

nextgen
education fund

nextgen
america



➤ Thank You to Our Funders

NextGen was founded on the idea that a new American generation of youth holds the courage and imagination needed to tackle the climate crisis. A decade later, NextGen America has grown to become a force not only in the fight for climate justice, but the leading organization in empowering young people to elevate their voices and voting power to tackle racial, gender, and economic injustice.

And the youth demographic itself is growing too: young people will soon be the largest generational bloc in the country—currently with 70 million 18-35 year olds in their cohort. And this cohort is a force to be reckoned with: Just in the course of the last year alone, they have delivered clear messages to Americans about where they stand on abortion, climate action, and voting rights.

As we embark on our ten-year anniversary, it is clear that NextGen has elevated the power of youth across the country. We made youth turnout THE story of the 2022 midterms, even when the rest of the country discounted the younger generation. Through our year-round, layered engagement with young people, we knew young people would be ready to make their voices heard across this country. This feat is made all the more impressive as the world continues to deal with the effects of a global pandemic that shut down many avenues of traditional organizing.

But none of this would be possible without your support. We know youth infrastructure is historically under-resourced, underfunded, and underestimated. But **it is your belief in the youth vote that helped to propel this year’s incredible shift in the narrative and in our nation.**

Thank you for your support,

Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez
President, NextGen Education Fund & NextGen America



“ We have seen young people and people of color repeatedly targeted in our society. But we also know from our research that young people are ready to fight back. This is why the work of NextGen is so important: they are investing in the fighting power of young people. A prosperous and equitable future for youth is dependent on our ability to build the capacity of young leaders to harness their power and create transformational change in their communities.

– **John Della Volpe,**
Founder and CEO, SocialSphere
Director of Polling at Harvard Kennedy School’s Institute of Politics
NextGen America Ambassador

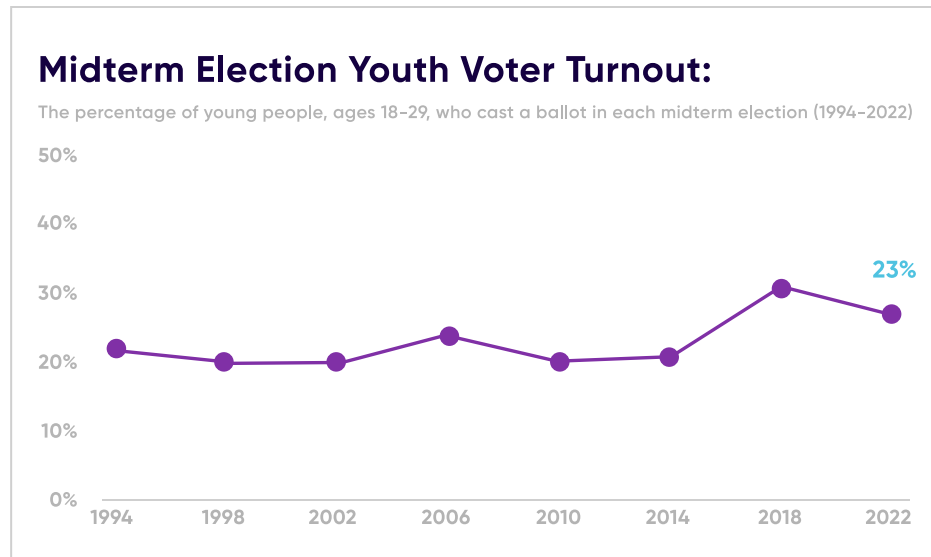


Young People Engaged in 2022

In 2022, uncertainty over youth turnout was even more widespread than usual. **Young voters were discounted in mainstream media**, most pundits did not believe they were going to turn out. But NextGen continued to push ahead, engaging young people in the field, via texts, calls, social media, and more, to participate because **we knew they have proven they will show up. And young people did.**

Second highest youth voter turnout in a midterm in the last 30 years.

