



UNITY 2016 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & VOTER EMPOWERMENT CAMPAIGN REPORT December 2015 – November 2016

OVERVIEW

The National Coalition on Black Civic Participation celebrated the 40th anniversary of its founding in 2016 by actively organizing its Unity '16 Non-Partisan Voter Empowerment & Civic Engagement Campaign (Unity '16 Campaign). A key component of the Unity '16 Campaign strategy was to leverage the trusted relationships of our local affiliates and member organizations with their knowledge of priority issues to reach Black voters paired with a robust communication strategy informed by the latest research. Unity '16 focused on connecting the dots from voting to public policy.

The Unity '16 Campaign includes three (3) organizing components:

- Black Women's Roundtable - Power of the Sister Vote Organizing Initiative
- Black Youth Vote – Vote4Justice Organizing Initiative
- Black Voter Alliance – Black Vote Organizing Collaborative

Media, social media and online tools played a much larger role in our work in 2016 than ever before. We focused worked to ensure the voices of Black Women were heard in the media. This effort helped to place Black Women at the center of the conversation instead of looking in for the sidelines. (Please see attached *Exhibit A – Selected Media Impressions*). We launched our unitycampaign.org website, which provide a clearinghouse for our work and research. As a trusted source, we were able to exponentially expand our reach through Facebook Live and Twitter town halls to ensure that Black voter had access to important issues as they were reflected in the election as well as accurate voter information.

Black Women's Roundtable

On November 16, 2016 the NCBCP convened a BWR Power of the Sister Vote Post-Election Media Briefing on The Role of Race & Gender in the 2016 Presidential Election. As the country reeled from an election that revealed wide racial and gender divides, the briefing presented data analysis and field reports by National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP) state affiliates and Black Women's Roundtable Networks (BWR).

A key takeaway was the impact and role of Black women in elections. Black women turned out in large numbers and remained steadfast as a key voting bloc for candidates that supported the interests of Black women, their families and communities on a

national, state and local level. Additionally, the briefing highlighted the adverse impact that voter suppression had on Black and millennial voters in key states across the country.

The NCBCP's research was a key factor in assisting the organization with identifying the issues that were important to Black women in the 2016 election. The research included the following:

[BWR Non-Partisan 2016 Voter Guide](#) – Released in December 2015

[4th Annual BWR Report, “Black Women in the U.S. Report in the U. S. & Key States](#) – released in March 2016 the

[2nd Annual BWR/Essence Power of the Sister Vote Poll](#) – released in September 2016.

Black Voter Alliance (BVA)

BVA started out as our shared idea to have people gather around “who” they serve rather than “who” they are as organizations. In this way, we were able to have equal and common ground with all organizations interested in elevating the concerns of black voters. This was particularly valuable in a year where resources for C3 civic engagement work was very limited. By the end of 2016, NCBCP convened over 60 organizations through monthly meetings. We created a safe space, where organizations share information as well as strategy. Through this work, we were able to coordinate access to research and data; messaging and social media strategies, as well as collaborate around shared space and most importantly, insure that our field programs were working together to engage black people in their communities.

While BVA is anchored by our monthly meetings, the real work happens with the information and intelligence gained from the meeting. Through this effort, we have been able to connect participants to valuable partnerships, like support the NAACP's Journey for Justice, or sharing the opportunity for organizations with youth constituents to apply for the Hill Snowden Foundation, “Making Black Lives Matter Initiative,” or bringing in media outlets to discuss the communication strategy. In each case, BVA played a critical role in creating efficiency and building relationships that might not have otherwise occurred.

IN THE STATES

The Black Women's Roundtable (BWR) and Black Youth Vote utilized its intergenerational listening session model to engage Black women to participate in voter contact program, including door-to-door canvassing, live phone bank, lit distribution and community events.

Alabama – In AL, a comprehensive, state-wide, voter engagement program was used to with an integrated progressive message targeting women and

youth, through *Black Women's Roundtable* and *Black Youth Vote!* to reach more than 20,000 contacts.

