

Grassroots organizing app meets voters, supporters, where they are

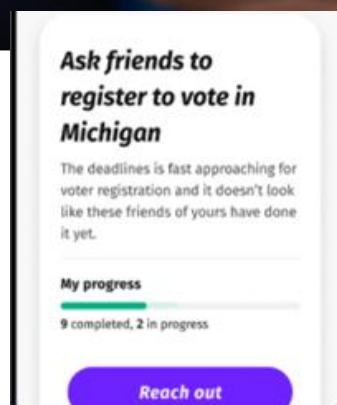
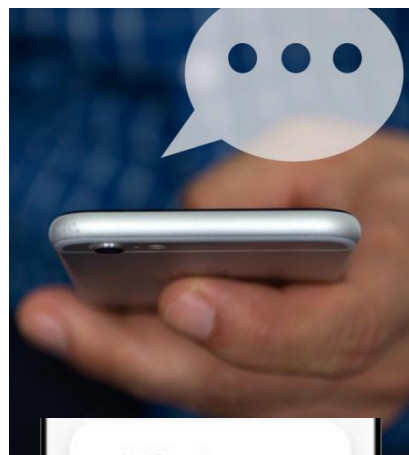
REACH



by Susan Fabrick
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*“Solidarity among human beings can happen spontaneously, as in a flood or fire, or by design, through organizing.” — Jane F. McAlevey
No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age*

*“To win big, we have to follow the methods of spending very little time engaging with people who already agree, and devote most of our time to the harder work of helping people who do not agree come to understand who is really to blame for the pain in their lives.” — Jane F. McAlevey
A Collective Bargain: Unions, Organizing, and the Fight for Democracy*



The Muskegon County Democratic Party is rebuilding to form a county wide group of activists and organizers who are willing to carry the message of the Democratic Party to every voter.

TRADITIONAL OUTREACH

You all know the traditional methods of reaching voters: knocking doors, direct mail campaigns, social media posts, phone calls and texting, TV and radio ads and more. Good research has been done on what actually works to get people out to vote. All those mass media efforts have some effects, but what REALLY is effective is personal contact.

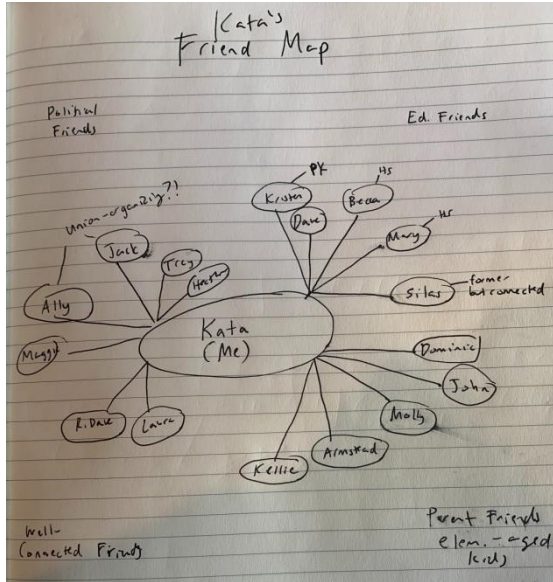
Handwritten postcards may be more effective than mailers. A conversation at a voter's door is more effective than "lit-dropping" — leaving a candidate flyer at the door. Phone calls from experienced phone bankers who know the community are far more effective than calls from an inexperienced caller from outside the community, and WAY more effective than robo calls.

RELATIONAL ORGANIZING OUTREACH

New methods have sprung up in recent years to do RELATIONAL ORGANIZING using social media. These tools allow volunteer organizers to use their personal social media contacts to spread the organization's ideas. They provide organizers with ways to START A CONVERSATION with people they already know, around political topics.



Research already shows that a face to face conversation with someone you know is the best way to communicate political ideas. It makes sense that conversations using social media to text and message people you already know could be crucial to spreading the message of the Democratic Party.



MI DEMS HARRIS

The Michigan Democratic Party is using a platform called REACH to do this. REACH is a cell phone app that can be used in a variety of ways.

When you download REACH, you can use its library to send memes, short messages and short videos to people you select in your contact list, or as posts on your social media feed.

The Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) and Biden/Harris are together creating the library so it reflects the campaign's most recent priorities.

If you choose, you can download selected people into the REACH database with information about their political leanings. This helps the MDP know who they need to reach to get out the votes, and how to tailor their messaging.

GET THE WORD OUT AND INTERACT TOO

REACH is not just intended as a way to push out information. The app also facilitates ongoing conversations with your contacts. And if someone starts to change their mind as a result of your conversation, you can put that information into the REACH database.

For more information on REACH, email us at muskegondems@gmail.com. Or visit our office at CIO Headquarters, 486 W Western Ave, Muskegon on Fridays 1-4 pm. We can tell you how to download the Michigan version of REACH, and help you get started.

If you can't knock on doors or feel uncomfortable with phone banking, REACH may be your way of becoming a Muskegon County Democratic Party organizer.

Rest in power, Jane McAlevy, 1964-2024, outstanding labor organizer, educator and author. She died July 9, 2024 of cancer at the age of 59.

See our related articles: [Reflections on Door Knocking](#), and [How to Talk with People with Different Political Views](#)