Youth are increasing their electoral participation, leading movements, and making their voices heard on key issues that affect their communities. Our partners at CIRCLE estimate that 23% of youth (ages 18-29) cast a ballot in 2022, making this election the second-highest youth voter turnout in a midterm election in almost three decades. They also estimate that youth turnout was even higher in some key states.



Source: Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)

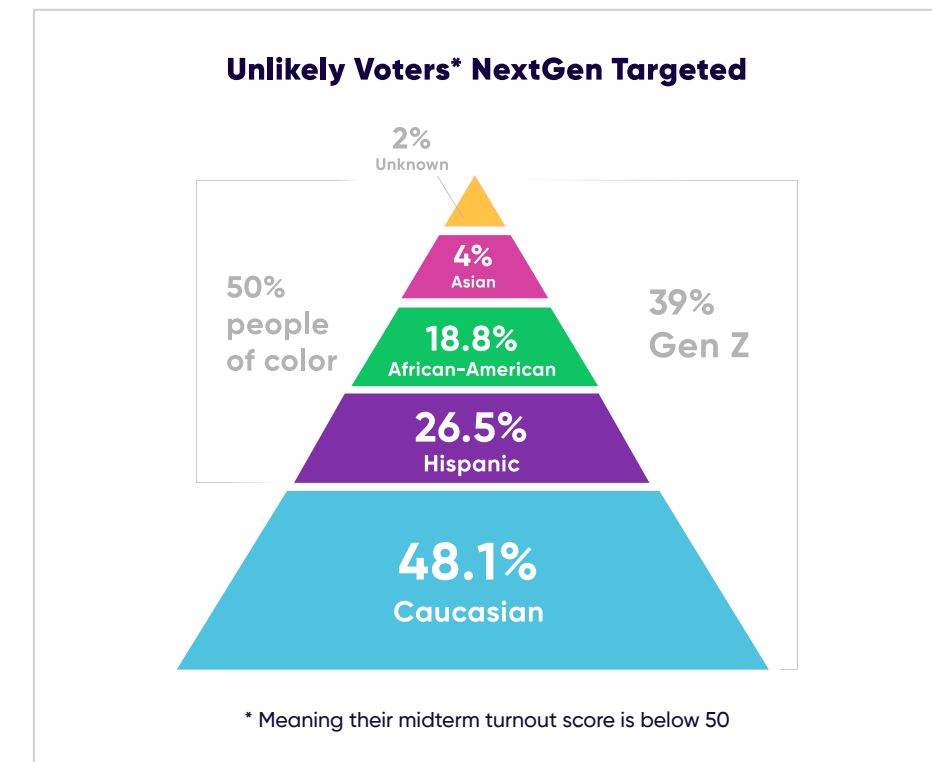
The NextGen Difference

Young people as a whole nationally turned out, but in NextGen communities, they *really* turned out. **In our 8 key states, 4.0 million of the young voters NextGen reached out to cast a ballot, accounting for 72% of all the young voters in these states.** This is because of NextGen's uniquely holistic, multi-layered approach to young people anywhere and everywhere they are.

Young voters we targeted turned out at higher rates than expected.

NextGen didn't just talk to all young people at random. Instead, we purposefully segmented our universe and delivered each segment the messages most likely to mobilize them to vote based on comprehensive polling and focus groups. **1.1 million** of our universe were **part of the NextGen America Contacts list**, meaning NextGen got them to pledge to vote, register to vote, or consistently engage with our calls, text messages, and online outreach.

