



# **Youth Voter Engagement: Developing Strategies to Sustainably Increase Youth Voter Turnout**

Prepared by Yousef Ibreak (MPP Candidate 21')



## **Policy Analysis Exercise (PAE)**

Client: Rock the Vote

Advisor: Robby Mook

Seminar Leader: Thomas Patterson

Submission Date: April 6, 2021

*This PAE reflects the views of the author and should not be viewed as representing the views of the PAE's external client, nor those of Harvard University or any of its faculty.*

*Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master in Public Policy*

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	2
Introduction.....	4
Background on Rock the Vote .....	5
Methodology .....	5
Findings .....	7
Changing Demographics – A Younger Georgia .....	7
Policy Changes.....	8
November 2020 Election .....	9
Georgia – January 2021 Senate Runoffs.....	12
Sampling of Interviews and Takeaways .....	14
Insights and Recommendations .....	19
Demographic Changes Demand Inclusivity .....	19
Localized Voices Have Power .....	20
Young People Can be a Bridge to Older Demographics.....	20
The Issues Matter.....	21
Automatic Voter Registration is Notable.....	21
Appendix 1 – Campus Election Engagement Project, Presidential Nonpartisan-Candidate Guide.....	22
Appendix 2 – Automatic Voter Registration in Georgia .....	24
Appendix 3 – Instagraphic Example.....	25

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

In 2020, Generation Z and Millennials represented nearly 40% of every eligible American voter. Despite this, young Americans have voted at historically lower rates in comparison to older demographics. In the 2016 November general election for example, 18-29-year-old Americans voted at a rate of 46%; Americans 65 and older voted at a rate of 71%. This disparity in turnout by age has implications in both the candidates that are elected and the issues that elected official prioritize.

The 2020 November general election saw record turnout across the United States; nearly 160 million Americans voted. In a year of record ballots cast, this policy analysis exercise seeks to analyze youth turnout and study the tactics used to drive young people to the polls. There is not an attempt to draw causal links to practices that drive youth turnout, rather the objective of this exercise is to draw insights from available election data and collate new/innovative approaches to turnout young people.

## Methodology

To accomplish this objective, a case study approach was adopted to focus the scope. The state of Georgia for the case study for several reasons: some sources noted the Georgia led the nation in youth turnout, the state received national attention for the Senate runoffs (providing an additional opportunity to study youth turnout), and Georgia significantly increased the number of young people registered to vote since 2016. The case study was informed by three input. First, a literature review was conducted on youth turnout. Insights from timely publications and academic writings were incorporated. Second, a broad range of organizers in the state of Georgia were interviewed. These interviewees represented both partisan and nonpartisan organizations working on efforts that sought to engage young Georgians in the election. Lastly, data provided by the state’s Secretary of State’s office was analyzed. Georgia publishes detailed registration and turnout data from its past elections. The 2016 general election, 2020 general election, and 2021 runoffs were analyzed for this policy analysis exercise.

## Analysis and Findings

Before analyzing elections data and conducting interviews, three variables were regularly cited as informing youth turnout in Georgia in 2020. Since 2016, the proportion of Georgians ages 18-29 has steadily increased. A large driver has been new residents to the state.



Population Growth



Automatic Voter Registration



2020 Election Environment

Additionally, in 2016 Georgia began implementing automatic voter registrations through its department of driver services. Over a million Georgians have been added to the voter rolls since 2016. A final variable for consideration of the election’s environment in Georgia is the state’s 2020 election policy environment. The state had at least 16 days of early voting and no-excuse absentee voting leading up to the November election.

These variables taken into consideration, key insights from the data analysis are:



An estimated 92% of all Georgians, ages 18-29 are registered to vote.



31% of the electorate is ages 18-34, compared to 23% in 2016.

## 2020 Election

There was a 5-percentage point increase in votes cast by registered Georgians ages 18-29, compared to turnout in the 2016 election.

