



SISTER DISTRICT SUMMIT 2023

SISTER DISTRICT ACTION NETWORK UPDATE

Gaby Goldstein, Co-Founder
Bela Tringali, Program Manager



SISTER DISTRICT
PROJECT



Action
Network



NEW MEDIA VENTURES

ActBlue

EMERGE



SISTER DISTRICT ACTION NETWORK

- 01 State Bridges
- 02 Legislator Support
- 03 Research
- 04 Narrative Change



SISTER DISTRICT
PROJECT

STATE BRIDGES PROGRAM

The State Bridges Program activates Sister District volunteers across the country to fundraise for organizations leading year-round power-building work in critical states.





STATE BRIDGES

“One of the best things about being a Sister District partner is networking. There are not enough people that know about our work and the impact that we make. Networking gives us the ability to connect with individuals from across the states to educate them on North Carolina. The more people understand NC and our work the more they can understand how we are all connected. When people recognize this, we can create change.”

— Melvin Montford, Executive Director, North Carolina A. Philip Randolph Education Fund

HISTORICAL STATS

PARTNERS: **16**

STATES: **10**

- AZ, FL, GA, MI, NC, NV, PA, TX, VA, WI

TOTAL RAISED: **\$440,633**

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS: **13,800**

STATE BRIDGES OVER THE YEARS

2021

10 PARTNERS IN 9 STATES
9 VIRTUAL FUNDRAISERS
\$168,031 RAISED



2022

12 PARTNERS IN 6 STATES
6 VIRTUAL FUNDRAISERS
\$212,069 RAISED



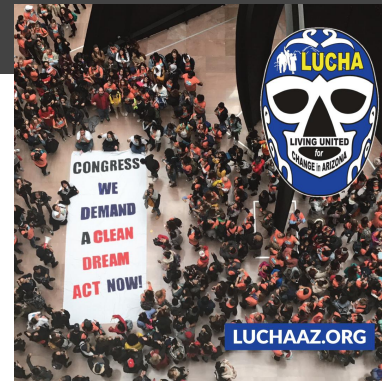
2023

8 PARTNERS IN 5 STATES
5 VIRTUAL FUNDRAISERS
\$60,531 RAISED TO DATE

2023 STATE BRIDGES PARTNERS

VIRGINIA
WISCONSIN
PENNSYLVANIA
NEVADA
ARIZONA

New Virginia Majority
Citizen Action of Wisconsin & WISDOM
PA Stands Up & Pennsylvania United
One APIA Nevada
Living United for Action in Arizona (LUCHA) & Rural Arizona
Action (RAZA)





LEGISLATOR SUPPORT PROGRAMS

1. Purple District Network
2. State Power Table



LEGISLATOR SUPPORT

Purple District Network

Goal: equip progressive frontliners with the skills and networks they need to succeed in advancing progressive policy.

3 COHORTS

BLUE TRIFECTA

RED TRIFECTA

DIVIDED GOVERNMENT



PURPLE DISTRICT NETWORK

- Member-driven and member led convenings
- Topics include:
 - Constituent services programs
 - Governing from the minority
 - Policy transfer (blue trifecta)



PURPLE DISTRICT NETWORK

Quotes from PDN Members:

- *“Being able to chat openly with other members in similar situations gave me tangible good ideas that I was able to put into practice in real time in my district.”*
- *“It's so great to know that we're not alone out there. I loved getting to hear from people in other states who are dealing with similar issues.”*

LEGISLATOR SUPPORT: STATE POWER TABLE

MISSION: to convene national organizations engaged in progressive state legislator support to:

1. Increase collective impact by identifying and pursuing opportunities to streamline organizational efforts through collaboration and coordination
2. Increase visibility about progressive state legislators, policy and issues
3. Drive collective narrative around the importance of state legislators, policy and issues

CO-CONVENORS:

Sister District
State Innovation Exchange
Pipeline Fund

**MEMBER
ORGANIZATIONS: 12**



STATE POWER TABLE: IN PERSON CONVENING

June 2022: Preparing State Legislators for *Dobbs*

- Legal analysis of the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision
- Abortion-forward messaging and polling research
- Discussion of partner initiatives for state legislators and legislator needs

Speakers:

- Gretchen Borchelt, VP for Reproductive Rights and Health at National Women's Law Center
- Jennifer Driver, Senior Director of Reproductive Rights at State Innovation Exchange
- Tresa Udem, Partner and co-founder of PerryUndem

RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Research Program produces **publicly available, high-quality research**.

Since 2018, the research program has conducted and/or published **41** research studies and analyses.



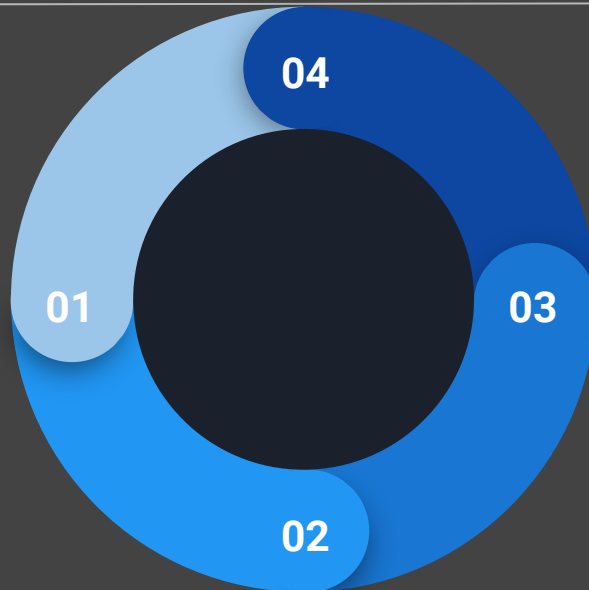
TYPES OF RESEARCH

RCTs/Experiments

Original research projects that test the efficacy of mobilization and registration tactics

