



OHIO ORGANIZING  
COLLABORATIVE



# GROWING OHIO'S GRASSROOTS POWER

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



# EXPANDING & STRENGTHENING OUR BASE

In 2023, OOC grew our grassroots membership and strengthened our base to build long-term power in Ohio. We created **a robust organizing agenda that tapped into the power of hundreds of Ohioans**, conducting regular leadership trainings and public actions that helped build our members' power and grow their political skills and acumen. Our members also **participated in key transformative fights** this year around the state budget, direct democracy, reproductive freedom, and marijuana legalization.

Anchored by our base of formerly incarcerated folks, child care providers, faith leaders, college students, and parents, we are **proud to keep growing the leadership of directly impacted people in Ohio.**

We're excited to see what this newly activated base of powerful Ohioans will unleash in 2024!





# A YEAR OF PROTECTING OUR FREEDOMS IN OHIO

## ENSHRINING ABORTION RIGHTS & LEGALIZING MARIJUANA

Winning abortion rights and marijuana legalization is a powerful testament to the growing grassroots movement in Ohio. We thank the **thousands of young voters, Black voters, and women who turned out to vote** for their fundamental freedoms. These voters **represent the future of Ohio**.

From Toledo to Chillicothe, Cleveland to Cincinnati, everyday Ohioans spoke **loud and clear about the future we want for our state**.



## DEFENDING DIRECT DEMOCRACY & PROTECTING MAJORITY RULE



The collective power of Ohioans also resulted in the **defeat of Issue 1**, an undemocratic, unpopular, and unconstitutional amendment that would have allowed minority rule to rule in Ohio.

OOC was a **key part of building the coalition** of more than 250 organizations to stop attacks on direct democracy in Ohio. This attempt to raise the threshold for ballot initiatives to 60% and increase signature requirements proved to be a **thinly-veiled attempt to prevent popular measures** heading for the ballot in Ohio – from raising wages, protecting abortion rights, and strengthening our democracy.

# GET OUT THE VOTE: OUR IMPACT

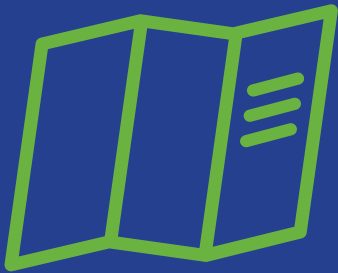
OOC and our sister organization Ohio Organizing Campaign ran the largest independent field program to win abortion rights and bodily freedoms for Ohioans.



**21,684**  
VOTER REGISTRATIONS



**44,050**  
TEXTS SENT



**35,000**  
VOTER GUIDES  
DISTRIBUTED



**8,586**  
CALLS MADE

**19**  
EARLY VOTE  
EVENTS

**696**

VOTE PLEDGES/  
TRIPLING

**282**

NEW VOLUNTEER  
SIGN UPS

**5,025**

VOL LITERATURE  
DISTRIBUTED

**630**

VOLUNTEERS  
ENGAGED

**1,098**

VOLUNTEER  
SHIFTS FILLED

OUR C4 PARTNER OHIO ORGANIZING CAMPAIGN



KNOCKED ON  
**372,753**  
DOORS



COMPLETED  
**56,170**  
CONVERSATIONS

# PUSHING FOR A PEOPLE'S BUDGET



Ohioans **protected fair public school funding, expanded initial eligibility for childcare, and expanded Medicaid to include doula and midwife services** as part of the biennial state budget. We also helped ensure early childhood Medicaid coverage for Ohio parents regardless of race and income.



Although the budget included harmful provisions regarding private school vouchers and continued attacks on academic freedom, **Ohioans are organizing and fighting back.** We will build upon this momentum for our campaigns in 2024 and beyond.



## FIGHTING FOR FAIR PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING

During the budget season, parents and public school supporters **helped protect more than \$500 million in public school funding** and advanced Ohioans towards a full phase-in of the Fair School Funding Plan. They also ensured the school funding formula would **include current data and account for the costs of educating students with disabilities and students learning the English language.**

During the November election, our leaders also helped pass Issue 11, a **levy that will retain critical teaching and professional services staff, expand Pre-K, and fund much-needed building renovations throughout Columbus Public Schools.** The collective power that we've built as a result of our previous public school funding wins contributes towards the **full and permanent implementation of the Fair School Funding Plan.**





# CHANGING THE NARRATIVE: A PEOPLE'S BUDGET FOR CLEVELAND

In Cleveland, formerly incarcerated leaders **organized around the need for participatory budgeting to fund our communities.** They played a **key role in getting out the vote for Issue 38**, a sweeping participatory budgeting initiative that would have allocated \$14 million of Cleveland taxpayer dollars to community projects.

While the measure narrowly lost, **the power in numbers that BFO brought to the fore helped close the gap.** BFO leaders will leverage this newly built power to fight for future funding to go towards their communities.