Turnout Analysis of Georgia in the November 2016 General Election			
Age Group	Number Registered	Voted in the Election	Turnout of Those Registered
18-24	719,559	333,554	46%
25-29	669,764	281,011	42%
18-29	1,389,323	614,565	44%
<b>Total (All Ages)</b>	<b>6,713,531</b>	<b>4,161,846</b>	<b>62%</b>

Turnout Analysis of Georgia in the November 2020 General Election			
Age Group	Number Registered	Voted in the Election	Turnout of Those Registered
18-24	943,300	480,050	51%
25-29	753,858	348,381	46%
18-29	1,697,158	828,431	49%
<b>Total (All Ages)</b>	<b>7,641,351</b>	<b>5,023,158</b>	<b>66%</b>

- The 18-29-year-old demographic represented 22% of all registered voters and 16% of total votes cast in 2020; this demographic represented 21% of all registered voters and 15% of total votes cast in 2016.
- Within this age range of 18-29 there were notable increases in turnout among certain racial demographics (e.g., 18-24 Asian-PI males increased in votes by 139% compared to 2016).

*2021 Runoff Election*

The runoff election provided an additional opportunity to analyze youth voter turnout data and to discuss with organizers efforts to turn out younger Georgians again.

- The number of new registrants ages 18-29 increased by 22,711, roughly 22% of total new registrants between the general election and the runoff election.
- While there were decreases in ballots cast by all 18-29 demographic categories, black males ages 18-24 experienced the lowest percentage decrease in turnout during the runoffs when compared to 2020 turnout.

**Insights and Recommendations**

After synthesizing the literature review, data analysis, and subject matter expert interviews, key insights and recommendations were developed.

1. **Demographic changes demand inclusivity.** The electorate is changing by race and age, and interviewees provided several examples of how political organizing is shifting to engage this new electorate. Future programming efforts to engage young people needs to prioritize inclusivity.
2. **Localized voices have power.** Shifting resources to young people through ambassadorships, fellowships, and as micro-influencers (paying young people with some followership on social media to encourage registering and voting) was deemed effective in 2020 by interviewees.
3. **Young people can be a bridge to older demographics.** Interviewees discussed how the pandemic surfaced an opportunity to leverage young people to engage older groups within their communities during the pandemic. Engagement strategies in the future can tailor outreach for civically engaged young people to expand their community reach.
4. **The issues matter.** Young people were galvanized by the events of 2020. Engaging young people to vote based on issues, beyond having a civic duty, was a strategy deployed by organizers.
5. **Automatic voter registration is notable.** A large portion of young Georgians are registered to vote; ensuring automatic voter registration remains intact should a priority for youth engagement.

## Introduction

In 2020, Generation Z and Millennials comprised nearly 40% of eligible American voters.<sup>1</sup> Despite the size of this voting bloc, youth (ages 18-29) voter turnout in the United States has been historically lower than other voting age groups.<sup>2</sup>

Numerous political scientists have studied the issue of low voter turnout, and there is no shortage of literature explaining the lower turnout rates. Political scientists attribute low voting rates among young people to habit formation, opportunity cost, and alternative forms of political participation (i.e., protests, social media, etc.).<sup>3</sup> In addition to these themes for explaining low youth voter turnout, researchers have observed that young people are more likely to face obstacles (e.g., waiting in line, getting time off from work, submitted necessary paperwork, finding transportation, etc.) to voting.<sup>4</sup>

