



No Shortcuts: Voter Engagement on the Path to Power

2021 - 2022

**COMMUNITY
CHANGE** ACTION

In 2020, we protested, we organized, we voted, and we won. In 2021 and 2022, we repeat. We build. We dream for tomorrow and we fight for justice and dignity today. With partners across the country, we are digging deep in the upcoming municipal and mid-term elections and have launched field campaigns for immigration, child care, and a just recovery as part of national tables: We Are Home, Care Can't Wait, and Real Recovery Now. These are the fights of our lives.

Community Change Action is both our name and a statement of our purpose.

We believe no one should struggle to make ends meet, and that sweeping change comes when directly affected people lead a movement powered by community organizing, big ideas, and the ballot box. And we know that social movements—anchored by community-based organizations—drive social change.

There are no shortcuts on the path to power. We fuel movements by fusing together different forms of power. We build the power of people directly affected by injustice—people of color, women, immigrants, people struggling to make ends meet—to envision and fight for a society where all people and communities thrive. We bridge the outside power of the people with the inside power of influence, creating spaces for grassroots leaders. We bring together different forms of expertise—including the expertise of lived experience—to reimagine and fight for policy solutions from the ground up.

Building an Electoral Powerhouse of, by, and for People of Color



We cannot conceive a path to a just democracy and economy without an electorate that looks more like the country, and we know that changing our politics requires mobilizing voters who fall outside of traditional campaign electoral targeting.



Community Change Action continues to build a large-scale political operation that engages ordinary people in year-round organizing.

We seamlessly connect voter engagement, turnout, accountability work, and issue lobbying—with deep roots in communities and trusted local messengers. We connect candidates to the values and issues that impact voters through conversations that increase support for progressive candidates.

Our year-round organizing approach strengthens grassroots community organizations and progressive state power infrastructure. We provide support for each of our partners as they plan and operate comprehensive field, narrative, and digital programs to reach new and infrequent voters—particularly in Black and Latino communities.

No year is an “off year” or less important. In 2021 and 2022, Community Change Action and our PAC affiliate—Community Change Voters—will:



Collaborate with local partner groups on selected 2021 municipal and state-level elections, including in Virginia.



Support our partners' grassroots campaigns to push back against attacks on voting rights at both the national and state levels, like the victory in Nevada for universal mail in ballots.



Support state ballot initiatives that demonstrate new political possibilities for key issues like child care, housing, and immigration.



Engage our communities in year-round organizing efforts including early voter engagement, accountability campaigns, and federal issue advocacy as well learning tests around narrative messaging and research.



Launch a substantial 2022 national electoral program that increases turnout in Black, Latino, and immigrant communities for key races in order to maintain Democratic control of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate, and to advance our progressive governing agenda.

Reinventing Community Organizing



I needed a constructive, effective way to fight back so I got busy. I found my voice. The work is too important to our present and future democracy and the future of younger generations.

- Queen Jackson, volunteer, relational organizing program

2020 was an organizing moment, but the pandemic took bedrock tactics of in-person organizing off the table for a large portion of 2020. It escalated the need for creative modes of engaging communities at scale and building a sense of shared fate through deep relationships.



In our electoral work, we deepened our digital pipeline for virtual engagement, organic content creation, and our relational organizing program first piloted in 2018. Community Change Action accelerated our experiments, leaning on the digital tools that kept our in-real-life social networks connected but physically distant. Relational organizing is a method of training voters to reach out to their friends and family, and it is one of the most effective strategies for increasing turnout. In the 2020 cycle, we recruited 7,000 volunteer leaders who generated 7.8 million actions through their networks to reach 4.3 million voters.

After the election, this infrastructure stands as we know digital engagements will hold power even beyond a pandemic.

In 2021 and 2022, we will:



Mobilize new relational organizing leaders to make sure elected officials hear directly from the electorate. To date, we have held meetings with the offices of 18 members of Congress and sent thousands of peer-to-peer messages supporting the American Rescue Plan.



Deepen capacity for our relational organizing program and test other methods of digital organizing that connect directly impacted people.



