STATEMENT FROM OUR CO-FOUNDEERS

During this unprecedented period in our country’s history with many people suffering from the impact of COVID-19, a rise in unemployment, and stark racial injustices in communities across the country, it is clear that America is long overdue for real change. And today we rejoice in knowing that change is coming.
For the past four years, Black voters have felt deeply the impact and growing threat of racial inequality, white supremacy and the weight of injustice all around us, but this election was never about one candidate or one party. It was always about realizing the collective power of Black voters to activate change in our communities. We stood in long lines, waited hours to vote, faced down agitators at the polls, and fought back against voter suppression locally and federally. And the message is clear: The power we have to control our own destiny cannot be denied. We Got The Power.

Black America did their part with record voter turnout from the urban sprawls of Los Angeles to the rural fields of Madison, Alabama. While we are 12 percent of the population, early reports show Black voters — of all ages and backgrounds — are a key constituency group and have played a critical role in saving a fragile democracy that hasn’t always saved us.

And it must be noted that Black women across the country helped to lead the way for America to be on the right side of history in this moment. We look forward to that leadership and insight continuing with Vice President Kamala Harris in the White House.

And while we know there’s much more work to do, we first wanted to pause and acknowledge all the hard work that has been accomplished this year by you.

So, thank you, Black voters for staying the course and getting the job done despite the obstacles that always seem to be in the way. Thank you for taking the time to exercise your full right as citizens of this country and for bringing family and friends along with you. You showed up and showed out for your country and democracy.

While on the road on the Blackest Bus in America, we saw you canvassing, calling, marching, and standing in your power to make sure you and others had the chance to cast your ballot. We were inspired by the strength of our community, and we praise your energy and your spirit.

As y’all know, Black people rarely have the time to take a breath before jumping back into the fray to fight the next battle. But we want to take the time to say: We hear you. We see you and we appreciate you. Thank you.

We must also thank our state partners. As we all know, real change happens locally in communities. That is where the work is done. That is where the people live. With your support, BVM’s We Got The Power campaign reached more than 15 million Black voters across the country, particularly in the South, sharing information, registering people to vote, and spreading love and joy wherever possible. Our mission together has been served but our work is not done.
As we look ahead, we urge everyone to keep these lessons in mind:

- Continue to raise your voice and be heard. Just as we’re making sure every vote is counted, we must continue to raise our voices against any injustice. This is what a true democracy requires.
- Without real election reform, our fragile democracy will continue to weaken. We must stop normalizing long voting lines and demand fair elections. The waiting time for Black voters to cast their ballot far exceeded those living in white communities in certain pockets in the country. That is unacceptable and a form of voter suppression.
- Hold your local officials and policymakers accountable. A real democracy demands fair policies and true representation from local council offices to the Capitol. And Black communities all over this country, but particularly in the South, deserve better. Our rights will not be denied.
- A new South is rising. As more and more Black voters engage, we are seeing the margins narrowing and the tide turning. Local elections play an integral role in our communities. Keep your eye on them and turnout like you did this year to vote.

This moment is a significant milestone in our nation’s history in what has been a long and exhausting journey. Yes, now is the time to re-charge and re-set, to take stock and allow ourselves some peace and joy. Tomorrow, we rise again and get back to work to make sure justice is served. Black voters are galvanized and we are ready.

Can't stop, won't stop!

Cliff Albright and LaTosha Brown
IT'S ABOUT US
OUR PURPOSE

Black Voters Matter goal is to increase power in marginalized, predominantly Black communities. Effective voting allows a community to determine its own destiny. We agree with the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he said, “Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”

Indisputably, the historic turnout of 2020 elections is largely attributable to the participation of Black voters, particularly in southern states, even in rural communities. Black Voters Matter, whose focus is often overlooked, was at the center of this national effort.

This report provides a brief account of our grassroots campaign across 14 states, in 2020. It also highlights our achievements and the many years we placed into this work with more to come. It is a resounding demonstration that Black voters not only matter, but when we participate in democracy, we have the power to shape critical debates.