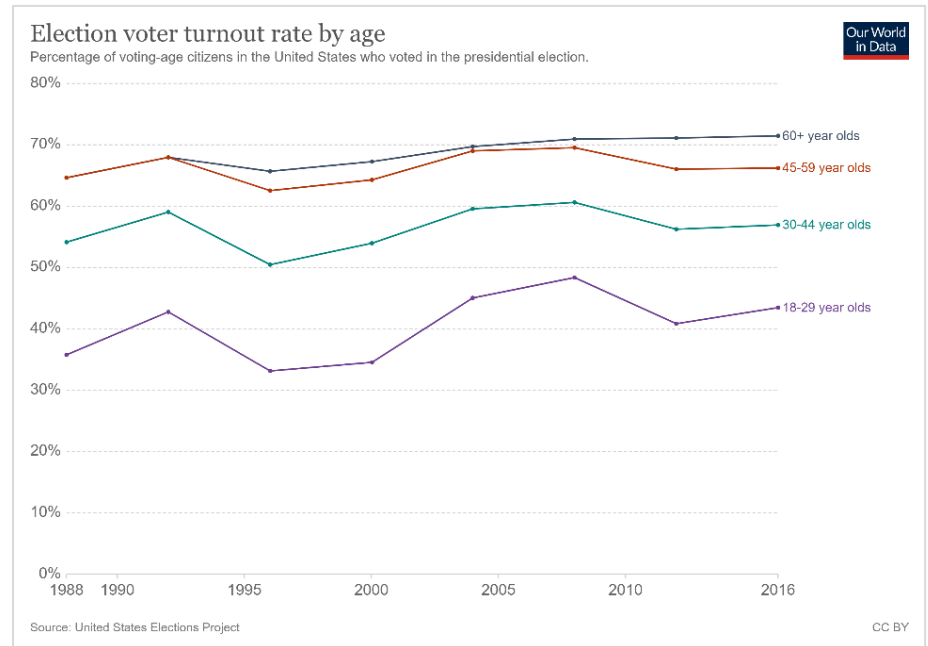


Figure 1 Visualization created by Our World in Data

Increasing the number of young Americans that exercise their right to vote has implications on both who becomes an elected official and which issues elected officials prioritize. Partisan and nonpartisan affiliates have consistently engaged in turning out young voters.

The 2020 Presidential election resulted in record aggregate turnout; more than one and six Americans of voting age cast a ballot<sup>5</sup>. While more granular data is expected in the coming months, some have estimated that youth turnout increased 10-11% nationally compared to the 2016 election.<sup>6</sup> In some states such as Georgia, organizations noted that the youth vote represented 20% of all votes cast in the Presidential Election.<sup>7</sup>

This policy analysis exercise aims to provide insight into the strategies and tactics deployed by partisan and nonpartisan political operatives in the 2020 election, with an objective to sustainably increase youth voter turnout. Key research questions that drove this design and structure of this policy analysis exercise include:

---

<sup>1</sup> [Rock the Vote](#)

<sup>2</sup> [United States Election Project](#)

<sup>3</sup> [New York Times – Why Don't Young People Vote, and What Can Be Done About it?](#)

<sup>4</sup> [FiveThirtyEight - Why Younger Americans Don't Vote More Often](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Pew Research](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University](#)

- What drove higher turnout in 2020? Where did turnout increase?
- What drove higher turnout among young Americans in 2020?
- What new strategies and tactics were deployed to drive turnout?
- What can be learned and replicated from 2020 to sustainably increase youth turnout?

## Background on Rock the Vote

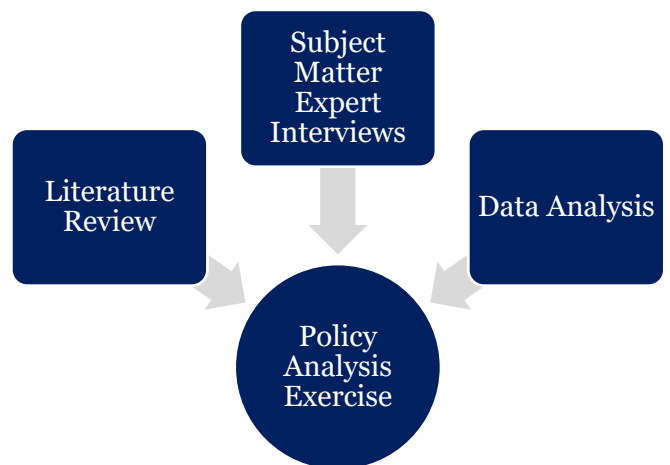
Rock the Vote (RtV), the client organization for this PAE, is a nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to building the political power of young people. In its 30-year history, RTV has registered 12 million Americans to vote. The organization was created in 1990 “deploys the most effective and impactful messages, tactics, and technology to uplift and empower the largest, most diverse generation in U.S. history.”<sup>8</sup> RtV works throughout the United States and has a deep network of partners in civic engagement.

