



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM JAMIE

As a co-founder of Voters Not Politicians, it has been an immense honor to watch this organization grow from a group of strangers with a seemingly impossible dream to a family of organizations that has transformed Michigan politics and fundamentally changed our democracy for the better.



That includes the work we've done through the Voters Not Politicians Education Fund.

In 2024 alone, Voters Ed Fund partnered with dozens of local community groups and municipal leaders to reach more than 200,000 voters in six cities through direct mail, canvassing, digital ads, text messaging, and voter education events. These unique partnerships meant that residents of our focus cities received accurate information from trusted sources. We also conducted in-person, city-specific Voter Access Town Halls, educated and engaged new grassroots activists, shared voter information at events and community meetings, recruited and shifted nonpartisan election poll challengers, distributed drop box and early voting information across the state through a mobile-friendly search tool, and helped support fair redistricting during an unanticipated court-ordered redraw.

Throughout the year, our volunteers continued to drive our work with their tireless efforts, and we appreciate every single one of them.

In the aftermath of the 2016 election, Voters Not Politicians became the place where many people channeled their feelings of disappointment, disenfranchisement, and disillusionment with our political systems into an empowering movement that revolutionized Michigan's democracy. Eight years later, Voters Not Politicians is still here, with many of those same volunteers, now trained, organized, and ready to continue the ongoing fight to protect and strengthen democracy in Michigan.

Voters Not Politicians is uniquely positioned to do the work necessary to improve our democracy and deliver positive change for all Michiganders. We continue to be a place for those who want to take action and achieve lasting results together, because we are the enduring proof of the power of collective action.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jamie Lyons-Eddy".

Jamie Lyons-Eddy, Executive Director

About Us

The Voters Not Politicians Education Fund (Voters Ed Fund) is a nonpartisan 501(c)(3) organization that educates the public and is dedicated to strengthening democracy. We envision a truly representative democracy, where the will of the voters drives government decision-making and public policy in Michigan.

Voters Ed Fund is expert in redistricting policy, grassroots organizing, and communications. Our organization is eager to use our expertise and experience to continue our work to increase voting access and empower Michigan voters to participate in the political process.

Voters Ed Fund is associated with, but distinct from, the 501(c)(4) Voters Not Politicians. The two organizations share much in common in terms of values and vision, but Voters Ed Fund is also charting its own course. Voters Ed Fund is focused on policy education and community engagement.



Vision

Voters Ed Fund envisions a truly representative democracy, where the will of the voters drives government decision-making and public policy in Michigan.

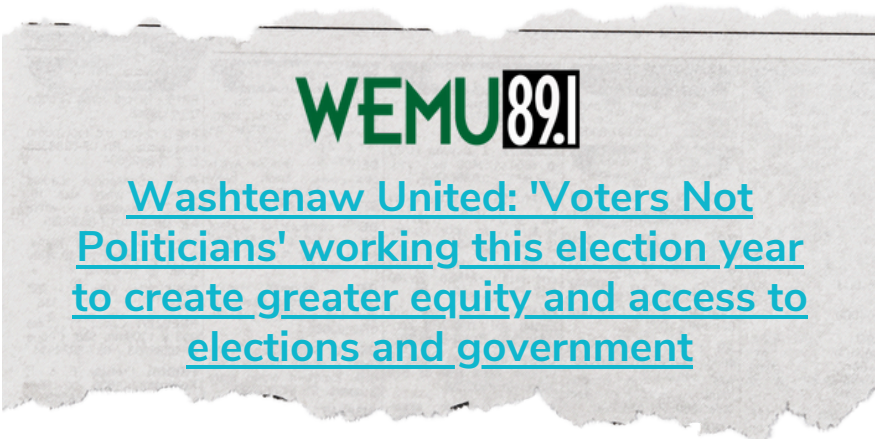
Mission

Voters Ed Fund is a nonpartisan organization dedicated to strengthening democracy in Michigan through public education and civic participation.

Values

Integrity
Inclusiveness
Empowerment
Innovation
Impartiality
Excellence

Top Headlines



- Voter Access Town Hall encourages informed voting in our community Flint Courier News | February 1, 2024
- Here's what to know about early in-person voting that starts Saturday Michigan Public | February 16, 2024
- Democracy Academy teaches residents how to boost local political participation Flint Courier News | March 19, 2024
- Using citizen lobbying as a force for change Flint Courier News | June 13, 2024
- Benton Harbor accepts elections grants WSJM | October 8, 2024
- The Follow Up with Mike Redford: Expanded Early Voting Delta College Public Media | October 29, 2024

2024 Fundraising Updates

Individual Donors	\$377,777
Grants	\$1,281,981
TOTALS:	\$1,659,758

Nonpartisan Poll Challengers

Voters Ed Fund once again launched our large-scale project to recruit and shift nonpartisan election Poll Challengers in partnership with Promote the Vote and the Election Protection Program for the presidential primary, August primary, and November general elections.

Voters Ed Fund leveraged its network of grassroots volunteers in municipalities across Michigan to ensure that accidental or intentional disenfranchisement of eligible voters did not occur at early voting locations, re-tabulation locations, and Election Day polling places for Michigan's election administrators and poll workers.

