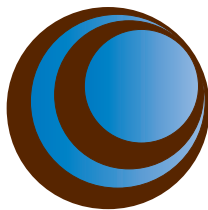


All. Together. Now.

Pushback Network | 2007 Report on Activities



Pushback
NETWORK

All. Together. Now.



March 14, 2008

I spent most of my early life in Black Churches – truth be told I was one southern gospel revival away from forever being known as Reverend McKenzie. As a child, my favorite reason to go to church was to see people testify. Where I grew up, Testimony Service was an opportunity for church members to stand up and speak about their struggles and pains, sometimes asking for help, but more often sharing heart-wrenching stories of how they managed to survive and get by in South Dallas, Texas.

As one person after another rose and testified, I could feel an overwhelming sense of hope and desperation as the entire church grappled with something much bigger than themselves — somehow the system wasn't created for them. I could feel Sister Jones's pain as she stood, crying about losing her job and how she couldn't imagine how she'd be able to feed her two kids; or the hopelessness that Brother Lester shared as he talked about his inability to afford blood pressure medicine. But what I remember even more poignantly is the support and togetherness, the shared belief that somehow things would get better, and that "somehow" involved everyone. Those moments were an opportunity for me to struggle with hope as a strategy and to think about ways that, as a community, we can build something with the capacity to change our lives.

Across the country, from Harlem to Albuquerque to Eastern Kentucky, residents of historically disenfranchised communities like the one I lived in as a child, are testifying about their lives in Precinct Leader Meetings, City Halls, Neighborhood Meetings, Door-to-Door Canvasses and State and National Pushback Network Convenings. These everyday people are testifying with clear purpose and greater hope, with support from the Pushback Network, because they are taking the steps to build the power it takes to move hope into victory.

I am privileged to be Director of the Pushback Network, a young and growing alliance making significant impact through a unique, state-based, "bottom-up" strategy that combines community organizing and voter work. We invite you to read our 2007 Report on Activities. This report reflects on what we accomplished in just our second year of operations and, I believe, will help you see why we are so excited about our potential. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 323.274.8191 or by email at rodney@pushbacknetwork.org. You can keep up to date with Pushback Network's work by visiting our website at www.pushbacknetwork.org. Check back often to stay involved!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodney McKenzie, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Rodney McKenzie, Jr.
Coordinating Director

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ABOUT PUSHBACK NETWORK

“The vision, strategy, and direction come from the communities doing the work. We all have something in common and link the work to ultimately build greater power for all of us.”

— Adrienne Shropshire, NY Jobs with Justice

Pushback Network (PBN) began in 2005 as a dialogue among experienced, non-partisan, independent community-based groups. PBN's founders were leaders of organizations that had built long-term, on-the-ground operations within the most challenging social environments in the country. They formed PBN to “push back” against what they considered to be shortsighted, tactical approaches to community organizing and electoral work.

Rather than forming a newly assembled national organization, PBN connects the infrastructures of well-established, high-performance community organizing groups from across the country to achieve a breakthrough in civic participation.

Currently in six states — Alabama, California, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Mexico, and New York — PBN is self-consciously a mixture of geographic regions, urban and rural communities, and a diversity of ethnic and racial populations. PBN exists to discover the most effective civic engagement strategies, programs, and activities, and how they can best be utilized as both universal and tailor-made models. Our goal is to bring these best practices together to build the kind of power required to change the power dynamic across the country. To reach that goal, as a part of a results-driven, sustainable growth plan, PBN is working to grow to include ten states by the end of 2008.

PBN is committed to revitalizing our democracy through the use of well-considered, state-based, grassroots driven strategies that are tested for accountability and freely shared and tailored to suit their environment. Our networks and allied partners expand and deepen civic participation and catalyze informed, sustained voter engagement among those

most underrepresented in the electorate — people of color, poor and working class communities, and young people. We build on decades of community organizing where networks and organizations are grown from local organizing, to regional campaigns, to emerging state formations.

To attain a higher level of progressive electoral power, PBN understands the need for multi-dimensional community organizing and electoral strategies that strengthen state-wide infrastructures, identify and address issues of public concern, emphasize investment in indigenous leadership development, and facilitate the overall participation of people of color, low income and working-class people, and young people in civic and voter-engagement processes.

Where the core ingredients of our model — **indigenous anchor organizations** taking the lead, centering **civic engagement work in underrepresented communities**, integrating that work with **ongoing community organizing**, and focusing on **building state alliances from the bottom up** — meet sufficient resources, dynamic and unique contributions are made to our goal of changing the composition and participation of the electorate and adding powerful voices of influence from the grassroots.

“Pushback helps us see that the changes we make in New Mexico bubble up to change the country. While our focus is on New Mexico, we also have a vision of the United States that's different. We identify with Pushback's vision of creating something that's bottom-up, that's rooted from our experience, and it was timely because we were ready for it to happen.”

— Robby Rodriguez,
South West Organizing Project

BOTTOM-UP BUILDING! 59% of money raised by PBN goes directly into its regranting program — supporting the work on the ground so it informs the work at the state-level to the national stage.

Pushback Network was built on a foundation of leadership, experience and know-how. PBN's anchor and allied organizations have a proven history of organizing for success and making real change happen at home. Our strength lies in our diversity. We are developing leaders and program strategies in diverse areas from population dense New York City, to New Mexico desert communities, Kentucky coal mining towns, widespread Los Angeles County and the red roads of rural Mississippi. Our work environment affects our strategies, and the needs of our base communities affect our programmatic priorities.

ALABAMA

"Pushback understands that power within low-income communities isn't indigenous to a certain kind of community, but that it's possible in all communities. Pushback is making connections across all regions of this country and that is the key to bridging the gap between state movements and a national progressive movement." – Scott Douglas, GBM

Alabama is an increasingly urban state containing the four major centers of Birmingham, Mobile, Montgomery, and Huntsville. While each of the four urban areas has its own rapidly expanding suburban environment, the cities themselves suffer from severe decay in infrastructure, housing, living wage employment, health care and public education.

The world-class health care available to the wealthy residents of Birmingham and Mobile is not accessible to low-income residents of Alabama. An antiquated Alabama Constitution keeps education and public transportation funding at a minimum. The Black Belt region of Alabama is one of the poorest regions of the country, reporting unemployment rates as high as 16%, and is rapidly losing population because of the absence of jobs, the lack of resources to adequately fund public education, and the low quality of housing stock.

Anchor Organizations
Greater Birmingham Ministries (GBM)
GBM is an ecumenical and interfaith organization with a thirty-five year history of direct services and community organizing. GBM's membership includes



some 17 faith bodies, Christian, Jewish and Muslim, with membership statewide. Greater Birmingham Ministries is located in Birmingham, Alabama, where the metropolitan population contains some 25% of the state's voters as well as 25% of the state's African American population. GBM has a two-prong, multi-organizational, multi-year strategy combining issue/base-building work in metropolitan Birmingham with the state's constitution reform work in ways that develop ongoing leadership among our precinct level grassroots constituencies and engages targeted populations, especially among people of color, in enhanced electoral participation.

Anchor Organizations Arise Citizens' Policy Project (ACPP)

Arise Citizens' Policy Project is a statewide citizens' organization composed of 155 faith-based and community groups. ACPP analyzes state policies and uses three kinds of activities to promote fairer state policies toward low-income Alabamians: policy analysis, statewide organizing, and citizen advocacy.

COUNTING ALABAMA 2007*

Organizations in State Alliance **2**
Active Campaign Volunteers **5**
Voters identified as supporters **300**
Voter Contacts **750**

**These numbers represent the first electoral campaign run by Greater Birmingham Ministries.*

Base: Low-income residents and people of color.