## Methodology

2020 could be classified as an atypical year for a variety of reason. In this PAE, there is not an attempt to draw causal links to an increase in youth turnout. Rather, after an election year with record breaking turnout, this PAE looks to analyze the youth turnout and to study practices from political organizers to sustainably increase youth turnout. The objective is to glean insights on the youth vote and to document practices used to drive young people to the polls. Given the broad scope of this objective, a case study method was adopted; the state of Georgia was selected as the focus of this PAE.

This policy analysis exercise was conducted with three research components:

- **Literature Review:** The role of the youth vote has been written about extensively by both political scientists and publications. This PAE incorporates findings from both academic studies and from topical modern reporting. Timely writings relevant to the 2020 election and the 2021 Georgia Senate runoffs are cited throughout the PAE.
- **Subject Matter Interviews:** To gain insight into new tactics and strategies adopted in 2020, numerous individuals were interviewed. This PAE incorporates the input from individuals working in academia, politics, civic engagement, and general advocacy. Interviewees were asked about their organization’s strategy for engaging younger voters and their perspective of strategies/tactics that can be replicated in future election cycles. Representatives from the following organization were interviewed for this PAE:  
Notable absences from this list include the major political campaigns in Georgia and representation from the Democratic party. The individuals interviewed at these organizations ranged in seniority, but all interviewees were asked questions focused on youth engagement during the 2020 general election and 2021 runoffs.




---

<sup>8</sup> [Rock the Vote – About Us](#)



Figure 1 Visual of Organizations Interviewed as Part of the PAE

- Data Analysis:** This PAE includes analysis of data provided by the state of Georgia’s Office of the Secretary of State.<sup>9</sup> Election data for 2016, 2020, and the 2021 Senate Runoffs were analyzed. This data is publicly available and was aggregated at the state level; all county level data was aggregated. Note throughout the data analysis, the focus will be on age groups 18-29 .

Near the time of this PAE’s publication, Georgia’s governor Brian Kemp signed into law a bill that impacted multiple facets of the state’s election law. This PAE will not analyze the implications of the recent legislation. However, it should be noted that most of the interviewees participating in this PAE expressed concern about the implications of this bill on its impact on youth voter turnout. Consistently in interviews, it was expressed that efforts which created obstacles to cast a ballot disproportionately impact young people.

This PAE also does not incorporate population data into the analysis of the 2016, 2020, or 2021 elections. Understanding the impact of population changes would be provide a clear picture on the increase in youth vote. This should be taken into consideration for future studies and iterations off this report.

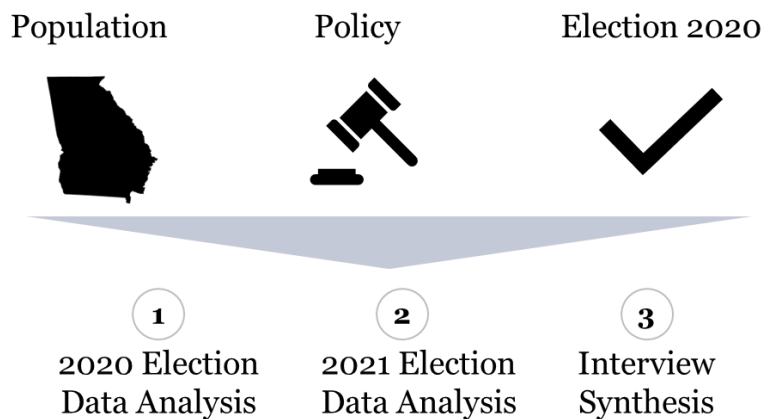
---

<sup>9</sup> Note that the nomenclature used to analyze various demographic dimensions mirrors the nomenclature provided by the state of Georgia.

## Findings

To provide insights into youth voter turnout, this policy analysis exercise will use the state of Georgia as a case study to glean insights. Georgia was selected for a case study for several reasons. First, some sources note that Georgia led the nation in youth turnout during the November election (based off of available data) at a rate of 20%. Second, Georgia received national attention for the Senate runoffs and a second statewide election serves as an additional opportunity to analyze youth turnout. Thirdly, relative to 2016, Georgia led the nation by increasing the number of registered 18-24-year-old Georgians by 34%. This offers an opportunity to understand the factors leading to an increase in youth registration.

