

ORGANIZING THE MIDWEST

DISRUPTING MYTHS AND BUILDING MULTIRACIAL GOVERNING COALITIONS

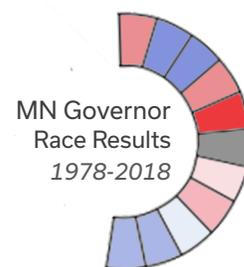
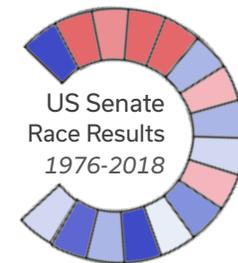
Minnesota Addendum

Despite an aging and predominantly white population in Minnesota, communities of color are growing across the state – led by an influx of Latino immigrants and significant AAPI and Black population growth in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro. There is also an urban-rural divide in-state that rural communities falling behind in most socioeconomic indicators. These trends underscore the opportunity of building multiracial coalitions.

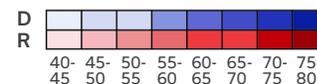
There is a rich landscape of power-building organizations in Minnesota. ISALAH is an institutional membership organization initially anchored by faith groups that diversified to include child care centers, barbershops, and community centers; TakeAction Minnesota is a coalition of 20 groups blending organizing, advocacy, and movement politics; Awood Center is a worker-led organization developing the next generation of East African immigrant leaders; Unidos MN is building power for gender, racial, and economic justice in the Latino community; Inquilinx Unidos Por Justicia is a tenant advocacy group; Centro do Trabajadores Unidos En La Lucha (CTUL) is led by and dedicated to building power for low-wage workers; The New Justice Project focuses on the Black community; and Land Stewardship Project is known for its work in rural communities, organizing family farmers, immigrant workers, and building a broad statewide membership base.

Minnesota is regarded as a national model for state alignment and strategies for long-term power building. Allied groups have won an impressive set of policy wins encompassing wages, child care, and climate policies. It has also been at the center of the policing and criminal justice reform debate in the wake of George Floyd's murder. In order to maintain this momentum in 2022, Minnesota progressives must execute the four part strategy laid out in Organizing the Midwest:

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



Key: Winning Ratios Per Party



4,118,462

MN Registered Voters, 2020



KEY ISSUE

Child Care

Organizations in Minnesota

are advocating for reforms that promote increased access to child care for all families and raise wages for teachers. This includes fighting to create a state standard for child care wages and prices, building support for a Department of Early Childhood and supporting investments in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).



KEY ISSUE

Health Care

Organizations are working to expand

public health insurance via the MinnesotaCare Public Option, and expand MinnesotaCare to include undocumented immigrants. They are also seeking to establish a statewide employment standard allowing workers to accrue 48 hours of paid sick/safe time each year, and create a state insurance program providing workers with 12 weeks of paid medical leave and 12 weeks of paid family leave.



KEY ISSUE

Criminal Justice Reform

As one of the

epicenters of the Black Lives Matter movement, local leaders continue to push for substantial policing reform and a set of criminal justice policies. While groups were unsuccessful in passing a charter amendment in Minneapolis, they continue to advance this work.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INVESTMENT IN MINNESOTA



\$1M
committed

\$2.5M
needed

INVEST IN BLACK, IMMIGRANT & YOUNG LEADERS

Demographic shifts across southern Minnesota, primarily through the immigration of Somali refugees and Latino immigrants over the past 30 years in the core cities along with places like Rochester, Austin, Worthington, and Faribault, have created new constituencies that traditional policy making too often take for granted. Building civic power in BIPOC communities is essential for the future of Minnesota.

A focused, relational organizing strategy grounded in local community leadership for new American communities can reflect these communities' religious expressions, countries of origin, and traditions, as well as the aspects of life that they value in Minnesota. In 2020, organizations like UnidosMN, ISIAH's Muslim Coalition, Black Visions Collective, and Minnesota Youth Collaborative used community-grounded, relational field strategies to engage and mobilize high-potential voters in Latino, Somali, and East African communities. These strategies proved promising and, if scaled across the state, could make real strides in closing the gap between BIPOC and white voter participation rates.



\$1.5M
committed

\$3.5M
needed

ORGANIZE CONFLICTED WHITE COMMUNITIES

There are two organizations doing deep work in rural communities and suburbs. Land Stewardship Project is a rural organizing project known for its work around organizing family farmers, immigrant workers, and building a membership base in rural communities across Minnesota. They work closely with other groups in-state and have led around climate issues.

Additionally, ISIAH is an institutional membership base organization initially anchored by faith based groups that has diversified to include child care centers, barbershops, and community centers. They have hundreds of institutional members that represent tens of thousands of people across the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro, St. Cloud, and outer suburbs like Willmar.



\$1M
committed

\$1.5M
needed

ESTABLISH A RACE CLASS NARRATIVE IN MINNESOTA

Following the successful Greater than Fear public communications campaign of 2018, progressive labor, grassroots organizing, and faith organizations built a shared strategic narrative infrastructure to support the build out of a multiracial, progressive coalition in Minnesota. Over 30 organizations are involved in the RCN Builders Table and the "Narrative Justice League." This table will work to coordinate strategic messaging and narrative work in the 2022 and beyond.



\$1M
committed

\$2.5M
needed

STRENGTHEN INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL ECOSYSTEMS

As Minnesota organizations ride the national waves of polarization, rancor, and confusion, the possibility of holding a multiracial coalition in Minnesota will be extremely challenging. Civic participation organizations, rooted in communities, need a long-term approach to build the infrastructure and ecosystem necessary to bring in new constituencies, ensure that a shared agenda is developed, and push policy makers to commit to those policies that support racial, economic, and social justice in Minnesota. This means strengthening organizations and their capacity to build power for members – for example, the Tending the Soil table hosted by CTUL, where BIPOC power-building organizations and worker centers are developing their individual and shared power in the wider field.