We also intentionally target voters without vote history – those who typically are not targeted by other organizations and tend to be Gen Z and/or people of color. These 6.0 million are youth who data modeling considers low propensity and less likely to turn out,* but who **NextGen considers high-opportunity.** Of those 2022 lower-propensity voters, **we helped 1.2 million vote. They are largely POC and Gen Z:**

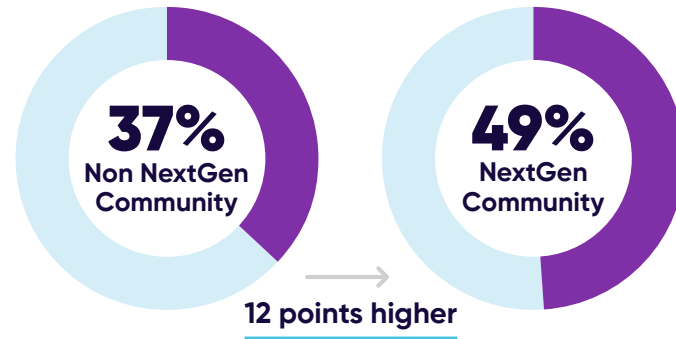


Source: Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)



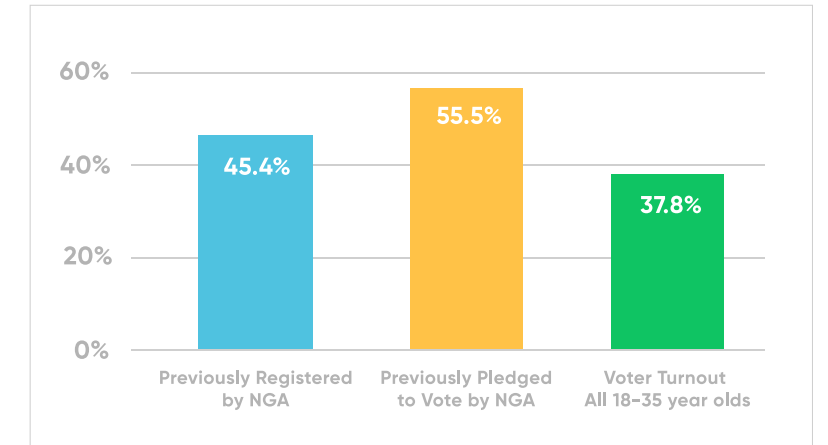
Young voters in the NextGen Community turned out at higher rates than folks not in the NextGen Community.

We consider voters in the NextGen Community to be those in our universe who we have pledged or registered to vote, or who have volunteered or done three or more actions with us. They are young voters who have taken extra initiative (beyond mere contact) to become involved in progressive politics.

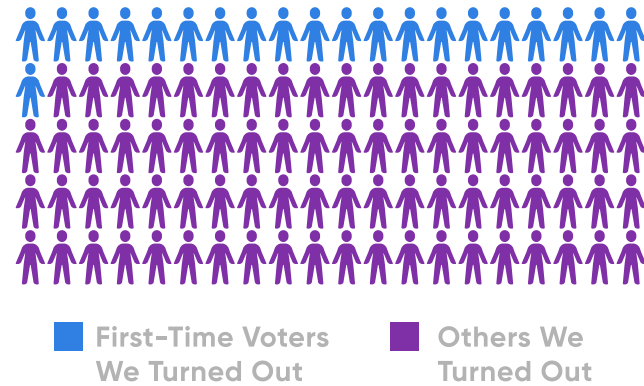


We are building a generation of lifelong voters.

Young voters who were first registered or pledged to vote by NextGen in previous election cycles voted in 2022 at higher rates than their peers. This proves what we have long understood: the impact of NextGen's organizing lasts years after our first interaction.



Over 4 million young voters we targeted turned out and voted. Of those 4 million voters, over 570,000 (21%) were first-time voters.



NextGen's holistic approach to mobilizing young voters has yielded higher turnout in the states we have worked in.

Across the eight key states we worked during the 2022 cycle, NextGen turned out young voters at an average rate of 13 points higher than those young voters we did not contact.

* In New Hampshire, voters we contacted turned out just below those we did not contact due to a combination of factors, which include age modeling on the voter file and race competitiveness. Additionally, New Hampshire's youth population turns out at higher numbers than many states across the country. In this state, we make extra effort to target and turn out lower-propensity, unlikely voters.

