



COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER
SUCCESS STRATEGIES FOR COLORADO NONPROFITS

The Participation Project: 2016 Voter Engagement Program

Background & Growing Impact

The Participation Project was founded in 2010 to address the civic and advocacy capacity gap among human service nonprofits who have a direct reach into politically marginalized communities in Colorado. In January 2016, the Participation Project was adopted as a program of Community Resource Center. The Participation Project seeks to increase the capacity of organizations by providing guidance, training, and support to human service nonprofits for their nonpartisan advocacy and civic engagement efforts.



In 2016, programs focused on the general election through a state-wide voter engagement campaign. Our partner organizations include food pantries, community health centers, employment and education service centers, and more. These organizations provide life-giving and life-changing resources to the community.

Voter engagement efforts are one way to address the disparities that exists in our electorate and country. Voter engagement efforts included education, registration, and efforts to ensure voters cast their ballots. **Since 2010, the Participation Project and our organizational partners have directly engaged over 19,000 individuals in civic activity.**

2016 Voter Engagement Accomplishments and Impact

In 2016 the Participation Project trained, coached, and/or provided support to **20 nonprofit service providers** across the state of Colorado (see enclosed list). Together with our partners, this program engaged **5,364 clients and individuals** across the state to register and pledge to vote, and engaged **1,949** additional individuals from past cycles and other CRC programs. The PP partnered with a diverse group of human service nonprofits, training **90 staff and volunteers** on the importance of voting, voter engagement tactics, nonpartisanship, voting rights, and cultural competency.

2015 Experiment Results

In 2015, the Participation Project, in conjunction with Nonprofit Vote, ran a voter registration experiment to help determine the impact and effectiveness of this unique model. **The key takeaway - voter registration efforts and nonprofit service providers can reach potential voters that are largely missed by other efforts and can have an impact on their voter turnout.**

About half or 51% of the voter registrations collected resulted in net registrations from new registrants and those who were prevented from being de-registered. **By comparison, other site-based experiments at bus stops, grocery stores, etc. resulted in 27% and 29% net registration rates.**

Voter Education Scale

CPP's 2016 program resulted in 5,364 direct contacts with voters across **18 counties**. This included approximately 1,385 new and updated voter registrations and 3,979 pledges to vote.

List of Participating Organizations

- Denver Urban Matters
- The Center
- Harm Reduction Action Center
- Boulder County AIDS Project
- Florence Crittenton Services of Colorado
- Women's Bean Project
- Sister Carmen Community Center
- Mi Casa Resource Center
- Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
- Colorado Cross Disability Coalition
- Metro Community Provider Network
- Salud Family Health Centers
- Sunrise Community Health
- Emergency Family Assistance Association
- Denver Inner City Parish
- Volunteers of America
- Colorado African Organization
- Advocates for Recovery
- Clinica Family Health
- Lutheran Family Services, Rocky Mountains

One common reaction from clients when we ask them to register to vote is surprise. Clients have often been surprised – and in some instances grateful – that folks who are homeless can register. Clients have also not realized that they need to re-register and update their address if they have moved. They are often grateful to us for relaying this information to them.

- Ashley Burnside, Denver Urban Matters (DenUM)



Field Program

The Participation Project ran the largest field program in its history, hiring 7 Voter Engagement Canvassers to extend the reach of partner organizations and provide on-site support. Canvassers included current partner clients, social workers, and emerging grassroots leaders. Canvassers received in-depth training on nonprofit voter engagement, nonpartisanship, canvass tactics, voting rights, and cultural competency.

Get Out The Vote (GOTV)

All GOTV efforts provided nonpartisan information regarding methods to cast a ballot and resources for troubleshooting issues. GOTV efforts were designed to reach the entire CRC/Participation Project universe. Various methods were used to target specific groups within the universe, including newly engaged individuals, individuals engaged in previous election cycles, and individuals from CRC's statewide work. These methods included live, bilingual phone calls, a direct mail piece, texts, and digital engagement through CRC's social media, email and website. This resulted in over **12,725 contact attempts** to participate in the 2016 election, with more than **7,400 completed contacts**.

Digital Program	Mail	Phone
Social Media, Website, Email	Bilingual Mail Piece	Live, Bilingual Calls- Make a Plan Script

In the week prior to and including Election Day, participating partner organizations and canvassers educated clients, staff and supporters regarding voter service center locations and ballot drop off information via personal contacts, social media outreach and other communication streams.

Partnerships

Nonprofit Vote and the Colorado Civic Engagement Roundtable are critical partners to Community Resource Center, providing data and systems support, resources, tools, and infrastructure. The Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition who ensure our efforts reflect the laws and voting rights of people with criminal backgrounds and the importance of re-enfranchising communities. JustVote Colorado: Election Protection Program provided training and materials to help remove barriers to voting by providing and necessary information to protect voters as they cast their ballots.

Participation Project Staff and Contact Information

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