Issues: Constitutional reform, tax reform, campaign finance reform, affordable housing, public transportation, and fair distribution of hurricane relief funding.

Strategies: Direct services; integration of faith and community and economic justice; strategic communications and messaging; anchoring multi-sector, multi-region strategic analysis toward systemic change.

KEY:



Anchor
Organizations



Pushback
Participants

CALIFORNIA

“Pushback advances our efforts to build electoral capacity and coalition throughout California’s diverse political landscape.” – Rudy Gonzalves, California Alliance

California is the most populous state in the nation, with 36 million people, and it’s one of the world’s most diverse areas. No race or ethnic group constitutes a majority of the state’s population. One of every four Californians is an immigrant – a higher proportion than in any other state.

The bustle of everyday life in California’s diverse communities sharply contrasts with its political landscape. Although the state has undergone major political shifts over the last two decades, the state of civic affairs is in fact languishing. It’s marked by record-setting declines in civic participation, and an ever-widening gap between those that vote and those that don’t – mostly distinguished by race, income and education.

“PEP has helped to boost our regional coalition building. We’ve connected with groups doing similar work throughout the state, and have taken advantage of joint planning, training, technical assistance and voter contact tools.” – Esther Portillo, Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, San Bernardino/Riverside, CA

California Alliance

The California Alliance, founded in 2003, is committed to developing long-term strategic initiatives from a common set of values and vision. Its Progressive Electoral Project (PEP) is a collective effort to boost communities of color, low-income communities, and young people into greater civic involvement. It envisions effective networks of community-based groups committed to grassroots civic participation and the capacity to coordinate multi-region field programs as a way to build progressive state power. This work enables the California Alliance to move beyond defensive and tactical work to advancing policy ideas that resonate with both its base communities and the mainstream electorate.

Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE)

The mission of SCOPE is to develop multi-dimensional approaches that reduce and eliminate structural barriers to social and economic opportunities for poor and economically disadvantaged communities and communities of color. SCOPE pursues this mission by: building grassroots organization, leadership, alliances and power in communities most affected by social and economic justice; developing movement and power from the bottom up through organizing, alliance

building, and collaborations in expanding arenas of struggle (local, regional, statewide and national); and winning systemic social change from the bottom up.



COUNTING CALIFORNIA 2007

Precincts Covered **22**
Active Campaign Volunteers **65**
Voters Contacted **3,621**
Voters in Database **400,000+**

Base: African American, Latino/a and low income communities in key California regions.

Issues: Grassroots progressive electoral power; environmental justice; tax and fiscal policy reform; low-wage workers rights.

Strategies: Building models of civic participation; developing strategic alliances between diverse communities; equipping poor and disadvantaged communities with strategic resources and relevant political and policy analysis; providing training and strategic facilitation to allied organizations; peer-to-peer intermediary collaboration primarily led by people of color; innovative statewide strategic initiatives; statewide electoral capacity building; statewide campaign coordination; targeted regional policy campaigns to address conditions of poverty, unemployment, and low-wages in inner-city neighborhoods.

KENTUCKY

“PBN has helped to open up my organizing to connect more directly the impact of what we’re doing locally to national policy change. Pushback has helped shape our work by providing tools, shared experiences and evaluation techniques. Through our partnership with Pushback Network we learned how to keep the pressure on between election cycles.” – Darnell Johnson, Kentucky Jobs with Justice

Kentucky is a Southern and Appalachian state with strong ties to the Midwest. The state is the ninth most rural in the nation, with an economy based on a growing service sector and a shrinking contribution from manufacturing, mining and agriculture. Its two urban centers, Louisville and Lexington, comprise about a third of the state’s population. In addition, several sprawling counties on the border with Cincinnati, Ohio, boast a larger total population than Lexington itself.

Kentucky faces many serious challenges associated with widespread and persistent poverty. The state claims 29 of the 100 poorest counties in the US, based on median household income. (Mississippi is next with 13 counties.)

Kentucky provides an excellent case study of a heavily Democratic state (at least by party registration) that has propelled conservative Republicans to state and national power over the past decade. But the political landscape in Kentucky is now in flux and seems poised on the edge of significant change.

⚓ **Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC)**

KFTC is a 26-year old grassroots social justice organization with 5,100 members statewide. KFTC has built 10 local chapters, including two in the most populous cities, several in small towns located in central Kentucky, and 6 in the Appalachian coalfields of eastern Kentucky.

⚓ **Kentucky Jobs with Justice (KYJwJ)**

Kentucky Jobs with Justice just celebrated its 15th anniversary. KYJwJ is comprised of a diverse coalition of more than 80 labor, community, and religious organizations in Kentucky who are committed to taking action to support workers’ social and economic rights.

COUNTING KENTUCKY 2007

Number of organizations in State Alliance **2**
 Active Campaign Volunteers **95**
 Number of Voter Contacts **19,086**
 Total voters in database **11,986**
 Voters identified as supporters **8,815**

Base: Low-income and working class Kentuckians, youth, people of color, those affected by economic, racial and environmental injustice, and members of progressive, labor and faith-based communities.

Issues: Living wage and workers’ rights, restoration of voting rights for former felons, energy and environment (including stopping mountaintop removal mining), progressive tax reform, economic development, immigration reform and health care.

Strategies: Multi-issue direct-action community organizing. We prioritize leadership development, coalition and alliance building, base-building and mobilization, strategic communications, and non-partisan voter empowerment. We also engage in participatory research; policy education and development; civic engagement in democratic decision-making; and strategic litigation.



MISSISSIPPI

"We've been able to offer real leadership opportunities for our core constituencies and that has provided greater value to our work and allowed us to go deeper and broaden our base." – Leroy Johnson, Southern Echo

Southern Echo's antidote to the state's matrix of systemic poverty, structured under-education and residual fear has been to provide training, technical and legal assistance to support the building of independent black-based, black-led, low-wealth grassroots community organizations and leadership with the tools and skills to impact the formation and implementation of public policy at all levels of government. In Mississippi, success in civic engagement is best measured by the following elements:

- the extent to which community-supported candidates win elections;
- the extent to which the civic engagement process contributes to the community understanding about the underlying policy issues;
- the extent to which the civic engagement process contributes to the building of sustainable organizations and the understanding of the capacity of the community to impact the process; and
- the extent to which this process results in an evolutionary change in public policies at the town, county, school district and state levels.

Mississippi partners prioritize a year-round process of voter education in which they work to:

- increase community understanding of the mechanical parts of the electoral process;
- provide a critical basis for assessing the accountability of candidates in relation to the needs and interests of community; and
- encourage community members to see themselves as potential candidates, rather than deferring as a matter of culture to those who have historically been politically advantaged.

Southern Echo's work involves the 10 black-based, black-led organizations in the MS Delta Catalyst Roundtable, the more than 30 organizations in the Education Stakeholders Alliance, and the 58 organizations in the MS Coalition for the Prevention of Schoolhouse 2 Jailhouse.

Southern Echo (Echo)

Southern Echo sees quality public education as the public policy struggle most critical to the transformation of individuals, communities and culture. Echo has worked for 18 years to engage parents and students in the formation and implementation of education policy; dismantling the student achievement gap; supporting mechanisms for students at-risk, dropout prevention, school discipline policies and conflict resolution, and the use of budgets to shape education policies.