Surveys/ Non-experimental

Surveys, pseudo-experiments, and A/B tests



Message Testing

Testing different types of messaging, including values-matched, norm activation, and gratitude

Secondary Research

Using existing data to investigate important trends that shed light on what we can expect the electorate to do



SISTER DISTRICT
PROJECT



ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2022

With the help of Sister District volunteers, the Research Program had another great year!



Op-eds published



RCTs/experiments
conducted



Studies publicly
reported



2022 Expy Award from
Analyst Institute



SISTER DISTRICT
PROJECT

SECONDARY RESEARCH

Using a number of trusted sources, we collect archival data that can be used to shed light on the “big questions,” including electoral trends

United States[®]
Census
Bureau



BALLOTPEDIA
The Encyclopedia of American Politics

Why secondary data?

1. The data reflects real voter behavior
2. Shed light on disparities between demographic groups or political parties
3. Experiments are limited in scope, as are the outcomes they can measure
4. Trends tend to emerge over several years - the past informs the present

SECONDARY RESEARCH: BALLOT ROLL-OFF

- Ballot Roll-Off: Voting at the top of the ticket, but not all the way down
- VA 2021:
 - Terry McAuliffe received **60,000-plus more** votes than Dems running for state legislature
 - Glenn Youngkin received **2,973 fewer** votes than Republican state legislative candidates.
 - Dems lost the House by **733 votes**
- 2012 to 2020:
 - 10 battleground states: Democrats in contested state legislative races experienced ballot roll-off almost **80%** of the time.
 - Republicans in contested state legislative races only experienced roll-off **37.25%** of the time.

SECONDARY RESEARCH: BALLOT ROLL-OFF



Opinion

Political Op-Eds

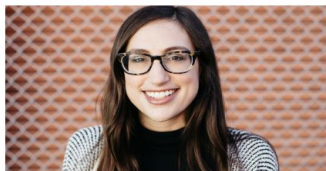
Social Commentary

(CNN) — The president's party typically loses ground in midterm elections. In two weeks, we'll find out if this year will be an exception. Propelled by widespread dissatisfaction over Roe v. Wade's reversal and concern about some Republicans' efforts to erode democracy, Democrats appeared to have momentum a few weeks ago. The latest polling may suggest otherwise.



Gabby Goldstein

But even if Democrats buck historical trends and hold onto Congress, there is another cause for concern on the left: Democrats have a "roll-off" problem. We know that some people roll off their ballots, voting for candidates higher on the ballot but not for down-ballot offices such as the state legislature. But how common is ballot roll-off, and do both parties experience it equally?



Mallory Roman

To answer these questions, we compared the differences between the number of votes each major party's presidential, gubernatorial or US Senate candidate ("up-ballot" candidates) and their state legislative party mates ("down-ballot" candidates) received in even-year elections between 2012 and 2020 in 10 battleground states.

The findings from the recent report of our organization, Sister District, were staggering: Democratic voters appear to roll off at much higher rates than Republican voters. The results echoed our past findings.

Down-ballot Democrats received fewer votes than up-ballot candidates in their own party 93.08% of the time. Down-ballot roll-off was less severe for down-ballot Republican state legislative candidates, who received fewer votes than up-ballot candidates 75.47% of the time. While both parties suffered from down-ballot roll-off, Democrats experienced it more often.

NARRATIVE CHANGE: THE POWER & PROMISE OF STATES

- Narrative Change

- Goals

- Increase understanding among progressive community about the power and promise of states
 - Create habitual downballot Dem voters (decrease roll-off)

- Three prongs

- Academia - thought leadership
 - General public - traditional media, new media
 - Message testing / voters

NARRATIVE CHANGE: THE POWER & PROMISE OF STATES

- Progressives generationally overinvested in federal power
- Structures follow ideas
 - We need strong ideological base to support permanent progressive state infrastructure
- Progressives have little imagination re: power + promise of states
- Conception of state power baked directly into conservative ideology; progressives have negative conception of state power
- There is a new, post-neoliberal progressive worldview emerging
- Tremendous opportunity to share the power and promise of states



NARRATIVE CHANGE: THE POWER & PROMISE OF STATES

State Power Series: Crooked Media / Vote Save America

- 3 virtual events in 2022 with over 18,000 views
- Panelists included: Erin Ryan (Hysteria), Imani Gandy (Rewire), Leah Litman (Strict Scrutiny), Dahlia Lithwick (Slate, Amicus), Malcolm Kenyatta (PA House Representative), Abdul El-Sayed (America Dissected), Dave Daley (Ratf**cked), Jessica Post (DLCC)

Thought Leadership

- Op eds in national publications including The Guardian, Washington Post, CNN, Salon, Democracy Docket

New Initiatives

- Teen Vogue: The Historic Firsts Series uplifts inspiring, historic firsts among state legislators, with a focus on women, people of color, young folks, LGBTQIA+ folks
- Roosevelt Institute: White paper(s) envisioning state power as a critical part of post-neoliberal progressivism



THANK YOU!