### Case Study Structure



### Changing Demographics – A Younger Georgia

Changing demographics are often cited when exploring a notable increase in turnout or a political shift from an election. An analysis of demographics in Georgia provides insight into the outcomes of youth turnout in the state.

Analyzing available data from the United States Census, the proportion of Georgians aged 18-29 has steadily increased over the last 10 years.<sup>10</sup> According to Census estimates from 2019, Georgians in this age group represented 18.4% of the state's total population. 1,786,722 out of 10,617,423 Georgians are aged 18-29. This means young (18-29) Georgians represented a greater proportion of the 2020 electorate than their population representation (note this is also aided by the fact those under the age 18 cannot vote).

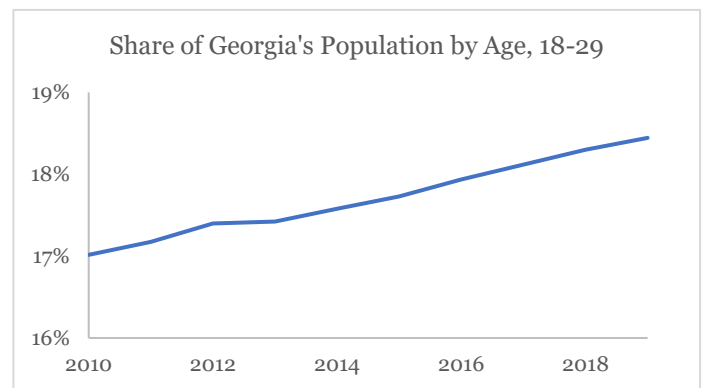


Figure 2 Analysis of Census Population Data (2010-2019)

<sup>10</sup> [United States Census](#)



## Policy Changes

The elections legislative environment of a given state can have immense impact on turnout in a state, with younger voters particularly sensitive to legislative changes. In recent years, there have been a few notable legislative changes that provide context into the elections legislative environment that may have impacted youth turnout.

First, under former Georgia Governor Nathan Deal, it became policy to automatically register Georgians to vote when applying/renewing driver licenses unless they explicitly opt out.<sup>11</sup> This made Georgia one of 20 states (including the District of Columbia) that have implemented automatic voter registration (as of January 2021).<sup>12</sup> Analysis from the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported that the number of Georgians registered to vote, ages 18-34, increased by 68% between 2016 and 2020.<sup>13</sup> Despite this policy change garnering minimal amounts of attention, the impact seem clear. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution estimates that 350,000 voters registered each year through automatic voter registration since the policy change in September 2016, roughly 1.1 million Georgians added to the voting rolls from 2017-2020.<sup>14</sup> From those 1.1 million newly registered voters, nearly half are under the age of 35.<sup>15</sup>

Conducting an analysis using data provided by the United States Census and Georgia's Secretary of State, an estimated 91.6% of Georgians, ages 18-29, appear to be registered to vote. Note that this figure is directional since the overall population data is based off the 2019 Census estimate.

Analysis of Georgians Ages 18-29, Percent Registered to Vote (2020)	
Number of Georgians Registered to Vote, Ages 18-29 (Secretary of State's Office <sup>16</sup> )	1,697,158
Estimated Numbers of Georgians, Ages 18-29 (2019 Census Data <sup>17</sup> )	1,786,772
<b>Estimated Percent of Georgians Registered to Vote in 2020, Ages 18-29</b>	<b>~91.6%</b>

It is also worth noting that being registered to vote does not ensure nor imply casting a ballot, however, automatic voter registration is a noteworthy factor when consider an increase in voter turnout. The Brennan Center estimated that if automatic voter registration is adopted nationally, 50 million Americans could be added to their state's respective voter rolls<sup>18</sup>.

