



AIRLIFT  
2020 REPORT TO DONORS: PART TWO

## Lifting up the Midwest.

In this second report to the Airlift community since the November election, we are focusing on three Midwestern states that changed the path to the White House: Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. Airlift began funding grassroots work in these states early in 2018. As an Airlift donor you helped turn back a red tide in 2018 and elect Biden in 2020. The work, however, is just beginning and the road is steep.

# MI

“ We are creating a culture of new organizers - giving them the language to look at their lives and understand how powerful they are. And then how to combine that vision with getting from A to B. We are starting to see our field teams training their own people to run meetings and come up with messaging. 90% of our messaging comes from our base. ”

— Rai La Nier, Wayne County Director, MI Liberation

## WHAT HAPPENED IN MICHIGAN?

### UP BALLOT:

Joseph Biden wins by 154,000 votes

Gary Peters wins by 92,000 votes

Rashida Tlaib wins by 170,000 votes

Supreme Court flips to Democratic control

Constitutional amendment requires search warrant to access phone or computer data

### DOWN BALLOT:

Progressive DAs elected in Oakland and Washtenaw Counties.

Progressive candidate who lost in Detroit (Wayne County) appointed Chief Assistant Prosecutor in Washtenaw County.

New package of criminal justice reforms championed by our groups, enacted by state legislature and signed by Gov. Whitmer

Won a second progressive seat on the Kalamazoo school board



## HOW IT HAPPENED

**Detroit Action** made a million phone calls and mobilized 20,000 first time voters. When Republicans tried to steal the vote they converged on the Wayne County Board of Electors waging a mighty protest that convinced the 2 Republicans to certify Biden. Then they organized car caravans to Lansing to urge the State Board of Electors to follow suit.

**Michigan Liberation** fights all year long for criminal justice reform which brings thousands of disenfranchised voters into the political process. They created a pioneering *Judge the Judges* campaign which helped flip the state Supreme Court. They pushed to empty jails of inmates in danger of contracting COVID and they got international attention fighting to free a middle school student who was incarcerated for not doing her homework.

## MICHIGAN FUNDING

2019-20 Airlift funding: **\$170,000**

W I



“ We work with high schoolers who are 13 and 14. We know that if we engage them and unlock civics for them and talk to them about how they can impact decisions at the local level – like showing them how we got the Milwaukee Board of Education to replace police in schools with nurses and social workers – that is how you create the next wave of young organizers you’re going to see in this country. ”

— Dakota Hall, Executive Director, LIT Wisconsin

# WHAT HAPPENED IN WISCONSIN?

## UP BALLOT:

Biden wins Wisconsin by 21,000 votes

Wisconsin Supreme Court seat flips to Democratic control

## DOWN BALLOT:

Milwaukee Public Schools end contract with Milwaukee Police, becoming one of the first in the country to set a blueprint for police-free schools

In a major victory for public education 78% of voters approve \$87 million hike in funding for Milwaukee Public Schools over 4 years

# HOW IT HAPPENED

**LIT (Leaders Igniting Transformation)** fielded 20 full time staff, 6 artist fellows, 18 college fellows, 17 canvassers and 20 interns working in 14 high schools and 9 college campuses. They made 1.28 million calls and sent 2.12 million texts, distributed 10 mail pieces to 250,000+ voters, 75,000 voter guides in English and Spanish, and created ads on 40 city buses and 20 bus shelters that reached 2 million riders.

**BLOC (Black Leaders Organizing Communities)** ramped up from 36 canvassers at the beginning of 2020 to a total of 73 in the months leading up to the election. They made 242,000 calls, sent 651,000 text messages, and dropped literature at 37,000 doors.

# WISCONSIN FUNDING

2019-20 Airlift funding: **\$170,000**



# PA

“ I organize in West Philly. One of the leaders reached out to me about running for committee person, which is like a block captain. As a Latino I felt I didn't deserve it. As a queer person I felt I didn't deserve it. As a high school dropout I felt I didn't deserve it. What canvassing and door knocking taught me is that people just really care about the issues. Now I can see myself running for office. ”

—Sergio Cea, Organizer, Reclaim Philadelphia

## WHAT HAPPENED IN PENNSYLVANIA

### UP BALLOT

Biden wins Pennsylvania by 80,000 votes, a 124,000 vote shift from Trump's win in 2016

### DOWN BALLOT:

Democrats lost ground in the state house and failed to take the senate due to lack of in-person canvassing, high Republican turnout, and the end of straight-ticket voting. However, many PA counties that we lost in 2016 were pulled back to blue, and after the redistricting in 2022 PA will look a lot more like Virginia and less like Ohio.