Catalyst Roundtable (CR)

The MS Delta Catalyst Roundtable, formed in 2005, is a partnership of 10 black-based, black-led, grassroots community organizations, including Southern Echo, built on inter-generational community organizing models and based in the MS Delta region, through which the partners pool their strengths and resources to impact the formation and implementation of education policy at the state level in support of their education organizing work at the local school district level.

COUNTING MISSISSIPPI 2007

Precincts Covered **100**

Active Campaign Volunteers **850**

Voters Contacted **50,000+**

Voters in Database **20,000+**

Base: Grassroots, low-wealth African American, Latino/a and White families in 20 counties and 43 school districts in the Mississippi Delta region; multi-issue grassroots community organizations.

Issues: Quality public school education: healthy schools, children-at-risk, dropout prevention and maximizing on-time graduation rates, shutting down the schoolhouse to jail house pipeline, conflict resolution and positive behavior intervention in lieu of corporal punishment, suspension and expulsion. Political representation, education, economic and social justice, building models of fair and accountable governance.

Strategies: Training, technical and legal assistance to enable parents and students to understand and enforce their rights and to build newer, emerging organizations of parents, students, and educators with the skills and tools to impact formation and implementation of education policy at the local and state levels. Building new, accountable leadership through effective, inter-generational community organizing; influencing public policy; providing technical and legal assistance and training to grassroots groups.

NEW MEXICO

“Democracy doesn’t end on Election Day. It’s best to invest resources into local groups that are doing the work before, during, and after the election season. Pushback caused us to look beyond ourselves as an organization and accelerated that trajectory to get us to scale.” – Robby Rodriguez, South West Organizing Project



New Mexico’s population of 2 million residents is composed of a majority of people of color; the state is also home to the third highest poverty rate and a twenty-five percent child poverty rate. NM spends 5.7 times more per prisoner than per student and has the highest rate of uninsured children in the country.

Despite these oppressive realities there exists incredible hope for change. New Mexico has passed some of the most progressive legislation with regard to immigration reform, including laws to allow undocumented immigrants to obtain drivers licenses, the children of undocumented immigrants to receive in-state tuition and lottery scholarships at institutions of higher education, and laws limiting local law enforcement of federal immigration laws.

Education spending consistently ranks number one in policy priority and recently the state legislature voted to expand all day kindergarten and preschool. Governor Richardson, a former candidate for the 2008 Democratic Presidential nomination, signed an Executive Order on Environmental Justice and has been a strong supporter among western governors for the use of renewable energy and increasing the minimum wage. Our courts, for a number of years, have been viewed as progressive/liberal when it comes to protecting civil liberties and in defining the public welfare. New Mexico also continues to be a swing state for federal elections with close electoral margins. For instance, in 2000 Presidential contest, Al Gore beat George W. Bush by **366** votes and in 2004 George W. Bush beat John Kerry by **5,988** votes. Also, the first congressional district has for the past four election cycles been targeted by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee as a potential pick up, drawing attention to the state.

📍 **South West Organizing Project (SWOP)**

SWOP is a statewide multi-racial, multi-issue, community based membership organization working for progressive solutions. Since 1980 SWOP has worked to make it possible for thousands of New Mexicans to have a place and voice in social, economic and environmental decisions that affect their lives. SWOP works to empower its communities to realize racial and gender equality and social and economic justice.

📍 **Sage Council (Sage)**

Sage Council is an Indigenous and people of color-led organization using community organizing to build power through action, education, leadership development and political participation. Sage Council’s commitment to social change and self-determination is based in spirituality that honors Mother Earth and all peoples.

📍 **New Mexico Youth Organized (formerly the New Mexico League of Young Voters)**

New Mexico Youth Organized envisions a movement in which young people realize and wield their political power. By fostering a spirit of volunteerism, a culture of respect and an environment of constant learning, young people will claim their place in the political process. NMYO works to improve the lives of all New Mexicans by fostering new leadership, protecting the rights of working class people and exercising power through the political process. By holding public structures accountable to the community, young people are working together to protect the planet for the future.

COUNTING NEW MEXICO 2007

Organizations in State Alliance **4**
 Active Campaign Volunteers **120**
 Voters Identified as supporters **3,130**
 Voter Contacts **9,933**
 Total Voters in Database **28,200**

Base: Working class and people of color communities with a primary focus on Native Americans, Latinos/as and young people age 17-34.

Issues: Education; ethics; environment; electoral and campaign finance reform; health care; sustainable energy policy; protection of sacred sites; Native rights; climate change; youth rights; fair minimum wage; and progressive tax reform.

Strategies: Direct community organizing with a focus on leadership training, personal and political relationship development, building and sustaining diverse alliances, earned and paid media, multimedia outreach, and developing viral models of civic engagement.

NEW YORK

“Pushback’s vision is grounded in the notion of building progressive power to effect progressive policy that changes people’s lives. The state alliance has created the opportunity for us to spend more time in other parts of the state, and allowed us to see how people do their work and what they’re facing. Pushback has allowed us to move our vision of building statewide power towards reality.”
– Adrienne Shropshire, New York Jobs with Justice

New York is a critically important state in the national landscape and in Pushback Network. In addition to the sudden attention that New York is receiving surrounding the 2008 Presidential election (with both Democratic and Republican candidates emerging from within), New York policies have the potential to lead the way in the nation, but only if they begin to truly work for the people most in need.

New York Pushback groups are working to see that this happens – first by building their capacity to do non-partisan voter mobilization work, and then by using this voter power to assure that progressive policies are put in place.

The New York Pushback Alliance is anchored by two strong organizations:

⚓ **Community Voices Heard (CVH)**

CVH is a 14-year old organization of low-income people, predominantly women with experience on welfare, working to build power in New York City and State to improve the lives of low-income families, communities, and individuals. Founded as a welfare rights organization, CVH now focuses on a broad range of economic justice issues including workforce development, public housing preservation & improvement, and accountable development. CVH currently organizes in three areas across the state: New York City, Westchester County (Yonkers), and the Mid-Hudson Valley (Newburgh & Poughkeepsie).

⚓ **New York Jobs with Justice (NYJWJ)**

New York Jobs with Justice is a dynamic, permanent, multi-issue coalition of labor, community, student, and faith-based organizations working to build power for poor and working class New Yorkers. Three of Jobs with Justice’s New York coalitions, operating in a statewide capacity, co-anchor the Pushback work in New York: Buffalo, New York City, and Rochester.

In addition to the two co-anchor groups above, PBN’s New York State Alliance also consists of five core participating organizations, working in urban and rural communities across the state:

Coalition for Economic Justice

(Buffalo)

Metro Justice

(Rochester)

Make the Road New York

(Queens, Brooklyn, & Staten Island)

Families United for Racial and Economic Equality

(Brooklyn)

New York City AIDS Housing Network

(Brooklyn)

COUNTING NEW YORK 2007

Number of organizations in State Alliance **7**

Active Campaign Volunteers **75**

Precincts Covered **118**

Voters identified as supporters **2,519**

Number of Voter Contacts **8,388**

Total Voters in Database **30,592**



Base: Low-income New Yorkers, public assistance recipients, no-wage workers, public housing residents, immigrants, and people living with HIV & AIDS.

Issues: Welfare reform and workforce development; worker rights; public housing preservation, improvement, and governance; health care; accountable economic development; education; housing; economic development; anti-gentrification; immigrant justice; language access; environmental justice; unjust policies for people living with HIV & AIDS.

Strategies: Base building and mobilization; leadership development; popular education; direct-action organizing; legislative and budgetary policy education; grassroots-driven or participatory research; media outreach and public education; coalition building & stakeholder work; legal advocacy; civic engagement.