Continue to build a robust digital audience, testing new messaging to expand our research and engaging our digital community in content sharing and organic content creation, fighting back against rising digital disinformation.



Advancing Our Governing Agenda



Our movements set the agenda in 2020 —and we have to keep pushing to make our demands reality. Failing to deliver will forfeit the next election and too long delay the transformational social change that Black, Latino, and immigrant communities need. Community Change Action is fighting for immediate, tangible change.



We must win real change, and make sure our communities understand their role in making this change possible in order to win in 2022 and beyond. The absence of an overarching cohesive, progressive, and culturally competent economic agenda and narrative has historically hurt Democrats with Black and Latino voters. The campaigns we are waging today will set the political conditions for enacting the long-term governing agenda we seek.

Over the past four years, we have begun to define a new common sense and narrative for the U.S. economic and immigration systems, and we have tested our ideas through state and local policy campaigns. Now, the governing moment at the federal level demands a policy response as transformational as the challenges this country faces.

In 2021 and 2022, we will:



Demand a just recovery that includes a permanent expansion of more inclusive child tax credits and earned income tax credits and a just housing system that repairs the harm of racist federal policy. As leaders of the Real Recovery Now! coalition, we are fighting for a new economic paradigm that ensures a freedom to thrive.



Fight for citizenship and deportation relief as necessary steps toward immigration reform and radical inclusion. As leaders of the We Are Home coalition, we are writing new rules for our political economy that open opportunities denied because of race, gender, and nation of origin.



Win significant changes to the child care system, including federal investments that make a down payment on universal child care as a right. As part of the Care Can't Wait coalition, we are leading the field fight and building the power and visibility of our movement of directly impacted parents and child care providers.



Strengthening Black, Latino, & Immigrant Organizations and Leaders



To rebalance power in this country, the movement for social justice requires multiracial coalitions that build common purpose and solidarity across race, gender, and immigration status. These coalitions must be led by Black, Latino, and immigrant leaders on the front lines of racialized attacks and systemic oppression.



Community Change Action, in partnership with organizations grounded in the multi-issue, lived experience of Black, Latino, and immigrant communities, is building real power that positions our partners to lead a multiracial movement for social and economic justice.

Organizational infrastructure: Our political program builds on nearly two decades of local investment in political power building with our partner grassroots organizations and the grassroots leaders they recruit and train. Each election cycle serves as an opportunity to invest more deeply in a growing set of advocacy organizations that are becoming an electoral powerhouse. Community Change Action also utilizes our coalitions of grassroots, community-based organizations—including our Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) Action and the Black Freedom Collective—to intentionally strategize on the intersection of civic engagement, long-term power building, and voter mobilization.

Movement leaders: Community Change Action also builds the power of individuals through leadership development initiatives designed to meet the specific needs and challenges that movement leaders of color encounter. Our approach includes formal, cohort-based programs such as our program for grassroots political directors. We also integrate leadership development within one-to-one conversations and peer-learning spaces. We focus on building core skills—political analysis, relationship building, organizing tactics—and the capacities required for transformational organizing—radical vision, new ways of claiming and walking in power, cultivating fullness of presence, flexibility, and the “strategic imagination” to develop innovative approaches and expand what is possible.

In 2021 and 2022, Community Change Action will:



Identify common areas of growth across partner organizations, coaching partners directly and connecting them with peers to exchange best practices.



Support organizational capacity building that strengthens partners’ accountability and issue campaigns, integrating data from 2020 voter programs to drive strategies and tests for 2021 and 2022 priorities.



Convene a cohort of local partner organizations’ political directors as part of our grassroots leadership development program.



Equip local leaders, relational organizing leaders, and organizers to combat disinformation through political education and information on vaccines and vaccine equity, the benefits of relief and rescue policies, and the experience of immigrant essential workers.

For more information and ways to get involved contact Grecia Lima, National Political Director, Community Change Action at glima@communitychangeaction.org.

Community Change Action is a 501(c)(4) advocacy organization—with Community Change Voters (PAC) its sister organization. These entities share a common mission and vision for the world, and work in full compliance with the law.