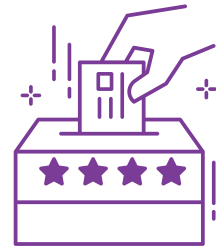
State-by-State Turnout for NGA Contacts

State	NGA Contacts	Non-NGA Contacts	Difference
AZ	48%	33%	+15 pp
MI	58%	42%	+16 pp
NC	42%	32%	+10 pp
NH*	52%	54%	-2 pp
NV	40%	28%	+12 pp
PA	54%	48%	+6 pp
TX	55%	33%	+22 pp
WI	62%	52%	+10 pp
Total	50%	37%	+13 pp



Innovative and Creative Strategies to Activate Youth

We took the most effective messages that were tested and developed through our comprehensive polling and used them through all our programming. Despite a highly pessimistic news cycle, NextGen rallied youth around having their voices heard on their top issues through innovative field and distributed organizing, a massive volunteer program, and effective messaging.



4,001,519
of target audience who voted

Field Programming

We began 2022 with the reality of coexisting with Covid-19, so we continued to organize online while transitioning back into the field. We did this through hosting launch events, leveraging key moments at college campuses such as welcome weeks, and maintaining a presence at culture and music festivals. Each event included giveaways as a creative way to bring youth into our network.



Creative Field Activations: Rose Petal Action

We partnered with Jolt in Texas to descend on the Capitol and drop over 250,000 rose petals from the top of the rotunda to remind lawmakers of the over 250,000 young people of color who turn 18 and are eligible to vote every year in Texas.



Creative Field Activations: Speed Dating for Democracy

On National Voter Registration Day, we hosted speed dating events with our college athlete influencers in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Texas.

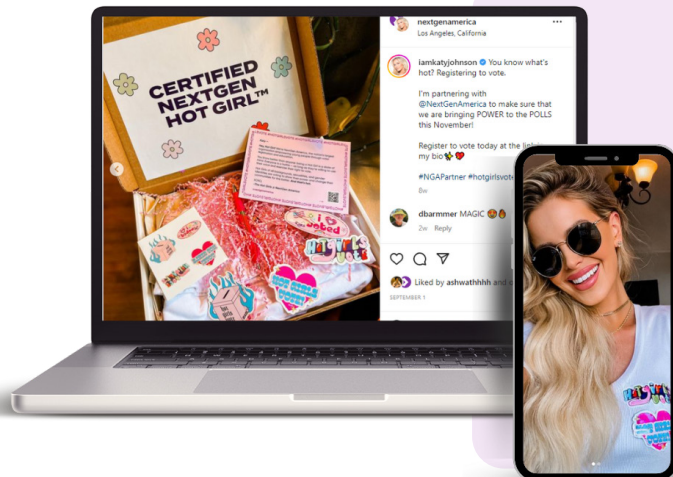
Partnerships in NextGen's athlete influencer program are capitalizing on the recent NIL rules, which allow athletes to profit on their name, image, and likeness. This type of partnership is ground-breaking and only the second-ever use of NIL to support civic engagement. It is a new frontier for athletes to profit off their public personas and marks a historic shift in the way sports and voting coincide.

Participants engaged with potential matches on issues that resonated with them – helping them make good connections and become civically engaged ahead of the midterm elections.



Creative Field Activations: Hot Girls Vote Campaign

We launched Hot Girls Vote, an innovative voter registration campaign. Everyone can be a certified NextGen "Hot Girl" – as long as they're ready and willing to use their voice and their vote. The campaign educated young people and celebrated the power of their vote.



On-Campus Advertising

We strive to be everywhere students are, including their walks to class and on their campus transit systems. To raise awareness about all things voting, we placed billboard and digital ads across campuses and in campus-owned news that notified people of key dates and the mechanics of voting.



