

MAXIM THORNE, ESQ. was selected to lead Campus Elect (now Civic Influencers™) in June 2021. He is leading at a pivotal time, when the landscape for young people understanding, and participating in, our democracy is changing so rapidly that they may never inherit the future we promised. Rigorous novel data collection and analysis are now driving our youth centric voting interventions, and determining what we are scaling. This data driven approach will have a greater impact on increasing young people's voting and civic power.

"These times call for rigorous and data driven work, to effectively mobilize young people both on- and off-campus in strategic districts. We must bridge the town and gown divide, continue to work with two- and four-year college faculty and administrations, partner with community groups and support young people's participation in social justice movements." - Maxim Thorne, Esq., Civic Influencers CEO

RE-IMAGINING WHY, HOW AND WHERE WE ENGAGE YOUTH VOTERS

After our intense retreat in August, we committed ourselves to ensuring young voices and votes matter in our democracy. We have reimagined how and where to engage young voters. The data compel us to center racial equity and the enfranchisement of Black, Indigenous and Youth of Color (BIYoC) populations, and to increase our work in key states and at People of Color Serving Institutions (PoCSIs), including Tribal Campuses, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and more. We adopted our **Organizing, Advocacy and Learning** model to equip young people to dismantle barriers to voting.

HOW WE POWER YOUNG VOICES AND VOTES

With surgical precision, lawmakers are depriving young people of their right to vote. They have introduced over 400 voting bills in 49 states during 2021 alone, 30 of which have already been signed into law. They are targeting BIYoC populations especially. These bills and laws are gerrymandering predominantly Black colleges, banning polling sites and prohibiting voter registration on campuses and rejecting student IDs as voter IDs. The intent is to discourage BIYoC voters because of their success in impacting important elections in 2020 and in January 2021.

We are deploying new data-driven interventions to help young people confront the horrifying movement of voter suppression bills across the US, which coincides with a fourth wave of COVID. We have designed three major series of interventions to dismantle new and existing barriers: **Youth Civic Power**, **Campus Civic Power** and **Institution Civic Power**. We are training and deploying 600 funded "**Civic Influencers**" both on- and off-campus to influence their peers and communities, through on-the-ground and digital organizing. These will help maintain and increase youth voting rates and civic power.

YOUTH CIVIC POWER – EXPANDING OFF-CAMPUS

In 2021, Civic Influencers will begin engaging youth off-campus through our Civic Influencers and digital organizing. In 2021, two-year higher education institutions experienced a shocking 19% decline in first-year enrollment. Four year colleges and universities saw an unprecedented 13% drop in first-year enrollment.

Civic Influencers expanded to serve young people both on- and off-campus, partnering with both colleges and community organizations to ensure that we are building youth civic power wherever young people congregate. Our work is youth-centered and youth-facing.

We are engaging the growing number of youth who are no longer college bound, to register them and get them to vote. By focusing on leadership capacity building, we help young leaders to craft and implement Civic Influencers Action Plans for their communities. These include innovative convenings like HBCU Civic Action Summits, building Town-Gown Coalitions and disseminating voter resources to BIYoC peers.

Some of our most data-driven, impactful interventions include coaching Civic Influencers to:

- share accurate information in novel ways like using social media and peer-to-peer texting campaigns;
- promote early voting;
- shuttle young people to the polls;
- cure rejected absentee ballots remotely;
- advocate for drop boxes and multilingual ballots; and
- co-sponsor events and integrate voter registration and education at youth centric events in areas around arts, sports, music and social networking.

CAMPUS CIVIC POWER

Civic Influencers will continue to engage young people, with increased cultural competence, on campuses through our Civic Influencers and digital organizing. We currently have partnerships with 83 PoCSIs in 21 states, including 28 HBCUs and 44 HSIs. Civic Influencers on campuses will run registration drives, provide civic education in classrooms, engage student groups and volunteers and encourage voting among their peers.

INSTITUTION CIVIC POWER

Our work with young people both on- and off-campus will be complemented by our commitment to working with the leaders of institutions who serve young people. Civic Influencers will partner with college and university leaders, as well as student governments and young people-serving community organizations, to provide resources and to help them create a culture of voter engagement. We work to convince these leaders to implement voter friendly policies like making Election Day a holiday, bringing polling sites on campus and ensuring student IDs can be used as voter IDs.

DATA-DRIVEN STRATEGIES

We focus on youth data to determine where youth can have the greatest impact on elections and increasing young people's civic power, including marginal utility of the youth vote and demographic voter performance on campuses, districts and states. In 2021, our data compels action in **New Mexico** and **Virginia**. In 2022, this results in 9 states (and possibly 1 more, dependent on funding) in which to significantly deepen our work: **Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas** and **Wisconsin** (and potentially **Florida**). Meanwhile, we will maintain a lighter digital footprint in 30 states to increase youth voting. Our two-tiered approach allows us to invest deeply in states where voting margins are tight, youth impact and

voter suppression are great, and other factors align, to maintain or increase youth voter turnout.

For talent acquisition and retention, we are a very skilled, culturally competent and diverse team across the country. In addition, we are recruiting and granting higher stipends to **600 Civic Influencers, who are being deployed both on- and off-campus**, to build momentum for increased youth civic power leading up to the Midterms and Presidential Election.

“Youth voting and election participation are essential to an inclusive democracy. By working with institutions and youth on- and off-campus, we will have an immediate and increased impact on youth voting this year and onwards. Our very democracy now depends on the young people voting.” Maxim Thorne, Esq., Civic Influencers CEO