PBN creates opportunities for ordinary people to make real contributions to the political decisions that affect their lives.



Politics isn't just about machinations; it's about people and the policies that affect their lives. Pushback brings to the table what people need to affect change. Since its inception, the Pushback Network has consistently operated within a broadened framework of putting power and resources into the hands of people of color, poor and working class communities, and young people.

Pushback partners integrate community organizing and electoral work to “push back” against shortsighted, tactical approaches to civic participation. Through the creation of state alliances, PBN has developed an effective national infrastructure of indigenous, grassroots organizations that are committed to grassroots civic participation, and the emergence of a broad base of informed and engaged voters that advance bold policy initiatives toward social and economic justice.

Operating in six states in 2007, under a consciously sustainable plan to grow to ten states in 2008, the Pushback Network has developed substantial, measurable, and strategic programs that are bringing to realization our vision for an authentic, participatory democracy. PBN provides overall direction, coordination, technical assistance, accountability mechanisms, and evaluation processes for its state alliances. In turn, each PBN partner is committed to the program goals and components consistent with Pushback Network principles, models and goals:

✓ **Building a State Alliance**

Each state must develop a statewide power-building strategy which includes: recruiting, convening and maintaining a statewide non-partisan electoral alliance; developing a comprehensive non-partisan electoral field program that includes voter contact goals and strategies; promoting and developing approaches to engage grassroots volunteers in on-going strategies to deepen and expand our base; developing and maintaining tracking systems and monitoring, evaluation and accountability measures.

✓ **Commitment to On-Going, Politically Conscious Issue-Organizing**

Each State Alliance must develop multi-dimensional, multi-constituency, multi-issue strategies that build an on-going progressive, politically conscious base. State Alliances will develop plans that increasingly integrate civic engagement with year-round, ongoing community and issue organizing.

✓ **Direct Voter Engagement Targeting Communities of Color and the Poor**

Each state must have a plan to contact voters in multiple, strategic regions of the state. Each state must develop a plan with defined, specific goals and targets (i.e., numbers of precincts or other electoral units to be covered, number of voters to be contacted in base and in other communities, voter turnout goals, etc.). State Alliances will employ door-to-door,

in-person voter education and mobilization strategies that rely on an expanding network of indigenous volunteers and leaders. We want our constituencies fully engaged and participating in the “democratic process.” Many low-income, people of color communities are unregistered and disenfranchised. But by acting together to register, mobilize and organize post-elections, we are able to influence the debates both during and between campaigns and get our issues heard.

✓ **Strategic Communications to Bridge Base Communities and Non-Traditional Allies**

State Alliances must employ strategic communications plans that focus on shifting the terms of public debate on issues and themes prioritized in that region, as well as on message development, media influence and strategic targeting of base, swing and independent voters. PBN emphasizes that a crucial component of successful communications strategies include the development and deepening of grassroots leadership by engaging electoral volunteers, precinct leaders, independent media makers and consumers into on-going community organizing work.

✓ **Developing Indigenous Leadership**

By engaging new leaders, sharing best practices and seating a diverse table to develop new program models, PBN's state partners keep organizing tools relevant to the community while sustaining all levels of leadership over the long haul. It is critical to engage both the constituent bases of anchor and partner organizations, as well as allied constituencies that may not have been previously targeted, including youth, seniors, the disabled, the homeless, and persons with felony convictions. PBN partners are spear-heading models that identify and develop indigenous leaders toward the establishment of a regular, continuously supplied and sustainable pool of credible, progressive messengers who both energize and motivate our base and build bridges between communities.

✓ **Connecting Non-Partisan Voter Engagement to Ongoing Issue-Based Community Organizing**

Nationally based election efforts that have “parachuted” agents into local communities for mass voter engagement have not built lasting power on the ground because they have been largely disconnected from pre-existing infrastructure. Each PBN State Alliance agrees to the development of multi-dimensional, multi-constituency, multi-issue strategies that build an on-going progressive, politically conscious base. Base building is a two way street. We work both to educate our base constituencies about policy issues while developing avenues for our own education by the base about the issues most important to them. State alliances develop plans that increasingly integrate civic engagement with year-round, ongoing community and issue organizing.



THE PUSHBACK NETWORK NATIONAL CONVENING Louisville, KY • July 13-15, 2007

"The National Convening opened up my eyes to a lot of things I didn't know before. I was able to bring back what I learned to let other people know how important it is to vote and get involved in the community." – Valerie Pearson, Community Voices Heard Leader, Yonkers, NY



PBN held its first national convening in Louisville, KY. The gathering was co-hosted by founding Network partner Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and Kentucky Jobs with Justice. The convening brought together over 160 grassroots leaders, community members, allied groups, funders and staff from each of PBN's participating states, as well as representatives from additional states that PBN is exploring for inclusion in our work.

By all accounts, PBN's first convening was a landmark event. Not only did it raise Pushback's profile amongst some of the country's most successful community organizing groups in the social justice field, but it was a productive, spirited gathering that engaged participants in a variety of broad-minded discussions about local and regional best practices, resource sharing, and national strategy and our role in the progressive movement.

At the convening, participants gained a deeper understanding of PBN's work and shared successful organizing and voter engagement tools and techniques. Rather than using this time to discuss the next campaign action or the next precinct walk, the participants looked at the convening as an opportunity for deeper connections around shared work and shared vision.

Specifically we achieved the following overall goals set forth by our Steering Committee:

- Shared tools, techniques, and case studies of successful organizing and voter engagement work in an effort to increase the knowledge and skills across all of the states and organizations participating in Pushback Network;
- Aligned state leaders and organizational representatives with the goals, program and philosophy of the Pushback Network to ensure a common vision;
- Deepened the understanding of the strategies and work of Pushback Network for grassroots leaders, constituents, and organizational staff from the states;
- Built strong relationships among the various state groups and individuals who participated in the convening;
- Helped people understand the national context of where the progressive movement is today in the United States and the role of organizations like their own and Pushback in the national context; and
- Raised the profile of Pushback Network nationally and with others in the social justice field.

"Having young people participate in this process, and make the connections nationally, was very helpful. They came out proud. Knowing that what they did was valuable, and that people were listening changed their strut. The support and recognition of others turned their abilities into skills." – Leroy Johnson, Echo

The spirit of PBN's first national gathering was one of cooperation, two-way learning, and increased partnership and ally building across traditional barriers that energized all who attended. Each state also caucused independently, which led subsequently to commitments from each state to hold its own statewide convening in 2008 to deepen the political education, skills and motivation of staff and volunteers doing electoral work around their state.

PEER-TO-PEER CROSS TRAINING

"The vision, strategy, and direction comes from the communities doing the work. We all have something in common and link the work to ultimately build greater power for all of us." – Adrienne Shropshire, NY Jobs with Justice

Peer-to-Peer learning and cross training is a cornerstone of PBN's work. Because PBN is self-consciously made up of a diverse mix of people, regions, urban and rural areas and strategies, we are in a unique position to share a wide range of best practices, tools and experiential lessons.

One example of PBN's 2007 emphasis on peer-to-peer cross training is captured in a conversation between Birmingham, Alabama, based Hill Carmichael and New York City based Sondra Youdelman, who talked about their experience working together during a peer-to-peer training trip Hill took to New York City:

"It was extraordinarily helpful to see CVH's electoral program and the work on the ground," said Hill, whose organization began piloting voter engagement operations in 2007. "While I was there, there were tons of opportunities to get out into different communities. The most helpful was going door-to-door and canvassing. Because of this experience, GBM is now starting to do door-to-door work and canvassing."