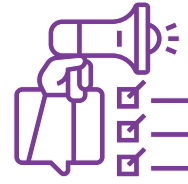
Engaging Youth Everywhere: NextGen Online



300

Macro Influencers
Partnered with

* (Macro = 36,000+ Followers)



181 Million+

Total Influencer Combined
Potential Audience

*More than Double the
Original Goal of 75 Million



60%

Creators
of Color



10.3%

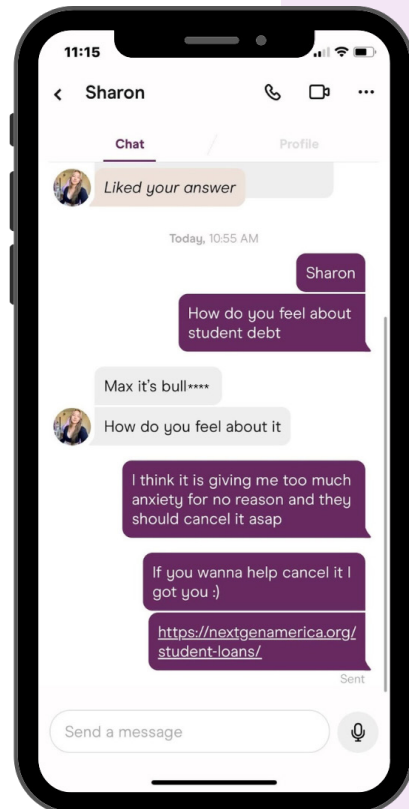
Overall Engagement Rate

* More than Double the
Average for Instagram



14.8 Million

Total People
Reached



A Mighty Distributed Program

Our base of over **28,000** volunteers called and texted year round. Here are some highlights from the team:

- ✔ Organizing on dating apps and social media
- ✔ Virtual rallies and events through online town halls, drag shows and more
- ✔ Hosted a launch call of nearly 200 volunteers for National Voter Registration Day and contacted **168,562** young people on National Voter Registration Day
- ✔ Leveraged key months such as AAPI Heritage Month, where we hosted our first influencer distributed event, a relational organizing workshop with influencer Drew Afualo (7m followers on TikTok)

Social Media Influencer Program

Our intentional investment into our influencer program, as part of our holistic strategy, helped shape new standards for content creation and collaborations. NextGen's influencer program launched 12 campaigns to release 700+ pieces of content that built the blueprint for the future of civic engagement for a digital generation.

Our and others' research shows that young people get the majority of their information through social media platforms. However, there is not yet any research on the effectiveness of using influencers to mobilize young people to vote. We have done an experiment to fill this research gap. Later this year, we will release the results of our **Influencer Vote Impact Study** to help the broader youth space determine if influencers are an effective means of mobilizing young people to vote.



Digital Ads

Our 2022 campaign leveraged social pressure and "make a plan" messaging with broader targeting to mobilize young people of color to vote. Our audiences saw our ad an estimated average of 7 times per week in the final weeks of the election. Our video ads were extremely effective, meaning that young people watched the ads from beginning to end versus only watching a snippet of the ads.



Special Delivery: Snail Mail from NextGen

The data is clear: “snail mail” is an effective way to get young people to register and vote. And because getting mail as a young person is rare, studies show they pay attention when they get it.

Our **voter registration mail** (new voter registration as well as registering voters to vote by mail), run in partnership with the Voter Participation Center, targeted voters in the 8 key states where we worked.

We sent out **1,041,813 voter registration applications** over multiple waves and followed up many of these applications with a phone call or text to assist the process and encourage people to register early.

