

ORGANIZING THE MIDWEST

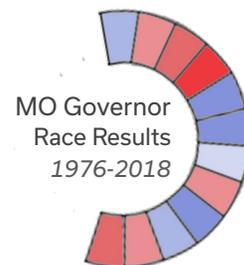
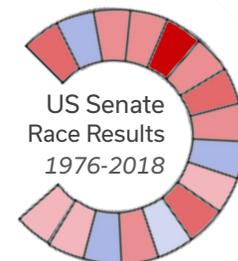
DISRUPTING MYTHS AND BUILDING MULTIRACIAL GOVERNING COALITIONS

Missouri Addendum

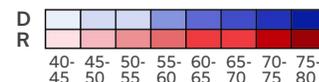
Missouri’s organizing ecosystem has been steadily increasing its scope and capacity in recent years. Black-led organizing has grown impressively in the wake of the 2014 Ferguson Uprising, resulting in hard-hitting organizing that tackles police harassment and killings in the Black community, and seeks to reform conditions in jails that serve as detention centers for poor people of color. [Statewide campaign efforts are aligned and coordinated through Missouri Organizing and Voter Engagement \(MOVE\)](#), a 501c3 table with membership including Metropolitan Congregations United, Missouri Faith Voices, Missouri Jobs with Justice, Rural Crisis Center, Youth Council for Positive Development, MORE2, Action St. Louis, WEPOWER, PROMO, Missouri Health Care for All, Shirley’s Kitchen Cabinet, KC Tenants, and Forward through Ferguson. Members are committed to data-driven, community-led, race-forward strategies to grow membership and base capacity across faith, farm, Black liberation, labor, environmental, queer, and reproductive justice organizing while addressing voter registration and turnout gaps in the state.

Missouri’s fastest growing communities are communities of color. But when 2020 Census population estimates are compared to electoral records, alarming disconnects appear: while 93 percent of all Missourians are registered to vote, only 79 percent of eligible Black voters, 62 percent of eligible AAPI voters, and 50 percent of eligible Latino voters are registered. MOVE members are addressing these gaps by bringing 80,000 new people into the progressive electorate; organizing 100,000 high opportunity but infrequent progressive voters towards participation; and moving 170,000 conflicted white Missourians away from narratives of racism and scarcity towards those of inclusion, solidarity, and abundance. To capitalize on Missouri's momentum, we must execute a four-part strategy laid out in Organizing the Midwest:

- 1 Invest strategically to mobilize Black, immigrant, and young people
- 2 Organize conflicted white communities with new and proven strategies
- 3 Advance a Race Class Narrative in Missouri
- 4 Establish electoral ecosystems through independent state ecosystems



Key: Winning Ratios Per Party



4,338,133

MO Registered Voters, 2020



KEY ISSUE

Equitable Voter Registration

Through the [Missouri Inclusive Democracy Fund](#), MOVE partners are working to equalize the registration rates of Black, AAPI, and Latino voters with that of white voters by the end of the decade. This is a key step in making Missouri’s democracy a truly representative one.



KEY ISSUE

Protecting Direct Democracy

A battle to defend Missouri’s initiative petition process is looming, and organizers are positioning themselves and their organizations to fight anti-democratic “reforms” in August 2022. Winning will require an intensive education campaign followed by robust community-led GOTV. Groundwork is also being laid for ballot fights in 2024.



KEY ISSUE

Worker Power

MOVE partners like Jobs With Justice and the Missouri Workers Center are working on wages, leave, and workplace safety policy strategies with workers and directly impacted leaders at the center. While defending our statewide wage increases in the legislature, we are also working to chip away at preemption to make future local wage fights possible.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INVESTMENT IN MISSOURI



\$1M
needed

INVEST IN BLACK, IMMIGRANT & YOUNG PEOPLE

Grassroots community organizations across Missouri are building a multiracial coalition grounded in year-round engagement. MOVE provides a visionary backbone for the alignment and coordination of multiracial movements, and member organizations are building powerful partnerships to bring 80,000 new people into action. For example, KC Tenants is organizing rural and small town tenants in areas of Missouri that are not deeply engaged, and Action St. Louis is expanding their organizer development program to increase their base and footprint. These talented leaders are invested in long-term strategies to change the issue environment and grow the scope and capacity of Black, brown, and young communities. By centering multiracial movement building aligned via MOVE, these grassroots community organizations will continue to build the political power needed to deliver statewide wins.



\$1M
needed

ORGANIZE CONFLICTED WHITE COMMUNITIES

Weaponizing racialized biases and fears has been a critical element of the conservative playbook for years in Missouri. As detailed in MOVE's Transformative Conversations report, Missourians feel that urban and rural residents and white people and people of color have been pitted against each other by politicians and corporate backers. Organizers encountered significant hopelessness, apathy, cynicism, and racism that amplifies the need for ongoing organizing in left-behind communities. As one example, Missouri Jobs with Justice is growing its suburban and small town organizing to meet conflicted white leaders at the intersection of self-interest and shared values, and they are doing so through intentional alignment with BIPOC-led organizations.



\$400K
needed

ESTABLISH A RACE CLASS NARRATIVE IN MISSOURI

MOVE has committed to an alternative Race Class Narrative that builds on the listening work of member organizations in [4,000+ "deep canvassing" conversations](#) with poor and working class leaders in urban and rural parts of Missouri. These transformative conversations identified common struggles and offered insight into how Missourians think about race. In 2020-2021, member organizations engaged in an additional [3,000 conversations](#), moving engaged leaders into deeper leadership. MOVE partners are clear that maintaining political transformation requires committing to race-forward electorate transformation: engaging leaders in real conversations to empower race-forward solidarity narrative in place of ideology grounded in scarcity and racism.



\$1M
needed

STRENGTHEN INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL ECOSYSTEMS

In addition to MOVE's partnership with the Missouri Inclusive Democracy Fund on equitable voter registration, member organizations are partnering with the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition to coordinate nonpartisan election protection efforts across the state, and working under MOVE's umbrella to execute a large-scale grassroots GOTV program that funds field efforts of member organizations, not out-of-state vendors. This allows organizations to increase turnout while advancing new narratives and providing development opportunities for leaders and volunteers.

Crucial infrastructure coordinated by MOVE has made consistent large-scale voter engagement possible; continued investment will prioritize planning and leadership that builds the engagement needed to sustain multiracial coalitions over time.