# KEY HIGHLIGHTS

1

## ALL IN FOR OHIO: PEOPLE'S BUDGET LOBBY DAY

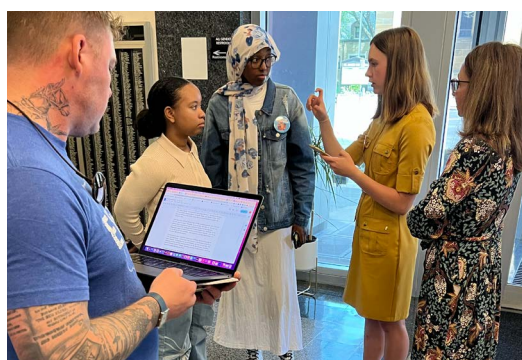
OOC's biennial budget campaigns protect public school funding and child care for Ohioans



2

## ALL IN FOR OHIO KIDS: FIGHTING FOR FAIR PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING

Public education supporters protect public school funding and advance Ohioans towards a full phase-in of the Fair School Funding Plan





# KEY HIGHLIGHTS

## 3 THE CEO PROJECT: FUNDING OHIO'S CARE ECONOMY

Child care leaders lobby for early childhood education funding at local, state, and federal levels



**BREAKING NEWS**

**CEO**  
THE LEE CONYER GRADING PROJECT

THE CEO PROJECT &  
OOC RELEASE MEMO TO  
INTEL CORPORATION  
URGING THEM TO  
INVEST IN OHIO'S  
CHILDCARE WORKERS

#DayWithoutChildcare



## 4 BUILDING FREEDOM OHIO: THE RISE OF BFO

Formerly incarcerated Ohioans develop solutions to eliminate collateral sanctions and ease community reintegration





# KEY HIGHLIGHTS

5

## OHIO STUDENT ASSOCIATION:

Young Ohioans use direct action to defend academic and reproductive freedoms in Ohio



6

## THE AMOS PROJECT:

Faith leaders organize to protect voting rights and engage Black voters in Ohio





# TELLING THE STORY OF A PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT: OOC MEDIA COVERAGE

2023 saw **OOC and our members prominently featured** in nearly 100 local, state, and national press. The **majority of coverage spotlighted our grassroots leaders** as on critical issues regarding democracy, voting rights, economic justice, and our reproductive, bodily, and academic freedoms.

## Organizers in Ohio work to engage 'rightfully cynical' Black voters



Pastor Lesley Jones (middle) and other voters at "Souls to the Polls" in Hamilton County, Ohio. (Courtesy of Pastor Lesley Jones)

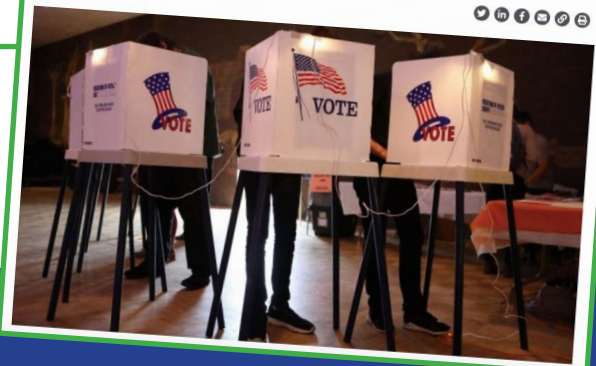
## State needs 'People's Budget,' funding child care, public education, policy group says



## Issue 38 - putting schools and streets of Cleveland on track: Fred Ward



## 'A sleeping giant.' Voting rights groups engage Black Ohioans



## 'We Build Democracy Through Grassroots Organizing'

by Molly Shack and Stephanie Luce · June 15, 2023



- **STATEHOUSE NEWS BUREAU:** Public school advocates worry DeWine's budget will take money away from students
- **THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH:** OSU student: 'We must call out Issue 1 for what it is: voter suppression.'
- **WOSU PUBLIC MEDIA:** Many Black students don't feel supported on Ohio campuses, according to new report
- **TRUTHOUT:** The Story Behind the Abortion Win in Ohio Offers Important Insights for 2024
- **NEWSONE:** Ohio's Black Voters Credited For Protecting Abortion Access, Legalizing Recreational Marijuana
- **DAYTON DAILY NEWS:** VOICES: Organizing for Ohio's future
- **USA TODAY:** Abortion rights inspire these young voters like no other issue. How they're fighting ahead of 2024.
- **THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH:** Ohio's inequitable child care system is built on underpaid Black women. Fixed it! Opinion

For the full list of press clips, please see [www.ohorganizing.org/press](http://www.ohorganizing.org/press).



# LOOKING TOWARDS 2024: IMPORTANT TRANSITIONS & CONTINUED GROWTH

This year, **we are fondly saying goodbye to our co-executive director Prentiss Haney.** Prentiss is moving with his partner to Philadelphia, and while he will no longer work full-time for the organization, he will continue to serve in a consulting capacity from afar.



Prentiss has been a stalwart of the OOC since starting out as a student leader nearly a decade ago. Molly will continue to serve as Executive Director, and the OOC senior team will continue to grow into new leadership roles across the organization. **We wish Prentiss all the best.**

**We are also growing our strategic capacities team.** We recently hired Deidra Reese as OOC's Voter Engagement Director. **Deidra is a long-time Ohio advocate and lobbyist** who most recently worked for the Ohio Unity Coalition, where she helped mobilize and activate Black voters. We're excited to welcome Deidra to the OOC!



PHOTO CREDIT: ASSOCIATED PRESS

**OOC is committed to protecting our democracy and voting freedoms in Ohio.** In 2024, we will focus on securing fair congressional and legislative maps for Ohioans, expanding the electorate by registering high-propensity voters, and facilitating access to the ballot through automatic and same-day voter registration.

**We thank you for your support, and look forward to building more power with you in 2024!**