Black Voters Matter is helping put America on a path that benefits everyone and lifts up the best possible version of our democracy.
Within a year, Black Voters Matter expanded its work from 7 states to 12 states and supported work on the ground in 17 states: Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin. With an increase in organizational support, we were able to expand our team of 17 to 35 staff members and counting. We were also able to increase our footprint within our states: growing our work in 22 counties in Georgia, 5 parishes in Louisiana, nine counties in Mississippi, 12 counties in Pennsylvania, 14 counties in North Carolina.
MOVEMENT BUILDING SUPPORT

ALABAMA
$704,000 DONATED TO 45 PARTNERS

CALIFORNIA
$22,500 DONATED TO 2 PARTNERS

FLORIDA
$546,800 DONATED TO 38 PARTNERS

GEORGIA
$2,263,000 DONATED TO 115 PARTNERS

LOUISIANA
$198,600 DONATED TO 23 PARTNERS

KENTUCKY
$18,500 DONATED TO 2 PARTNERS

MICHIGAN
$339,500 DONATED TO 43 PARTNERS

MISSISSIPPI
$549,500 DONATED TO 37 PARTNERS

MISSOURI
$25,000 DONATED TO 1 PARTNER

NORTH CAROLINA
$353,500 DONATED TO 41 PARTNERS

OHIO
$107,500 DONATED TO 10 PARTNERS

PENNSYLVANIA
$669,000 DONATED TO 45 PARTNERS

SOUTH CAROLINA
$202,000 DONATED TO 45 PARTNERS

TENNESSEE
$236,500 DONATED TO 21 PARTNERS

TEXAS
$108,000 DONATED TO 6 PARTNERS

WASHINGTON D.C.
$159,000 DONATED TO 4 PARTNERS

WISCONSIN
$20,000 DONATED TO 2 PARTNERS
In 2020, Black Voters Matter continued our support on the ground with our Saving Ourselves Fund. This fund gave over $150,000 in mini-grants toward COVID mutual aid work in Black communities. In addition, we provided over $50,000 to bail funds for organizers who took to the streets to fight against police violence in over 30 cities. Our team also provided over $500,000 to Divine 9 organizations for GOTV, including $100,000 as seed capital for the first ever Divine 9 501c4 organization.

Take a look at some of our Saving Ourselves Fund grantees:
OUR IMPACT ON THE GROUND

49.2 MILLION
TOTAL DIRECT CONTACTS VIA TEXT MESSAGE.

64%
TURNOUT FOR CONTACTED VOTERS

30%
DOOR-TO-DOOR AND PHONE CONTACT ATTEMPTS RESULTED IN CONVERSATIONS. BVM MADE 360,000 ATTEMPTS, 108,000 WERE SUCCESSFUL.

% OF CONTACTS WHO DIDN’T VOTE IN 2016 BUT TURNED OUT TO VOTE IN 2020

GEORGIA - 25%

 PENNSYLVANIA - 25%

 NORTH CAROLINA - 13%
INCREASING BLACK VOTER TURNOUT

• Increased voter turnout in Georgia in 9 southwest counties.

• In Pennsylvania, Black turnout increased from 57% in 2016 to 68% in 2020. Many Pennsylvania precincts had 100 percent turnout in small Black communities.

• In Michigan, Black voter turnout increased from 61% in 2016 to 64% in 2020.

• More than 41% of Black voters in South Carolina had cast an absentee ballot by Nov. 1st and each of our 12 target counties saw Black voter turnout at or above 62%.

• Increase in Black turnout in key Florida counties such as Escambia, Bay, Okaloosa, Duval, Orange, Volusia, Leon, Pinellas and Polk.

• Overall Black voter turnout in Florida was at 64%, a 12% increase from 2016.

• In Florida, Black voters ages 18-35 increased by 17%. Many were energized by the issues that were highlighted by candidates in the campaign, such as criminal justice and police reform, environmental justice and economic equity.
In Montgomery City Race, more black people voted in the runoff then in the general election, which resulted in the election of the first African American Mayor of the City of Montgomery.

Glynn County, Georgia elected a new District Attorney when residents mobilized following the murder of Ahmaud Arbery.

Increased voter turnout helped elect first African American woman in Martin County, North Carolina.

Bibb County, Georgia elected its first Black woman District Attorney.

Three Counties elected progressive candidates for the first time in North Carolina that traditionally voted for conservative candidates.

Charleston County, South Carolina unseated the incumbent Sheriff after 32 years in office.