In February, Voters Ed Fund volunteers served as poll challengers in the following communities: Ann Arbor, Benton Harbor City, Dearborn, Detroit, East Lansing, Eastpointe, Flint, Flint Township, Grand Rapids, Hamtramck, Inkster, Jackson, Lansing, Livonia, Kalamazoo, Novi, Oak Park, Pontiac, River Rouge, Southfield, Sterling Heights, Warren, and Westland. In August and November, volunteers were recruited statewide.

“ My experience [poll challenging] was an inspiring show of democracy in action.

- Cheryl H.

”

“ I found the experience of being a non-partisan poll challenger during early voting to be really rewarding. It was heartwarming to watch so many people engaged in small-d democracy!

- Marie K.

”

Democracy Academy

Continuing our work from 2023, the goal of Democracy Academy in 2024 was to combat low voter turnout in local elections and empower Michigan residents to become more engaged in their local governments. The Democracy Academy Committee held six virtual workshops to allow Michigan residents to develop various skills in their civic activism journey.

Our statewide workshops covered the following topics:

- Increasing voter turnout in your local communities
- Education on the new voting rights changes as a result of Proposal 22-2
- Citizen lobbying your local government
- Participatory budgeting (joined by Wayne State professor Janet Anderson)
- Monitoring your local elections
- Starting a local or statewide ballot initiative



[Democracy Academy teaches residents how to boost local political participation](#)

Proposal 22-2 Implementation

Following the passage of Proposal 22-2 which expanded access to the ballot in Michigan, our goal throughout 2023 and 2024 was to coordinate with statewide and local partners to ensure that municipalities across Michigan, especially the 100 most populous communities, had plans to fully implement the amendment during the 2024 election cycle.

Volunteers developed teams of community advocates alongside partner organizations to build bridges between constituents and clerks and worked to combat voter misinformation and disinformation. By tracking clerks' plans for Proposal 22-2 implementation, we worked to identify election officials' biggest needs to ensure voters could benefit from the most accessible elections in its history. By the end of 2024, VNP volunteers held 112 meetings with 82 municipal clerks and 7 county clerks.

Municipal and county clerks made clear that one of the most pressing needs during the 2024 election cycle was robust voter education about Michigan's new voting provisions, including early voting, the permanent absentee ballot list, and more. Toward the end of 2023 and into 2024, Voters Ed Fund expanded our implementation efforts to educate voters about their enhanced voting access through educational presentations.

Eighteen VNP staff and volunteers gave 49 presentations to 1,670 Michigan voters statewide in 2024. These presentations informed voters about how they could cast their ballot in the 2024 elections, how their right to vote is now enshrined in the Michigan constitution, and how they can mobilize their communities to get out the vote through relational organizing.



My City Votes

In 2023 and 2024, Voters Ed Fund identified six cities for the My City Votes program: Flint, Pontiac, Grand Rapids, Benton Harbor, Muskegon Heights, and Warren. The primary goal of this campaign was to inform voters of their new voting options to encourage them to participate in the 2024 general election. In order to achieve this goal, Voters Ed Fund worked to increase voter turnout in traditionally underrepresented populations through partnerships with local election officials, educating voters on their rights post-Proposal 22-2, and leveraging our network of volunteers and regional partnerships.

The program deployed a range of outreach methods, including direct mail, canvassing, digital ads, text messaging, and voter education events. Tailored strategies ensured each city's unique voter population received relevant and impactful messaging.



My City Votes

Municipal Partnerships

A key part of this program was the development of trusted relationships with municipal officials in each city. We worked with clerks, mayors, and city council members to ensure that voting access information was approved by the city at every step. Voters Ed Fund developed materials for direct voter outreach that were signed by city officials to ensure that in the avalanche of voting information that is sent during a general election year, voters had a credible source of voting information delivered directly to them.

Voters Ed Fund created custom websites for each city, offering detailed information about local election logistics, including clerk's office contacts, early voting sites, and Election Day voting times and locations. In addition, direct mail informed voters about early voting, absentee ballot requests, and ways to vote, supported by digital and text campaigns that encouraged voters to make a voting plan.

Building relationships with city officials and local partner organizations started in 2023 with clerk engagement meetings and voting access events designed to encourage an open discussion between community members and city officials. In 2024, Voters Ed Fund worked to help clerks bridge funding gaps in these historically underfunded municipalities.

Deep relationships were also established with local community partner groups. These local organizations provided a source of rich community knowledge and our partnership engendered trust when delivering messages about voting access to community members. We were able to identify several local organizations to whom we provided subgrants for canvassing, digital ads, and voter information events.

My City Votes

Direct Voter Engagement

In each city, we utilized multi-channel outreach that included a custom website with easy to find voting information, direct mail, digital ads, text messages, early vote events, radio ads, and canvassing.

Direct Mail: Three rounds of mailers were sent to 200,000 low propensity voters in our My City Votes universe during the 2024 election season. The first mailer detailed early voting information, an opportunity that most Michigan voters were not yet aware of. The second mailer was a notice from each city's Mayor or Clerk announcing the beginning of early voting. The third mailer was a colorful mail piece detailing individual municipal voting access for each city.