"Base building and political consciousness-raising are the principle strategies of how we do our work," said Sondra. "Our philosophy is to have our spokespeople be the ones who are most affected. We constantly have to be out there and listen to the issues that are bubbling up from the communities — whether it's from welfare recipients, public housing residents, or people living in low-income developments."

"Shadowing with the PBN partners," Sondra continued, "helps us understand the cultures of the different organizations in the mix."

"It was really helpful to sit down and talk about the nuts and bolts of their work," agreed Hill. "If I didn't have this experience, my work plan for 2008-2010 might be much different. Instead, our thought process is much more intentional about the work we do in different communities. We now have a better understanding of what it takes to build relationships and what kind of contacts and messengers are important."

Sondra stressed the importance of two-way learning using a cross training model. Hill didn't travel to New York City just to learn; he went to teach as well. "For CVH, it was incredibly helpful for us to have Hill shadow our work," she said. "With him here, it forced us to be clearer about our work and made us reflect on our experiences. New York City is mammoth and lends itself to a particular organizing model. Now that we're going into smaller communities outside of NYC, it was good to hear Hill talk about GBM's model of organizing in more rural areas. The experience with Hill has changed how we support offsite organizers."

Other examples of PBN's investment in a peer-to-peer training model include partners in California, Kentucky and Mississippi. In early 2007, SCOPE's Karla Zombro traveled to Kentucky to present two trainings: "Tools & Techniques," and "Building Labor-Community Alliances." In August, GBM, PBN, and over 70 other fired-up community members came together in Birmingham, Alabama, for a one-day convening of the Constitutional Convention Coalition to develop a 2008 action plan. The convening was opened by GBM's Scott Douglas with a 20-minute interactive Power Analysis presentation during which he shared the "Power Tools" developed by SCOPE.

"In June we were invited by the Miami Workers Center to help them think about setting up a civic participation program. It was the first time we were challenged to take what we had learned and translate it into a language and methodology others could use and adapt. PBN really pushed us to consolidate these trainings, and gave us an opportunity to test and refine them by presenting two workshops at the National Convening. Since then, we've developed five core Civic Participation training modules and tested them around the country. It has really helped in advancing the skills and commitment of local and state allies here in California."

— Karla Zombro, SCOPE

BUILDING BOTTOM-UP STATE ALLIANCES

"The South by South West Alliance has helped us to build a deeper relationship with our partners in New Mexico and develop a black-brown power building process. This process is crucial given the changing demography of the South. We can no longer be a part of the fracturing of working class, low wage workers, and new immigrant communities."

— Leroy Johnson, Southern Echo



PBN was created to build upon, and empower to scale, the best work happening at the local and state-level. Our shared goal is to ensure that organizing happening at the local and state levels can have the greatest impact both at home and across the state, the region and the country.

At the core of our work is a focus on leadership development and relationship building between organizations across the state and across the country. To build upon those relationships, and retain and strengthen hard-won gains and field-tested best practices, our organizing must connect to a broader regional and national framework.

Finally, that national framework must reflect back to the state and local level. The work happening in the cities and towns, states and regions across the country has the best chance of growing to its full potential when real investment in skills-building, leadership development, cross-platform mentorship, continuing education and ongoing communication and resource sharing is fostered, empowered and ultimately reflected back.

The impact of our work is most important when it's felt not just from the bottom up, but when all the benefits gained during the travel from grassroots issue to national platform, are brought back to the source, making the potential impact of each bit of work exponentially greater. In 2007, our first full year of operations, and first real opportunity to take the lessons we're learning to truly deepen our programmatic work, PBN's state partners made a number of key advances:



- Alabama's statewide PBN alliance was successfully established by anchor organization Greater Birmingham Ministries and Arise Citizens' Policy Project, whose membership includes over 150 congregations and organizations state-wide. The Network is exploring strategic relationships with Hispanic Interests Coalition of Alabama (HICA), Conservation Alabama, and Empower Alabama.
- KFTC provided 3-hour workshops for Community Captains in Perry County, Letcher County, Madison County, Rowan County, and Central Kentucky chapters and provided on-the-job training before every tabling and canvassing event across the state.
- Southern Echo served as the lead organization in the development of the Mississippi Redistricting Committee, Delta Redistricting Working Group, and the Mississippi Catalyst Roundtable.
- In November, Mississippi's Southern Echo held its 4th Annual dismantling the Student Achievement GAP Conference in partnership with the MS Dept. of Education and MS Valley State University. Five hundred delegates attended from 20 counties to address education issues such as children at risk, dropout prevention, maximizing graduation rates, abolition of corporeal punishment and state education budget reform.
- NY State PBN partner organizations met for two days in Brooklyn, New York, to foster relationship development. At this first convening, groups learned about each others' organizing and policy work as well as voter engagement projects, heard about work being done by other national Pushback partners, exchanged information about best practices across the state, and began a conversation about alliance vision and governance. This conversation among partner groups was continued at the National Pushback Convening in Kentucky in July.
- PBN's New Mexico co-anchors successfully added a third organization, New Mexico Youth Organized, to its state partnership alliance.

REACHING HISTORICALLY DISENFRANCHISED COMMUNITIES

"Pushback is committed to ensuring that the voices of those historically disenfranchised or otherwise shut out of the democratic process are heard." – Presdelane Harris, Alabama Citizens' Policy Project

A crucial evaluation tool for the success of PBN's work lies in the degree to which the approach to the work, as well as the results, empower disadvantaged and marginalized communities to participate in the process as well as reap the rewards of progressive policy wins.

Working to Improve Our Own Communities



Montgomery, Alabama, based Callie Greer is a citizen organizer on a mission to take back her state for its people. She spoke passionately to Pushbacknetwork.org about her dedication to the fight to reform the Alabama state constitution as a way to affect real, lasting change in her own, her family's and her neighbors' lives. Watch this video online at www.pushbacknetwork.org

In the context of our work, historically disadvantaged communities include those who have historically been excluded because of race, economic situation, ability, immigrant status, health status (especially HIV/AIDS), gender, income and wealth, sexual orientation, gender identity, faith community, education, language, family size, history of incarceration or party affiliation.

In 2007, PBN and its state alliance partners integrated historically disadvantaged communities into their voter engagement work at every level, from leadership development to strategic communications to base building and peer-to-peer learning.

One specific example includes the launching, in New Mexico, of new projects in five largely rural and historically conservative county strongholds. Large, and largely under-represented, Native American and Mexican American,

Chicano/a and new immigrant populations are now being specifically targeted and engaged in the political process in their local area.

New York partner group CVH celebrated a major policy win in 2007 when, through hard work, wide-spread community engagement, and strategic partnership, they moved Governor Spitzer to sign a bill that will bring \$47 million in additional resources annually into the NYC Housing Authority to help offset a public housing agency deficit and won \$3.5 million in funding from New York State for operating subsidies for public housing — the state's first contribution in ten years!

POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS BASE BUILDING

"In the past, we struggled with organizations that only wanted electoral deliverables and were not about the things that were long-lasting and community based."
— Keegan King, New Mexico Youth Organized



PBN and its partners believe that every moment at the door of a community member is an opportunity for community level cross-training. Door-to-door canvassing is often seen too simply as an opportunity to educate voters on the issues important to their lives. PBN sees political education as a two-way street.

When organizing in community, one of the most important things canvassers, staff and volunteers can do is listen. Oftentimes the education of organizers *by* the community members about the issues that are important to them is the most direct avenue to increased community participation, and to lasting change that has the greatest impact on the community. Some examples of 2007 base-building achievements include:

- PBN's California partners coordinated four advanced state-wide trainings and developed alliance-wide campaign criteria and endorsement processes for statewide issues and initiatives.
- Building toward the 4th Annual Dismantling the Achievement Gap Conference in November 2007, Mississippi partners re-engaged contacted citizens into a series of workshops in 20 counties and 39 school districts in the Delta region.