First Black City Marshal elected in the City of Lafayette, Louisiana, one of the most racially tumultuous regions in the southeastern part of the state.

50,000 Black voters early voted by mail due to outcome of Black Voters Matter lawsuit in the State of Alabama, which opened up absentee ballot access for more voters.

City of Mullins, South Carolina elected their first Black Mayor in the city’s history.
CAPACITY BUILDING OF GRASSROOTS GROUPS

We asked our partners how has Black Voters Matter increase their organizational capacity, here is what they had to say:

- Increased the visibility of your organization’s work in your community: 89%
- Increased your organization’s ability to circulate information about your organization’s work and voter outreach efforts: 88%
- Increased the number of events or activities your organization was able to host to increase voter engagement in your community: 88%
- Increased your organization’s ability to purchase resources (food, materials, supplies) for your GOTV and voter outreach efforts: 87%
- Increase the number of volunteers your organizations was able to recruit to assist with GOTV or voter outreach efforts: 83.44%

In 2020, Black Voters Matter has funded over 600 grassroots organizations who provide resources and support in Black communities. Throughout 2020 we provided funds to these organizations in addition to food boxes, essential items, Wi-Fi hotspots, and PPE. In addition to funding, we trained our partners in areas of communications such as digital, media, and data in order to increase the profile of their organizations.
“THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING CAPITAL REBIRTH THIS YEAR AND FOR SUPPORTING US IN OUR MISSION TO UPLIFT AND UNIFY CENTRAL PA. WITH YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT AND DONATION, WE WERE ABLE TO PUT ON NUMEROUS COMMUNITY-ORIENTED EVENTS FROM AUGUST TO NOVEMBER THAT ENCOURAGED OUR RESIDENTS TO REGISTER TO VOTE, AND TO RECOGNIZE THEIR INFLUENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY. DESPITE THE CHALLENGES OF THESE TIMES, CAPITAL REBIRTH EXCEEDED ITS GOALS AND WILL BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT IMPACTFUL EVENTS IN THE UPCOMING YEAR!”
-CAPITOL REBIRTH, PENNSYLVANIA

“OUR PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS SC SAVED THE DAY. WE SPENT MORE THAN A COMBINED 280 HOURS WORKING WITH THE JAILS TO GAIN THE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO OUR JAILED BROTHERS AND BOYS. COVID-19 MADE IT EVEN TOUGHER, BUT BECAUSE OF OUR WORK, WE ARE NOW HAVING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CONDUCTING OUR PROGRAM IN EVERY DJJ FACILITY IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND TWO ADDITIONAL COUNTY JAILS. WE NEARLY DOUBLED OUR GOAL BY REGISTERING 1,900 FORMERLY AND CURRENTLY INCARCERATED BLACK MEN IN SC. WE CONDUCTED VR IN 4 COUNTY JAILS AND ONE DJJ FACILITY.”
- AMPLIFY ACTION, SOUTH CAROLINA

“We assisted a total of 45 first time voters under the age of 21 during early voting and assisted 125 senior citizens via carpools and absentee ballot voting, the oldest being 96 years old. We also engaged in the “done with voting” people who hadn’t voted in 8 years but voting this election with personal stories of how their vote matters.”
- HANNA BROOME, NORTH CAROLINA

“WITNESSED HISTORIC VOTER TURN-OUT OF FOLKS THAT WERE “UNAFRAID” THANKS TO THE BLACKEST MIN-BUS IN AMERICA, AND THE INVESTMENT MADE BY BLACK VOTERS MATTER . . . THINGS WOULD NOT HAVE GONE DOWN IN OUR STATE THE WAY IT DID WITHOUT BLACK VOTERS MATTER.”
- TINA BINGHAM, OF VOTE- LAFAYETTE AND MEMBER OF THE NAACP, LOUISIANA
THE BLACKEST BUS IN AMERICA

In September 2020, Black Voters Matter announced its “We Got The Power” tour, a major voter outreach initiative to educate, engage, and mobilize Black voters ahead of the November election. The initiative, which spanned across 14 key states and included radio advertisements, digital PSAs, and a voter outreach “caravan” that canvassed major metropolitan areas through Election Day for both the Presidential Election and Georgia’s Special Senate Election.