## HOW IT HAPPENED

**PA Stands Up** ran a statewide program with 5,000 newly active volunteers who made 5.5 million calls and texts and had 335,000 conversations with voters. **OnePA** made 1,300,000 phone calls leading to 48,000 conversations and sent 1.4 million texts leading to 30,000 text conversations.

Our PA groups organized 45+ massive COUNT EVERY VOTE post-election rallies that thwarted attempts by right-wing militias to disrupt the counting of ballots. They also successfully organized against Republican attempts to derail certification of the vote.

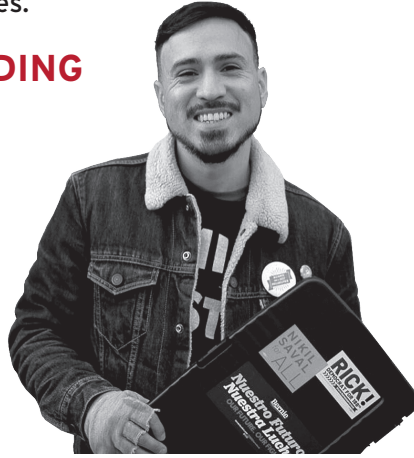
## POST-ELECTION

A deepening progressive contingent is gaining strength in the PA legislature. They are out in front of Gov. Wolf's new budget which sets a policy agenda for reforming taxation, changing the way public education is funded and raising the minimum wage. They are forcing the budget review out in the open, something unheard of in PA.

Massive texting campaign organized by PA Stands Up patched textees to phones in Republican legislators' offices, temporarily ending Republican plans to gerrymander state judicial offices.

## PENNSYLVANIA FUNDING

2019-2020 funding: **\$194,000**



## LOOKING AHEAD

Thank you for your belief in this work and your support in 2019-2020. One more update is coming soon which will review the performance of Airlift groups in FL, NC, TX and CA. We're planning a year-round series of [Deep Dives](#) for our donors. And we're starting *Airlift Justice*, a fund to help elect progressive DAs across the country.

The Airlift Team:

*Danny, Carol, Jenny, Ruth, Anne, Alison, Lizzy, Christopher, Jan, Susan, Larry, Jim, David, Sheila, Roberta, Lorrie, Pat, Rob*

# AIRLIFT

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*Airlift is an all-volunteer project of the Mill Valley Community Action Network, a 501(c)(4) organization. Online donations go directly to the groups we support via ActBlue. Airlift takes recommendations from check donors into account but the IRS requires that we retain full discretion over the distribution of funds. These contributions to Airlift are not tax-deductible.*

# THE POWER OF YOUR MONEY

## 1. AIRLIFT IS A DAVID AND GOLIATH STORY

In the 2019-20 cycle Democrats spent \$9 billion nationally. Grassroots groups turned hundreds of thousands of non-voters into voters and brought home NV, WI, MI, PA, AZ and GA on 5% of that. Good use of your money.

## 2. AIRLIFT BUILDS INFRASTRUCTURE

Airlift provides all of us a strategic alternative to giving to candidates and consultants. The beauty of supporting local organizing is that all of the money goes to local groups people know and trust.

## 3. THIS IS THE LONG GAME

Our groups don't fold up the tent when an election is over. Many funders are stepping in with multi-year grants to sustain local groups as they fight for issues their members care about and use local elections to battle-test their get out the vote strategies.

# AIRLIFT CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2019-2020

**1,600** donors from **35** states

Donors who gave \$500 or more: **500**

Donors who gave \$1000 or more: **300**

Total raised in 2019-2020: **\$1,690,000**

# HOW TO HELP

1. Spread the word. Airlift is an all-volunteer organization.
2. Go to [airlift.fund](https://airlift.fund) and donate online. This is the easiest.
3. Write a check to Airlift. 100% of check proceeds go directly to our groups. And your donations are completely private. Mail to Airlift, PO Box 617, Corte Madera CA 94976. Many Airlift donors use their checking account auto bill pay function to make monthly or quarterly donations.
4. We can help you make tax-deductible donations to Airlift groups. Send a note to [info@airlift.fund](mailto:info@airlift.fund) and we'll walk you through it.

**DONATE HERE**

*Airlift volunteers paid for the cost of producing and mailing this report.*