- 2007 was the first year that the legislature fully funded the MS Adequate Education Program that provides 70% of local school district resources. The commitment from both Democrats and Republicans to fully fund the MAEP in 2008 means that MS partners will be able to focus on increased funding for children-at-risk, implementing the state's new Dropout Prevention Plan, working to abolish corporeal punishment and working to reform the state budget process that controls education policy.
- Sage Council, SWOP, and partners at the Center for Civic Policy worked to secure public financing for state judicial candidates.
- California's allied organizations developed a capacity-building program with common standards and curricula focused on recognized best practices, joint planning, and integrating community organizing with electoral work and technology.

THE PERMANENT CAMPAIGN: PROGRESSIVE POWER THROUGH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

"Electoral power of people of color, poor people and young people is shaped by hundreds of years of history. No one election, even a presidential election, is enough to reverse the major impact on our base. Instead, democratic renewal involves several groups at multiple levels engaging our base and expanding the electorate to include those previously pushed to the margins." – Rudy Gonzalves, California Alliance

Networking Resources



Rudy Gonzalves of the California Alliance discusses with Pushbacknetwork.org how PBN has helped organizers and community members network resources locally, state-wide, and coast-to-coast to build power and enhance the effectiveness of their work. *Watch this interview online at www.pushbacknetwork.org*



Sustainable progressive social change must be institutionalized politically and culturally in the policies adopted at the local, state and national level to ensure long-term impact.

Achieving wide-reaching, nationally felt progressive policy changes requires time, patience, the development and implementation of long-term, culturally diverse models of messaging, evaluation, resource sharing and successful reporting, as well as an assurance that PBN's organizational leadership is healthy and sustainable to push for and track these changes over the long haul.

Because we are committed to bottom-up, base building and organizing strategies, our chief methods include using a longer-term approach toward developing indigenous leaders, expanding rural grassroots progressive power through multi-issue organizing, and ongoing, year-round civic engagement to build toward progressive policy outcomes that equal real change in our communities. Examples of real, sustainable growth, as well as capacity building toward progressive change, that our local and statewide leadership achieved this year in its civic engagement efforts include:

- GBM served as lead organization in Alabama's Constitution Reform Education Campaign, a statewide collaboration to reform Alabama's 107-year-old Constitution, through which it has trained over 5,000 leaders and supporters.
- Kentucky partners divided voter rolls based on capacity and strategized to contact over 20,000 voters at least three times in 2007.
- SWOP began tracking 'live wires' or voters who demonstrate potential as community leaders and organizational members, and working to engage them in educational and skills-building events sponsored by alliance partner organizations.
- New Mexico partners worked, with local allies, to enact statewide public financing of judicial races.
- Mississippi partners provided policy leadership in the ongoing fight against arbitrary discipline policies, and

enabled parents in many communities to hold educators accountable to rights of the students.

- New Mexico partners launched a permanent 2-way, civic participation campaign geared toward engaging people in the electoral process and moving them into policy and issue-organizing campaigns, and vice versa.
- Partners in New York City used a down election year to re-contact voters met in 2006 and engage them in town hall meetings, membership assemblies and other campaign events.

DIRECT VOTER CONTACT

"Due to our door knocking efforts, we were able to help change policy at the local and state levels concerning Native American healthcare." – Sonny Weahkee, Sage Council

PBN was created from the ground up by permanent, indigenous, local and statewide organizations where electoral organizing is a core strategy of a much larger body of work. Other organizations only work on civic engagement during election season. We do it year round as a part of our ongoing commitment to results that last.

Getting Involved at Home



Community organizer Rebecca Jackson explains to Pushbacknetwork.org why organizing locally, versus nationally, is important to her — and why she urges other young people to join her. [Watch this interview online at www.pushbacknetwork.org](http://www.pushbacknetwork.org)

PBN's primary civic participation strategy is direct voter contact, education and turnout achieved through building ongoing, grassroots precinct network, supplemented by other activities such as forums, surveys and mass communication. Some quantitative examples of PBN's voter contact work can be found in our numbers (see previous section). Other examples include the work done in the fall of 2007 by NYJwJ, which canvassed for three hours a day an average of three days per week during an off election year to retain and re-contact voters. In 2007, California



partners successfully expanded their cumulative database to over 400,000 contacted voters.

PBN's work stretches from the densely populated coastal states of New York and California, to rural, southern states like Mississippi where partners held hundreds of non-partisan community meetings and workshops to ensure that prospective voters understood their rights at the polls, to stress the importance of participation in the election process, and to train poll watchers and poll workers to ensure that elections are conducted fairly and are consistent with the laws regarding management of polling places, absentee ballots, affidavit ballots, security of the ballot boxes and proper handling of the new computer systems.

DEVELOPING INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

"This system is so often about tearing people down. They tell us we're too poor; that the system is too sophisticated and complicated for us to comprehend. We told our community that we believed in them. We gave them the skills and allowed them to do it. From there they were able to do it better than anyone else." – Leroy Johnson, Southern Echo

Coalition for Economic Justice was canvassing in a Buffalo, New York, housing development this summer and a woman came to the door who could hardly walk. She was in her late 60s, but because she saw the development happening across her street, she immediately got involved with CEJ.

She's grown into a leader. Even though walking was difficult for her, she managed to go throughout her building and get 30 contacts. She also got her church involved. Now, the Brown Memorial Baptist Church is involved with CEJ and has four religious leaders canvassing in their communities for change.

Pushback Network provides a forward-thinking model that prioritizes grassroots base building and leadership development in order to build and strengthen civic engagement and develop a progressive infrastructure from the bottom up.

The road to real change, where the impact is felt in the everyday lives of everyday people, begins in neighborhoods and communities, among family and friends, co-workers and regular passers-by. It also requires a commitment to empowering leadership from all facets of the community, with an emphasis on diverse voices.

Although indigenous leadership development is an ongoing facet of all of our work, some specific examples of PBN's leadership development achievements include part-time community organizer Rebecca Jackson, a young native of Montgomery, Alabama, who made such a deep impact during her campaign work that she was hired as a full-time staffer, sent to Kentucky to train in field organizing with PBN's KY partners, and is now taking what she learned into her own neighborhoods to organize for change to Alabama's outdated, anti-progressive state constitution.

In Kentucky, volunteers are involved at every level of planning, evaluating and implementing strategy. PBN's Kentucky partners provided ongoing training, mentoring and leadership development opportunities for over 600 individuals in 2007 including anti-racism and anti-classism training, organizing and spokesperson skills and voter engagement skills.



The Mississippi Demography Group is a group of high school and college students trained by Southern Echo in mapping and charting skills. In 2007, six students, working on behalf of parents and students in several low-performing school districts, created extensive sets of charts to enable educators and community to visualize the performance of students on standardized tests and to identify the key problem areas. Two of the students who first took the training are now in college and, in turn, are training middle school and high school students on how to create these visually accessible materials to educate the educators on what's happening in the schools.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS & INTEGRATIVE TECHNOLOGY

"Pushback understands that you need to use more than one tool in a multi-faceted toolbox to achieve concrete policy wins. Pushback sees the connections and that's important."
– Sondra Youdelman, CVH

2007 was a ground breaking, capacity building year for Pushback Network. In our first year as a staffed organization, we began developing strategies and effective mechanisms to communicate and project our values and vision. PBN partners coordinated inter-state trainings and cross-training sessions on values and beliefs analysis, strategic themes, framing and messaging, and the integration of strategic communications into organizing and voter engagement and empowerment programs.