The Blackest Bus in America is a central component of BVM's work. In previous years, the bus has been an important resource for reaching Black voters across the South and Midwest. How does it work? We connect with our Coordinators, organizers, and local partners on the ground to locate predominantly Black communities for a three-pronged strategy for Black voter engagement:

1. Empowering Black voters with community education and support.
2. Protecting voters and restoring electoral integrity through outreach and activism.
3. Blanketing communities in Black love and joy!

It's not that communities don't have power, they have been under-funded and under-resourced. As an organization, we want to make sure we give our folks the necessary tools and resources to build power. It’s About Us!
Our We Got The Power campaign consisted of power-building events that informed and inspired Black voters to utilize their collective power and address community issues and challenges.

BVM also rolled out additional events, tools, and resources in the weeks leading up to Election Day. Also in September, we partnered with BET and the National Urban League for the first-ever “National Black Voter Day,” an effort to demystify the voting process for Black citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic.

BVM also co-hosted the Hip-Hop Political Education Summit on National Voter Registration Day, featuring rapper Chuck D., Princeton University professor Dr. Cornel West, Georgetown University professor Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, Senator Cory Booker, and others.

One of our many stops during our bus tour took place in Los Angeles, California in Partnership with Equal Justice, TIDAL, and GOTV organizations for National Vote Early Day. This event was simulcasted in 13 states. In addition to voter education this event included over 5,000 boxes of free food distribution and celebrity appearances.
LET’S DO IT AGAIN TOUR

In the 2020 Presidential Election we witnessed HISTORIC Black voter turnout but the work was not done yet. BVM was back on the ground for the Georgia Special Election by launching our “Let’s Do It Again” tour to encourage Black voters in Georgia to bring their power to the polls once again by visiting over 50 counties. We started out with our 12 Days Of Christmas Tour where we toured the state of Georgia for 12 Days ahead of Christmas Day for voter education, FREE food and toy giveaways, community discussions, and live performances with our drive-thru tailgates.

We kicked-off our statewide voter outreach tour on the “Blackest Bus in America” with a launch event in Macon, Georgia. From there, we continued to make stops in Columbus, Augusta, and other parts of the state to meet with voters, discuss the challenges facing their communities, and share information about absentee and early voting. To bring in the new year, on December 31st Black Voters Matter held a series of Collard Green Caucuses in multiple cities to continue to get out the vote for the January 5th Run-Off Election. We held events in 30 Georgia counties with 30 food trucks and 9,000 free bags of collard greens and black-eyed peas.
OUR DIGITAL AND MEDIA IMPACT

Due to the current state of the world, a lot of our organizing work went digital. As a national organization, we understand that whether online or on the ground, our community needed us. Not only to stay informed about important election information but also resources and support we provide.


Black Voters Matter Fund’s neighborhood-level engagement in communities across the South and Midwest has also been a news highlight for local and regional media. With regional outlets pursuing coverage around how the 2020 election and other national issues impacted their own communities, Black Voters Matter Fund provided a unique and valuable perspective as a national, Black-led organization with deep local ties.

As a result, it saw tremendous local coverage related to its #WeGotThePower and #LetsDoltAgain campaigns, including print, radio, and television hits in each of its twelve priority states and mentions in The Alabama Political Reporter, The Georgia Recorder, Louisiana Weekly, The Gainesville Sun, The Jacksonville Free Press, The Louisville-Courier Journal, and other local papers of record.
In 2019, our email database consisted of a little over 25,000 recipients. Now, our email database has expanded to 51,000 recipients. Over the course of 2020, we sent a total of 60 emails on the following topics:

- Black Voters Matter Virtual Bus Tour in 8 states to discuss COVID-19 resources, important election information, and key issues impacting communities.
- Highlighting the Black National Convention and Democratic National Convention
- Discussing the Democratic Vice President selection
- Breathe Act
- National Black Voter Day
- Hip Hop Political Education Summit
- We Got The Power Bus Tour
- Let's Do It Again Bus Tour
- 2020 Census
- Police violence
- Partnerships
- National Early Vote Day
- Election information and voter registration resources
- Presidential Election
- Georgia Run-off Election
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Donations
- Petition Signings
- Virtual Events

NEW EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS
30,000

NEW VOLUNTEER SIGN-UPS
4,000

WEBSITE VISITS
817,457
SOCIAL MEDIA

Within the last year, Black Voters Matter has experienced a dramatic increase in our social media presence. Our Facebook has increased from 8,000 to 31,000 followers. Instagram increased from 4,000 to 90,000 followers, and Twitter increased from 10,000 to 70,000 followers.