A second legislative factor for consideration is the environment in which the 2020 election was administered. The COVID-19 pandemic caused election administrations to reconsider how their elections were administered. Brad Raffensperger, Georgia's Secretary of State during the 2020 election, commented that Georgia was "the first state in the country to have the trifecta of automatic voter registration, at least 16 days of early voting and no-excuse absentee voting. These early investments paid

---

<sup>11</sup> [Wall Street Journal – Georgia's Motor-Voter Drive Boosts Eligible Balloters Who Lean Democratic](#)

<sup>12</sup> [National Conference of State Legislatures – Automatic Voter Registration](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Atlanta Journal-Constitution – Rise of Young Diverse Georgia Voters May Influence 2020 Elections](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Atlanta Journal-Constitution – Rise of Young Diverse Georgia Voters May Influence 2020 Elections](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Atlanta Journal-Constitution – Georgia Made More Competitive by 1 Million New Voters Since '16 Election](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Analysis of data provided by the Secretary of State's office – Active Voters by Race and Gender by Age Group \(accessed March 27, 2021\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> [United States Census](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Brennan Center for Justice – Congress Must Pass the 'For the People Act'](#)

strong dividends as Georgia moved quickly to uphold access to the vote during the COVID-19 pandemic.”<sup>19</sup> In the state of Georgia during the November 2020 election<sup>20</sup>:

- No excuse is required for an absentee ballot application
- Absentee ballots did not require a witness signature
- Drop-off boxes for ballots were available
- Photo identification was not required for completing an absentee ballot application
- Three weeks of early voting<sup>21</sup>

### November 2020 Election

Combining demographic changes with legislation changes, Georgia’s electorate looked notably different in 2020 compared to 2016. In four years, there were simply more young Georgians, and there were more young Georgians registered to vote. A visual created by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, figure 3, depicts the increased size young voters have in the state’s electorate. In 2016, voters aged 18-34 composed 23.1% of the electorate. By 2020, this figured increased to 30.9%, a noteworthy increase of 7.8% in four years.

Taking into consideration the demographic and legislative changes, how did young people turnout in the November 2020 election?

The data analysis below is based off data published Georgia’s Secretary of State’s Office and the United States Census.

Compared to 2016, Georgia saw a 14% increase in voter registration and a 21% increase in votes cast. As visualized below, across all age groups there was an increase in both registration and votes.<sup>22</sup>