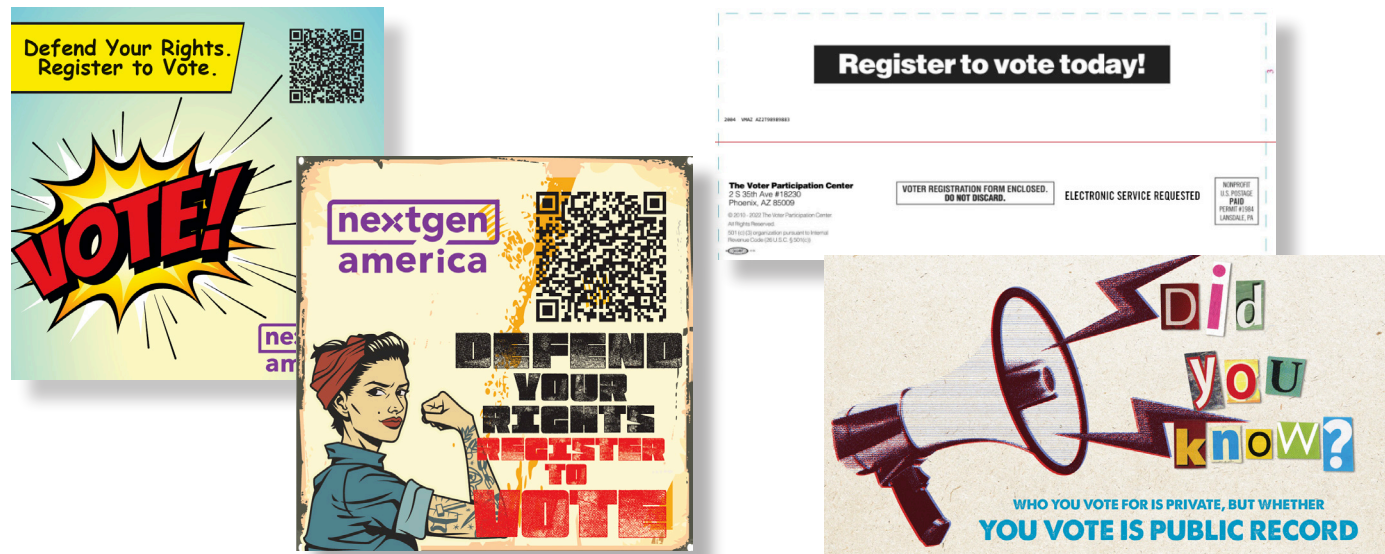
Our **persuasion and GOTV mail** program was focused on the 6 most vulnerable states and segmented by audience (as determined by polling and focus groups), with different audiences receiving different messages.



1,041,813
voter registration
applications sent

GOTV Mail

- While education was always going to be part of our 2022 strategy, it became increasingly relevant in every state we work in due to the success we had in 2020 with many states changing their VBM laws due to Covid-19. We emphasized voting by mail and early voting, resulting in record-setting turnout levels.



Connecting with Young People and Elevating Their Voices

NextGen was central to shaping the narrative in research and national media that engaging young voters is key to our democracy.

Groundbreaking Research

- ✓ Youth segmentation based on gender, race, age, education level, and parental status
 - 18-35 year olds have not been segmented with this level of detail before, but we know it's necessary to reach young people where they are
- ✓ Comprehensive analysis into young voters' attitudes, preferences, and motivations around voting, values, and worldviews through in-depth focus groups, surveys, and rigorous testing of creative content
- ✓ Results informed all our direct communications to youth in 2022, allowing us to hone in on messaging most likely to persuade every segment of youth to vote

National and Local Press



**Secured over
500 press hits**
An 80% increase from
the 2018 midterms



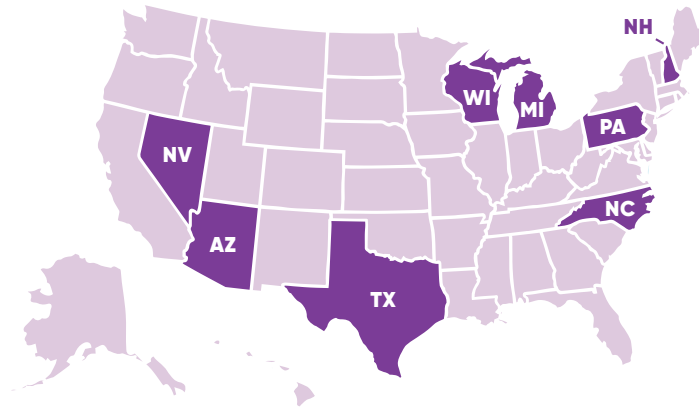
**Total Press Ad
Equivalency of
\$46.31 Million**