Digital Ads: \$125,000 worth of targeted ads ran across Facebook, Google, and YouTube, focusing on absentee voting, early voting, and Election Day participation.

Text Messaging: 258,395 residents received timely text reminders about voting logistics and early voting parties in Flint, Pontiac, and Warren.

Voter Education Events: In collaboration with Oakland Forward, Voters Ed Fund participated in FEED Day 2024 in Royal Oak Township, emphasizing education and democracy. Voter education events were also held in coordination with municipal officials and community organizations in Muskegon Heights, Flint, Grand Rapids, and Benton Harbor.

Radio Ads/Interviews: Radio advertisements promoting early voting and Election Day voting ran in Benton Harbor, Muskegon Heights, and Flint. A radio interview featuring the My City Votes Campaign Manager Tracy-Ann Jennings also ran in Benton Harbor and Muskegon Heights, where early voting and voter access were emphasized.

Voters Ed Fund hosted **early voting parties** in partnership with local organizations. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Faith in Action, Flint Rising, ACLU of Michigan, and others kicked off the early voting period and energized communities in Flint and Pontiac. In Warren, a municipal partnership with Voters Ed Fund resulted in an early voting party at City Hall that was attended by more than 200 people.

Pontiac Votes!

If you encounter any barriers or are told you can not vote - Call or text the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)

Pontiac voters:
It's time to vote!

Michigan's Presidential Election is on Tuesday, November 5th.

All eligible voters can choose to vote from home, vote in person before Election Day, or vote on Election Day. Choose an option below to learn more:



PONTIAC, YOU CAN NOW VOTE EARLY!

Pontiac voters have the option to vote early! It's your voice. Vote your way.

VOTE EARLY (NEW VOTING OPTION!) You can now cast your ballot at an Early Vote Center.

Your experience will be similar to voting at your polling place on Election Day, including feeding your completed ballot into the vote tabulator before Election Day!

This is a great option if you want to skip long lines, want to bring your family, have mobility issues, or if you need more flexible hours to vote, including nights and weekends.

ALREADY HAVE AN ABSENTEE BALLOT? Complete your ballot and then bring it to an Early Vote Center to feed your absentee ballot into the vote tabulator!

VOTE ON ELECTION DAY. If you prefer to vote on Election Day, go to your assigned polling place from 7 AM to 8 PM on Tuesday, November 5.

Not registered to vote? You can register & vote through 8 PM on Nov. 5

HOW TO VOTE EARLY

PLAN WHEN YOU WILL GO:
You can vote early from Saturday, October 26 until Sunday, November 3:

Saturday, October 26 through Wednesday, October 30: Open 8:30AM to 4:30PM

Thursday, October 31: Open 12PM to 8PM

late night option!

Friday, November 1 through Sunday, November 3: Open 8:30AM to 4:30PM

GO TO THE EARLY VOTE CENTER:
Pontiac Public Library
60 E Pike St #2225
Pontiac, MI 48342

GET OUT AND VOTE!

Scan the QR code for all the voting info you need to know!

Redistricting

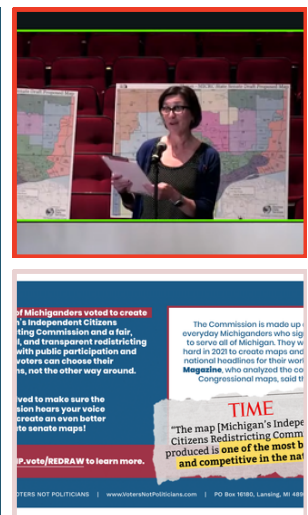
A three-judge federal panel [ruled in December of 2023](#) that seven Michigan state house and six Michigan state senate districts in the metro-Detroit area were invalid under the Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution and must be redrawn. While the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission was completing its court-mandated redraw, Voters Ed Fund felt it was vital to monitor the commission's process so that we could respond promptly to developments.

Three staff members and 18 Voters Ed Fund volunteers monitored roughly 260 hours of MICRC meetings and public hearings, enabling us to respond quickly and effectively to developments and decisions in real-time.

Voters Ed Fund did extensive outreach to make sure Detroiters were aware of the redraw and were able to make their voices heard during this process. We reached 1,074,228 Metro Detroit residents through our digital ad campaign, with 7,923,767 content views and well over 93,000 click-throughs to our landing page which included a [grassroots digital toolkit](#) that Detroiters could use to engage with the redraw process.

Voters Ed Fund made volunteers aware of the redraw process and collected an ongoing list of people willing to give map feedback via comment to the MICRC. At several points during the House and Senate redraw stages, we reached out to our own volunteers and others living in the impacted districts via text-banks, phone-banks, emails, and lit drops.

The goal was to encourage attendance at an in-person meeting of the MICRC, and to encourage public comment to the MICRC about community boundaries and other map considerations. In total, we made three rounds of phone calls and texted over 1,000 volunteers to encourage them to give public comment. We supported more than 50 public commenters in making their voice heard over both phases of the redraw.



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