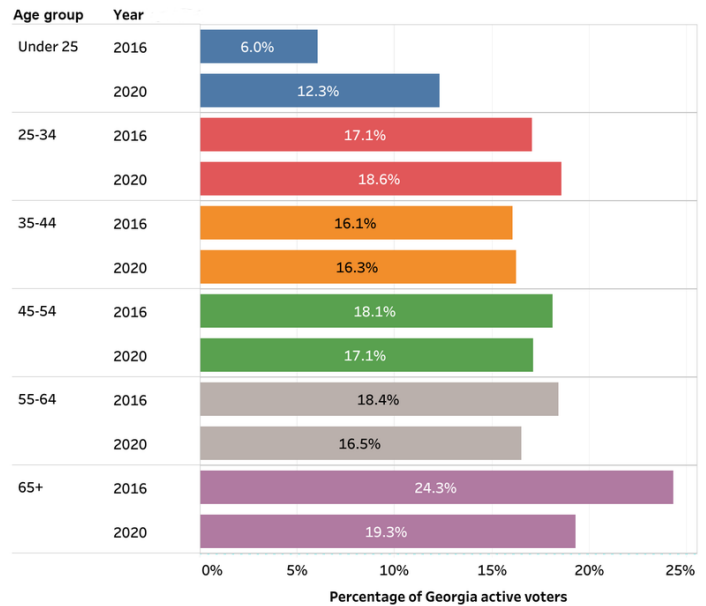


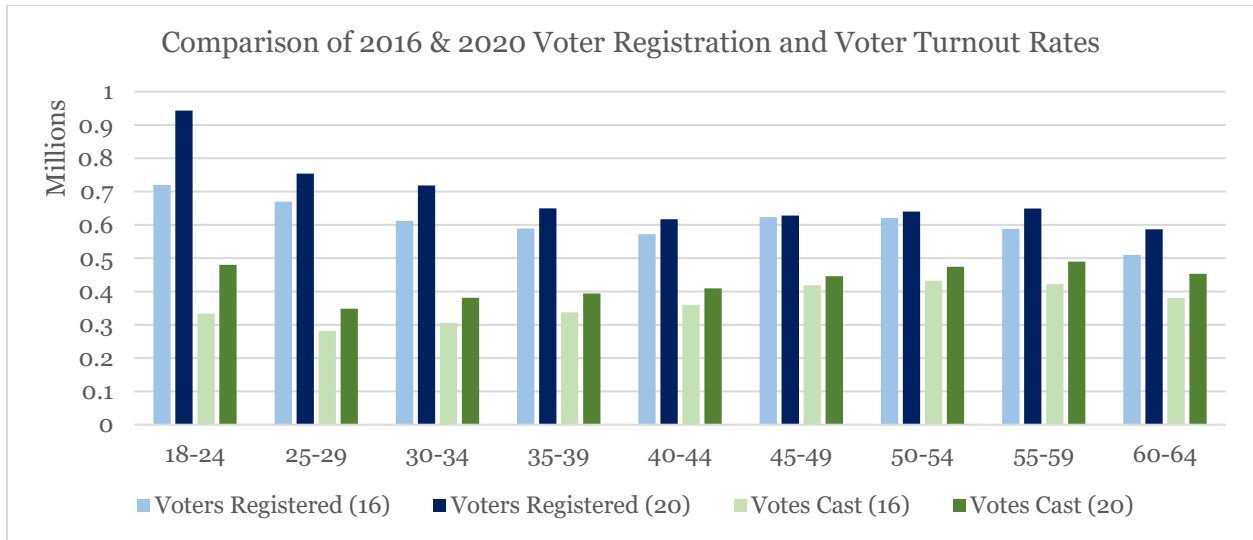
Figure 3 Atlanta Journal-Constitution Graphic on Georgia's Changing Electorate, Age Breakdown of Active Georgia Voters in 2016 and 2020

<sup>19</sup> [Georgia’s Secretary of State – Rand Corp. Recognizes Georgia as a National Leader in Voter Access During a Pandemic](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Defending Digital Democracy – Election Data Set](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Georgia Secretary of State’s Office – Record Turnout on First Day of Early Voting in Georgia](#)

<sup>22</sup> Note that the demographic of 65+ was removed from this visual. This demographic is the largest of both registered and votes cast.



- Excluding the 65+ demographic, 18-24-year-old Georgians represented the largest demographic of registered voters in both 2016 and 2020.
- In 2016, 46% of registered voters ages 18-29 voted. In 2020, 51% of registered voters ages 18-29 voted.

Table 1 Analysis of Georgia's 2020 Election Registration and Turnout by Age

Turnout Analysis of Georgia in the November 2020 General Election			
Age Group	Number Registered	Voted in the Election	Turnout of Those Registered
18-24	943,300	480,050	51%
25-29	753,858	348,381	46%
18-29	1,697,158	828,431	49%
30-34	718,138	381,120	53%
35-39	649,548	393,963	61%
40-44	617,153	409,372	66%
45-49	628,163	446,100	71%
50-54	640,209	474,114	74%
55-59	648,879	489,638	75%
60-64	586,471	452,867	77%
65-OVER	1,455,632	1,147,553	79%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,641,351</b>	<b>5,023,158</b>	<b>51%</b>

- The youngest demographic, defined as 18-24, turned out at a rate of 51% (relative to the number of registered voters).
- The 18-29-year-old demographic represented 22% of all registered voters and 16% of total votes cast.
- In 2016 this demographic represented 21% of all registered voters and 15% of total votes cast

To better understand youth turnout, a comparison from 2016 provides insight into where there were demographic increases<sup>23</sup>.