Merging strategic communications with ongoing issue-based organizing work and integrative technology helps state alliances succeed in implementing strategies to help shape the public debate around priority public policy issues, consolidate the political consciousness of base communities, engage and motivate new voters to participate, and move swing voters toward progressive solutions. Some examples of successful technology and communications integration this year include:

- Alabama partners developed a new database to organize and target voters by district and deepened volunteer leadership pools through the development of neighborhood clusters. Further, they conducted statewide skills-building trainings on using the new voter database.



- California partners began an alliance-wide assessment of technological capacity in order to develop common database training programs, identify technology needs specific to each PEP group, and make recommendations on tailored resource plans.
- New Mexico partners initiated development of an issue-oriented radio program targeting often ignored southeastern New Mexico markets.
- Kentucky partners expanded their databases to over 20,000 identified voters.
- In response to a long-term re-framing initiative, the Mississippi Dept. of Education named the 2008 legislative package the Quality Education Act of 2008. This victory reflected a shift in thinking and messaging from a focus on "adequate education" to "quality education."
- SWOP began working with partners such as the Center for Civic Policy to develop strategic earned and paid media infrastructure to shift the public policy debates.
- CVH conducted a media tour, promoting its statewide messages about the need for New York State investment in NYC infrastructure, as a part of their successful campaign to win \$47 million additional dollars to support public housing.
- PBN began its own branding and identity process which included the completion of an organizational website, logo and print brochure.

SWOP Weekly News Rant



Marjorie, Joanne, and the team at South West Organizing Project produce a YouTube distributed weekly news show with their own distinctive spin. [Watch this video online at www.pushbacknetwork.org](http://www.pushbacknetwork.org)

"I knocked on one door and a small boy was playing on the porch. He was immediately interested in what we were doing, why we were there, and what we had on our clipboards. He wanted to talk about the houses with the guns, the houses with the drugs, the vacant houses with homeless squatters. He knew what was going on at every single house." – Betty Martin, volunteer, Buffalo, NY

Support for Pushback Network, a fiscally sponsored, non-profit, non-partisan 501 (c)3 organization, is the right investment for successful, long-term, progressive change. PBN is built on the expertise of local and regional leaders with decades of experience in making real change happen in their communities. We're not just committed to doing things differently; we're committed to doing things right, and spreading the knowledge gained by our experience to others. In 2008, our focus will continue to be unique:

- Development of long-term strategies — beyond one-year funding cycles and two- or four-year election cycles – that build multi-dimensional infrastructure.
- Serious work on framing, crafting and delivering messages that build bridges between base and swing communities.
- Building the capacity of indigenous organizations, rooted in local and regional communities, to scale their work for success.

The hard work is paying off, but the demand for bottom-up prioritization continues to grow. As PBN expands to eight states in 2008, with more on the horizon, our supporters from coast to coast become even more important to our success and that of our partners.

Pushback's new Coordinating Director, Rodney McKenzie, Jr., reset the bar for PBN in his first year by successfully growing PBN's operational budget by over 50% in 2007, with the majority of that money going directly into the states where its needed.

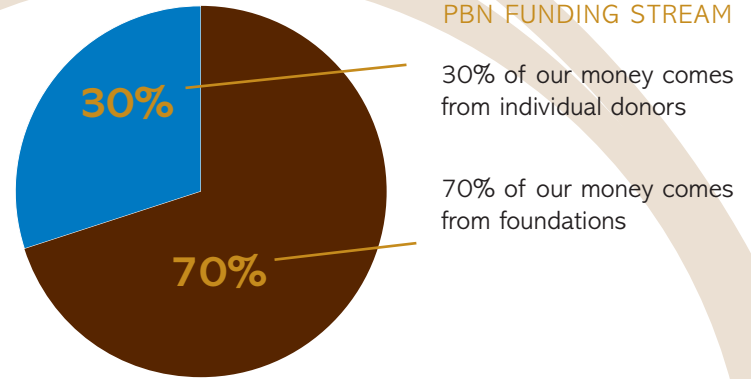
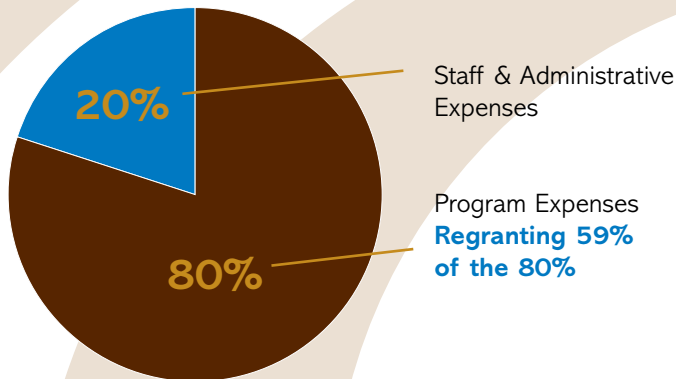
**2006
BUDGET
\$800,000**



**2007
BUDGET
\$1,260,000**



FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENSES



Just like our state-alliances build strength by working together, Pushback Network would be unable to succeed in our work alone. We're grateful to be part of a much larger progressive community that makes it possible for us to build this organization from the bottom up and continue to climb toward victory.

Thank you to the following foundations who gave funds to PBN in 2007:

Ford Foundation
 Solidago Foundation
 Public Welfare Foundation
 New World Foundation
 Tides Action Fund
 Bellevue Fund via Tides Foundation
 Carnegie Corporation of New York
 Alki Fund via Tides Foundation
 Democracy Alliance
 Open Society Institute
 Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock
 New World Foundation

Pushback Network thanks our extraordinary partners, volunteers and consultants who help us with communications, base building, organizational development, event planning and documentation and so much more. Some of the people who have been instrumental in helping PBN achieve its goals this year:

Samiya Bashir, TX, Communications
Aron Conaway, KY, Photography
Paul Getsos, NY, Program Development
Wura Ogunji, TX, Photography and Videography
Jen Simmons, PA, Layout & Design
Rebecca Winchell, KY, National Convening Logistics

The Pushback Network has moved leaps and bounds in 2007. This year, we focused our energy on building the National Infrastructure of the Pushback Network – and it shows. From hiring two full-time staff members, to re-granting nearly \$700,000, PBN has created a sustainable organization with long-lasting power.

Looking ahead to 2008, PBN will expand upon the solid foundation that we've built over the past year to launch innovative programmatic work, further enhance our national infrastructure, and support our state alliances to grow to scale. Here are some of the exciting things happening in 2008-2009.



- Pushback Network will expand the network's vision for building grassroots political power by growing to 10 states in 2008.
- We will launch our National Voter Protection Program – an exciting partnership with the Advancement Project that ensures our voters are accounted for and our communities aren't intimidated at the polls.
- Be prepared to hear more from PBN in local, statewide, and national publications as well as in electronic media. Pushback is investing resources in order to ensure that the voices of people of color, low-income and working class people, and young people are an integral part of the debate across the country.
- PBN will re-grant a million dollars in 2008. We believe the real work happens not in DC, but on the ground in communities across the country. For that reason the majority of PBN's funds go directly into the states through our re-granting process.
- PBN will hire a senior level program staffer to help guide and direct the overall programmatic work of the network. This person will deepen our national training program and help state alliances get the support and resources they need to do their work.
- In 2008, PBN will lay the groundwork for a Youth Fellows Program. This program is slated to begin in 2009 and will place fellows in each of PBN's Anchor Organizations. During their fellowship, young people will have an opportunity to spend two weeks in another state in order to understand the unique organizing challenges and techniques used to build long-term political power.