- ✓ Uplifted the voices of young people in the media on issues that matter to them such as abortion rights, the economy, and climate change
- ✓ Placed an emphasis on featuring young people of color and securing Spanish-language coverage
- ✓ Harnessed relationships with reporters to secure coverage of our field work and the youth vote in the news and on popular podcasts like Pod Save America



NextGen By the Numbers

We reached out to 1 in every 6 young voters nationwide. NextGen ran our largest midterm program ever in 8 key states. In each of these states, the young people in NextGen’s community (people we registered, pledged to vote, and had successful calls or text conversations) turned out at much higher rates than other young voters.



	Registered to Vote	Pledged to Vote	Volunteer Hours Completed	Campuses Reached	Community Colleges Reached	Total on the Ground Staff	Number of Youth Targeted	Calls Made	Texts Sent	Mail Sent	Influencer Partnerships Maintained
AZ	20,021	7,788	1,624	18	10	22	1,481,138	477,762	3,119,246	1,595,902	16
MI	2,007	9,619	3,514	18	7	19	2,365,034	9,621	2,801,325	1,286,245	17
NC	14,970	10,335	2,248	37	1	22	2,371,596	46,634	3,580,152	135,622	34
NH	-	3,030	452	14	5	6	132,366	11,829	406,001	149,641	5
NV	2,291	5,603	714	6	3	9	691,148	285,585	1,765,558	883,073	16
PA	8,203	18,120	4,390	93	6	34	2,517,394	187,191	6,221,560	2,051,078	31
TX	28,897	25,466	4,164	44	8	35	5,665,291	12,606	3,418,922	378,686	42
WI	1,802	8,613	1,466	15	2	14	681,655	63,464	1,418,862	445,018	8
*Other/ National	42	2,610	63,206	-	-	56	-	12,072	285,613	-	132
Total	78,233	91,184	81,778	245	42	217	15,905,622	1,106,764	23,017,239	6,925,265	301

*Captures efforts made into our battleground states by volunteers, partners, and staff outside of AZ, MI, NC, NH, NV, PA, TX, or WI.

Top Lessons from 2022

In-person field work needs to be done early and often every cycle, even amidst the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

In the early part of this cycle, through the spring of 2021 and 2022, many campuses were still taking precautions for Covid, hampering our in-person work and our ability to successfully organize year round. This was exacerbated by late funding, which hampered our ability to hire early in order to hit our ambitious voter registration goals. We plan to resume voter registration in person and through organizing on college campuses and in the community earlier in the cycle. We know this is critical for future success: our field program allows us to capture contact information we would not otherwise have, and our data shows that voter registration paired with a phone call has a significant impact on voter turnout.

It takes year-round, holistic, and non-traditional programming to build lifelong voters.

We know the key to reaching youth lies in meeting them where they are year round and through non-traditional channels. Yet many funders are still focused on traditional channels. For example, billions of dollars flowed from funders in 2021 and 2022 into traditional television ads. But studies show this funding will not reach young people, since they spend their time online and on social media – not on cable television. Funding must go to holistic and flexible programming such as NextGen's.

We must expand our outreach to young Black and Brown men.

We did targeted messaging and outreach to these voters in 2022, but we need to expand our programming to more specifically engage young men of color in ways that appeal to them. This type of programming can be costly, but is necessary to strengthen our democracy.

What's Next?