Completed Voter Contacts: 113,470 Completed Pledge Cards: 8349

Florida – In FL, in addition to traditional voter engagement tactics, a series of “sister” conversations were held to educate and empower Floridian women about what was at stake on the ballot, while providing them to tools to activate their friends, family and neighbors. Additionally, FL *BWR* aggressively worked to share voter protection information.

Completed Voter Contacts: 494 Completed Pledge Cards: 10,000

Georgia – The *BWR* team in GA focused on working with local organizations who engaged black women. By working in collaboration with these partners, issues vital to the working family was elevated through social media, forums, phone calls and events. Highlights included: (2) Voter Education Town Halls, phone bank and voter protection training and monitoring.

Completed Voter Contacts: 26,500 Completed Pledge Cards: 4739

Michigan – In MI, our partners in Kalamazoo focused their resources on health care access and reproductive justice, including a massive 5000-person health fair in August. In Detroit, the *BWR* team prioritized working family's economic issues like paid family leave, paid sick days and equal pay. Additionally, the team created “Mom-to-Mom” postcards, phone banking and hosted an equal pay forum in October.

Completed Voter Contacts: 1900 Completed Pledge Cards: 590

Ohio - Like GA, OH conducted focused their work on 7 cities identified by an intricate network of local partners a majority of whom were women organizations invested on advancing progressive economic issues for women. Activities in Ohio included: phone banking, the “Sister Stroll to the Polls” -- highlighting early vote and a community forum in Cleveland. Additionally, in October, the team hosted a tele-town hall, engaging over 16,000 women, featuring state and national leaders highlighting voting rights, economic issues and the need for supporting voter protection efforts.

Completed Voter Contacts: 72,350 Completed Pledge Cards: 38,400

Pennsylvania – Working with *Sisters Saving Ourselves*, we focused on leadership development and outreach into the Pittsburgh community. Highlights included 30 leaders attending the *BWR Summit* and hosting a successful *Power of the Sister Vote State of Emergency Town Hall* with over 250 attendees.

Completed Voters Contacts: 300 Completed Pledge Cards: 179

EXHIBIT A Sample Media – Selected Media Impressions

Story on the Poll/BWR

<http://www.insightnews.com/2016/10/20/new-poll-of-black-women-voters-shows-dramatic-increase-in-concern-about-criminal-justice-reform/>

Washington Post (47 million online 860,000 daily circ.)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/09/15/at-congressional-black-caucus-panel-women-urged-to-talk-to-our-men-about-the-stakes-in-the-presidential-election/>

ESSENCE Magazine (24 million online 1.4 monthly circ.)

Mention of BWR/ESSENCE poll part II

<http://www.essence.com/2016/09/07/hillary-clinton-black-women-vote-2016-election>

(Note: an interview with Melanie is also featured in the November 2016 ESSENCE on stands now)

Story on the BWR Tour

C-Span (Broadcast in 115 million homes nationwide)

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?416718-3/washington-journal-melanie-campbell-voter-engagement-2016>

Birmingham Times

<http://www.birminghamtimes.com/2016/10/black-women-will-elect-the-next-president-2/>

NBC BLK (reaches 8 million readers monthly)

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/oped-black-women-ohio-take-sister-stroll-polls-n675026>

USA Today (37 million unique online visitors – circ 1.6 million daily)

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/elections/2016/2016/10/28/voting-rights-group-ramping-up-protection-efforts/92894090/>

Final Call

http://www.finalcall.com/artman/publish/National_News_2/article_103359.shtml

Amsterdam News

<http://amsterdamnews.com/news/2016/oct/27/black-womens-roundtable-kicks-nationwide-power-sis/>

Westside Gazette

<http://thewestsidegazette.com/black-womens-roundtable-launches-national-vote-effort/>

San Diego Voice

<http://sdvoice.info/black-womens-roundtable-launches-national-vote-effort/>

Afro-American

<http://www.afro.com/effort-to-mobilize-black-female-vote-is-underway/>

NNPA Story (content sent to 203 newspapers- reaches 15 million people weekly)

<http://sdvoice.info/black-womens-roundtable-launches-national-vote-effort/>

Black Press [USA.com](http://www.blackpressusa.com) (750,000 unique visitors monthly)

<http://www.blackpressusa.com/black-womens-roundtable-launches-national-vote-effort/>