"Pushback is not about putting on an event or electing a legislator. It's about building the elements of a strong national collaboration that is informed by the infrastructure built through the local work." – Mike Sayer, Southern Echo



- 2008 will be the year of State Alliance Convenings. PBN will assist with each Statewide Convening. These convenings are intended to bring staff and leaders from across the state for peer-to-peer learning, trainings, and strategizing about building Statewide Political Power. All of this will build to a 300 person National Convening at the beginning of 2009.
- PBN will implement a national training program that includes leadership development, peer-to-peer learning, and evaluation sessions. This program will focus on meeting the needs of PBNs state alliances as they build to scale their innovative electoral programs.
- Over the next year, PBN will put in place a national individual donor program that will combine e-philanthropy and individual house party programs. PBN's goal is to diversify the funding streams not only for PBN but for PBN's State Alliances.
- Finally, 2008 will see a true deepening of communications programming with an increased focus on providing communications technical assistance and peer-to-peer training, expanding PBN's own web presences through the completion of an integrated, interactive website and the development and utilization of flexible, Network-wide, online communications and networking tools.



"No one group or state could do the work alone." – Sondra Youdelman, Community Voices Heard

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Co-Chair:

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New York Jobs with Justice, NY

Secretary:

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California Alliance, CA

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New Mexico Youth Organized, NM

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Sage Council, NM

SONDRA YOUDELMAN
Community Voices Heard, NY

2007 STEERING COMMITTEE ALTERNATES:

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Arise Citizens' Policy Project, AL

KARLA ZOMBRO
Strategic Concepts in Organizing
and Policy Education, CA

LISA ABBOTT
Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, KY

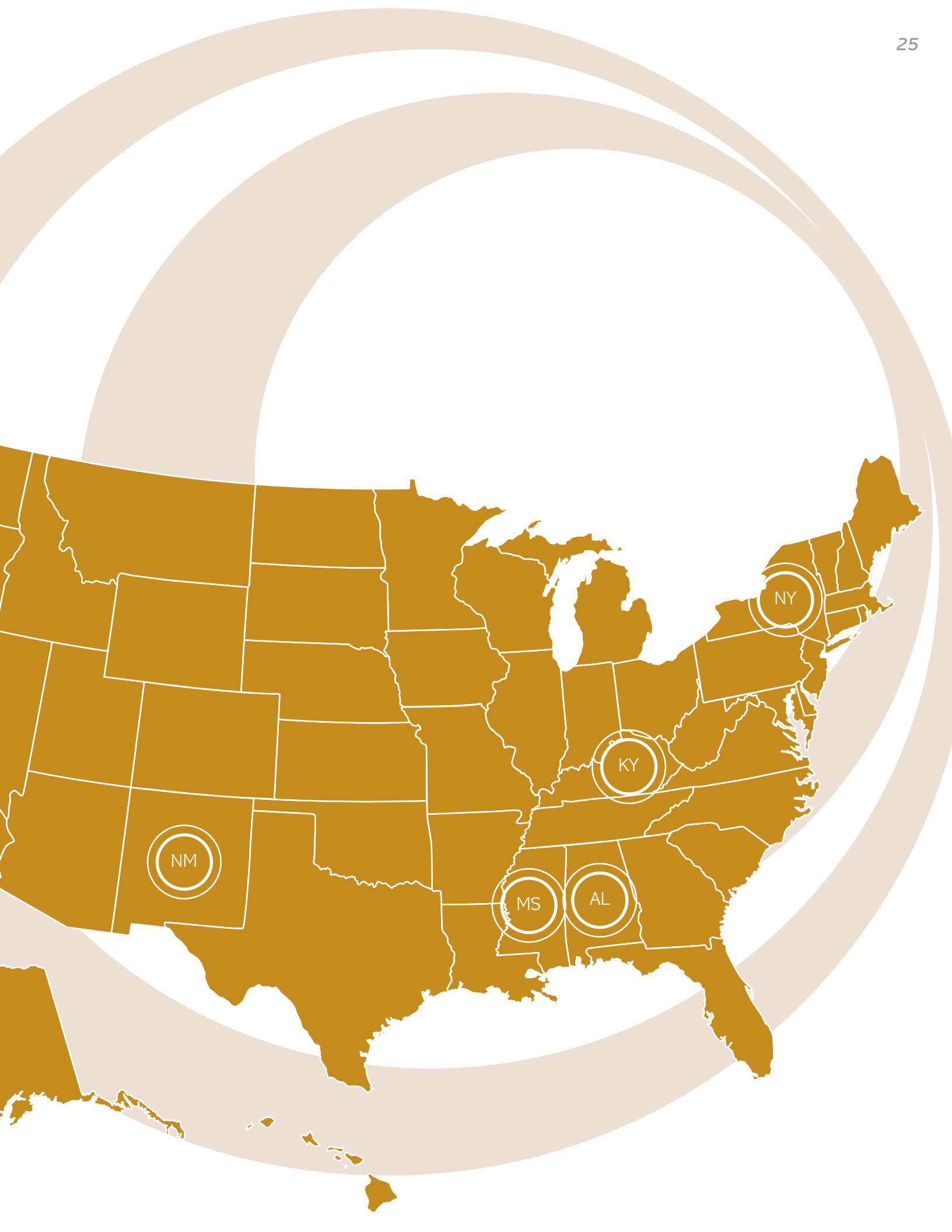
ATTICA SCOTT
Kentucky Jobs with Justice, KY

HENRY SERRANO
Community Voices Heard, NY

BINESHI ALBERT
South West Organizing Project, NM

HILL CARMICHAEL
Greater Birmingham Ministries, AL





When will there be *enough*?

Enough bread?
Enough land?
Enough justice?
Enough peace?

Once there *was* enough for all

But enough for *all* to share was
Just *too* much for some to bear!

When, *again*, will there be enough?

Now some have too much and more,
While most don't even have enough.
There is more today than yesterday,
And, today, even fewer have enough

People with three houses
Say there are too many people;
While people with no houses disappear in silence

People with *three* cars
Say there is too much congestion;
While people with no transportation disappear in silence

People of a *dual* justice
Say there is too much crime
While people receiving no justice disappear in silence

When, *again*, will there be enough?

Enough bread?
Enough land?
Enough justice?
Enough peace?

There will be **enough**...
 when the silenced reappear with their own voices.
Then, there will be enough!

There will be enough when the regained voices
 Relocate power
 To dwell **in community**.
Then, there will be enough.

There will be enough
 When humility is wealth,
 Greed is poverty,
 And crime —crime— is **harm** to the **spirit**
 Of **shared** community...
 Then there will be **enough**.

There will be enough
 When the temple of
 The god of scarcity (the god of greed)
 Is abandoned;
 And there emerges
 A new and faithful peoples
Forged in the crucible of struggle

For.....
Enough bread
Enough land
Enough justice
Enough peace

And they will be humble & yet
Powerful peoples

Because they will **remember**;
 And because they will have **enough**.

“We saw the failures of the 2004 presidential election. We saw those lessons that were not being learned by national groups. Yet we believed there was still hope to build upon the real work that can lead to authentic participatory democracy, to build it to scale for national impact, and to do it right.”

— Robby Rodriguez, Co-Chair, Pushback Network





Pushback
NETWORK

All. Together. Now.

www.pushbacknetwork.org