Our overarching goal for 2023 and 2024 is to **expand young people's knowledge and ensure they are participating in our democracy.** We know that we cannot be transactional in our interactions with young people. The more we engage them, the more likely they are to participate in our democracy. We plan to use this year to keep in contact with young people to build their habits of participation. With this in mind, we will continue to empower young people to strengthen our democracy and work tirelessly to be the voice and home for young people in the country. **Our goals this cycle include:**



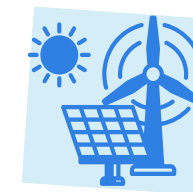
Developing young leaders through the NextGen Leaders Lab
a hub for civic engagement, leadership development, & training



Providing increased civics & issues education
opportunities on top advocacy issues



Fostering our NextGen Alumni Network
to continue developing and connecting the young leaders we trained who go on to work in nonprofit development, legal spaces, at the White House, and run for office at all levels of government



Continuing to educate & engage young people around climate,
through ensuring that we are amplifying young voices in the implementation of the IRA



Deepening our engagement with BIPOC communities so that they have a seat at the table to help shape policies and a government that represents and reflects their interests

Youth Voter Highlights

Meet Kirti

Kirti, she/her, is a 19-year-old student at Villanova University in Pennsylvania. Our field organizer initially approached her on campus and quickly learned that while Kirti was excited to discuss her passion for reproductive rights as a young woman of color, she was not registered to vote. Our organizer immediately helped Kirti register to vote.

NextGen's engagement with Kirti had a snowball effect: Our organizer had gotten Kirti so excited about voting that she wanted to help out in that moment to get others engaged. A group of three other students walked by, hesitant about registering. They said they weren't interested and didn't see a need.

Armed with new information from our field organizer, Kirti immediately jumped in along with our organizer to talk to them about the issues most important to them. This conversation and our organizer's strategic use of peer-to-peer connections convinced the students that they also needed to register to vote and make their voices heard on the issues most important to them. All four left our table excited about being able to vote for the first time. What initially started as an engagement of one student about voting quickly became an opportunity for NextGen to channel the passions of four young students into action and empower them to become leaders on their campus. This is a small glimpse into the work NextGen is perfectly positioned for – building leaders through civic engagement.



Meet Juan

Juan, he/him, is an 18-year-old student at the University of Houston and a first-time voter who we registered to vote at our Speed Dating for Democracy event. He believes that it is essential to vote as a young person in order to bring positive change to the community around us. Juan told us that it is only by voicing opinions through voting that we can contribute to and change the world. He told our organizer, "Especially for people with the privilege and the right to vote, we have to use our voice to speak up and also uplift other voices that may not have that right." We are proud to mobilize youth like Juan each and every day to stand up for what they believe in.



Meet Hailey

Hailey, she/her, is a 21-year-old gas station worker who was born and raised in Greentown, Pennsylvania. She got introduced to our work through one of our field organizers, taking our mission to organize anywhere and everywhere very seriously. While our organizer was waiting in line to get gas, he engaged her in a conversation about voting. When originally asked if she would be voting, she revealed that she didn't see the value or how her voice could really make an impact. Our organizer opened up a conversation with her, asking, "Do you have opinions? Is people telling you what matters ok with you?" to which Hailey responded, "Absolutely not." Our organizer helped Hailey register to vote, and Hailey shared more about issues that were important to her like abortion access. She shared, "It is a gut punch, and I feel outraged that an entity had that much power over us and can tell us what to do." She was excited to vote for the first time in 2022.





For questions or ideas, please contact
Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez, President
at cristina.tzintzun@nextgenamerica.org or
Victoria Yang Souza, Vice President of Development
at victoria.yang@nextgenamerica.org.



This program is run by NextGen Climate Action, a section 501(c)(4) organization, and partially funded by NextGen Education Fund, a section 501(c)(3) organization. All programming described is non-partisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote activity permissible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

To get involved, visit our website
nextgenamerica.org.