Through paid social media ads on Facebook and Instagram, we were able to reach over 4.3 million impressions with a 1.4 million reach during the General elections and over 1.3 million impressions with a 855K reach during the Georgia special election. We also gained 30,000 new subscribers via our email list.
TEXTING CAMPAIGNS

In 2020, Black Voters Matter sent 23,972,584 texts on behalf of ourselves and our nationwide partners. These campaigns registered voters, enrolled folks in vote-by-mail, encouraged participation in early voting, got folks rides to the polls, bus tours, and more. The primary themes of our texting campaigns were voter registration, get-out-the-vote, census outreach, and COVID Education Town Halls.

In February 2020, we executed a GOTV campaign in South Carolina for the SC Primary. In March, in Southwest Georgia, we conducted COVID-19 outreach and provided mutual aid through targeted P2P campaigns in Florida.

By April, our COVID-19 outreach expanded to North Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Pennsylvania bolstered by text messaging campaigns.

Black Voters Matter conducted Town Hall events across South Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, North Carolina, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Alabama, and a community conversation in Louisiana.

In 2020, BVM sent 5,688,002 text messages to request vote-by-mail and 4,494,801 texts for early voting and rides to the polls. We sent 1,981,213 voter registration text messages and in the final GOTV push of 2020, BVM sent 4,182,801 messages.
Community-based organizations and associations are the bedrock of BVM’s organizing. Through our support of hundreds of groups across multiple states, we are building a base of engaged residents for long-term, systemic change. In 2020, we established 208 new partnerships with community groups across all target states. These partners were also convened 127 times by BVM in 2020. BVM also gained national partnerships such as: Win Black, Tumblr, SONY, Elect Justice, GIPHY, BET, Empower, National Black Convention, Pandora, Oprah, iHeartMedia, Jordan Brand, Stepping Into Service, Lush, Levi’s, Dolce Vita, Propeller and More Than A Vote.

These partnerships helped to expand the BVM brand and assisted with our organizing efforts on the ground to get out the vote, provide mutual aid to communities, and increase our digital footprint.
“Black voters have proven time and time again to be a key constituency group. We waited in line for hours to cast ballots, faced down agitators at the polls, and fought blatant efforts to suppress our votes, including from the President himself. Even as our communities feel the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic, economic downturn, and police brutality, we have continued to stand up for a fragile democracy that’s been reluctant to stand up for us.”

“This election — and the election outcome — should serve as a stern reminder to elected leaders, representatives, and policymakers everywhere: Black voters matter. Not just in an election year. Not just when it’s politically expedient. Always.”

- Cliff Albright and LaTosha Brown, Black Voters Matter Co-Founders
Thank you for your support:

LIBRA Foundation  
FORD  
Community Foundation of Greater ATL  
Open Society Foundations  
Way to Win  
One for Democracy Fund  
The Equity Fund  
Alki Fund  
America Votes  
Kendeda Fund  
Johnathan Logan Family Foundation  
Womens Donor Network  
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Levi Strauss Foundation  
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General Service Foundation  
Compton Foundation  
Educational Foundation of America Arts Fund  
Overbrook Foundation  
The Heartland Fund  
Hill-Snowdon  
Hive Fund  
Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program Foundation  
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James and Gretchen Sandler Philanthropic Fund  
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Rockefeller Family Fund  
Neo Philanthropy  
Mertz Gilmore Foundation  
The Good Nation  
Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
Greater Houston Community Foundation  
United Philanthropic Fund  
Charitable Gift Fund  
JPMCB Private Bank  
Red Ventures  
JM Kaplan  
Democracy Frontlines Fund  
Georgia Alliance for Education  
Conrad Hilton Foundation  
River Road Foundation  
MS Gift  
Just Fund  
Education of America  
Tides Foundation  
Winward Funds  
WILF Family Foundation  
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