Table 2 Youth Turnout Ages 18-29 by Demographic, Comparison of 2016 November Election to 2020 Election

Youth Turnout Ages 18-29 by Demographic, Comparison of 2016 November Election to 2020 Election								
Year	Black	White	Hispanic-LT	Asia-PI	Native-Am	Other	Unknown	Total
2016	190,096	309,938	27,302	12,933	814	10,901	62,581	614,565
2020	237,583	425,525	54,093	28,728	1,761	23,521	57,220	828,431
<i>Net Increase</i>	47,487	115,587	26,791	15,795	947	12,620	(5,361)	213,866
<i>Percent Change</i>	25%	37%	98%	122%	116%	116%	-9%	35%

- Across all demographics, youth voters turned out in higher numbers, except for unknown demographics.
- Young white Georgians saw the greatest net increase, with 115,587 (37%) additional ballots cast, followed by black Georgians with 47,487 ballots cast (25%).
- The greatest percentage increase was driven by Georgians identifying as Asian/Pacific Islander, an increase of 122% compared to votes cast in the 2016 election.
- Georgians ages 18-29 cast an addition 213,866 ballots in 2020 compared to the 2016 election.

Compared to 2016, more votes were cast in 2020 across all age groups. The analysis below seeks to uncover where there were notable increases in votes (50%+ compared to 2016). The 2021 runoffs are included in this table as a reference point.

Table 3 Youth Demographics (18-29) with 50%+ Increase in Votes Compared 2016 to 2020

Youth Demographics (18-29) with 50%+ Increase in Votes Compared 2016 to 2020						
Age Range	2016	2020	2021	% increase (2016-2020)	% increase (2020-2021)	% increase (2016-2021)
<b>Black Males</b>						
18-24	37,045	56,558	49,347	53%	-13%	33%
<b>White Males</b>						
18-24	74,779	114,180	92,488	53%	-19%	24%
<b>Asian-PI Males</b>						
18-24	3,317	7,916	6,677	139%	-16%	101%
25-29	2,269	4,886	3,848	115%	-21%	70%
<b>Asian-PI Females</b>						
18-24	4,384	10,194	8,709	133%	-15%	99%

<sup>23</sup> Georgia [collects data on race](#) when Georgians register to vote, using the nomenclature found in the document

25-29	2,920	5,578	4,373	91%	-22%	50%
<b>Hispanic-LT Males</b>						
18-24	6,786	14,676	10,914	116%	-26%	61%
25-29	3,593	7,321	5,364	104%	-27%	49%
<b>Hispanic-LT Females</b>						
18-24	10,566	21,175	15,288	100%	-28%	45%
25-29	6,293	10,731	7,551	71%	-30%	20%
<b>Other Males</b>						
18-24	2,464	5,648	4,779	129%	-15%	94%
25-29	1,597	3,608	2,939	126%	-19%	84%
<b>Other Females</b>						
18-24	3,980	8,508	6,761	114%	-21%	70%
25-29	2,819	5,612	4,363	99%	-22%	55%
<b>Native American Males</b>						
18-24	262	522	418	99%	-20%	60%
25-29	103	310	236	201%	-24%	129%
<b>Native American Females</b>						
18-24	303	559	405	84%	-28%	34%
25-29	143	360	249	152%	-31%	74%

- Asian Pacific Islanders, Hispanic-LT, Native Americans, and Other are the demographic groups that experienced 50%+ growth in votes cast in both the 18-24/25-29 age groups and across males/females.
- Of all youth (18-29) demographic groups with over 1,000 votes cast, Georgian Asian/Pacific Islanders represented the large percentage increase in votes cast compared from 2016 to 2020 (139%).

### Georgia – January 2021 Senate Runoffs

Objectively, more young people did vote in 2020. This analysis of 2016 and 2020 elections data is intended to provide context into the strategies/tactics used by organizers interviewed for this PAE. While the primary focus of this PAE is the 2020 election, the state of Georgia was also selected for a case study because of the Senate Runoffs in 2021.<sup>24</sup> This race garnered national attention since it determined control of the United States Senate and cost nearly \$1 billion.<sup>25</sup> Interviewees described the 2020 and 2021 races completely differently. Given the historic nature of this race, an analysis was conducted.

Table 4 Analysis of Georgia's 2021 Senate Runoff Election Registration and Turnout by Age

Turnout Analysis of Georgia in the January 2021 Senate Runoff Election			
Age Group	Number Registered	Votes in the Election	Turnout of Those Registered
18-24	956,536	387,181	40%
25-29	763,333	268,327	35%

<sup>24</sup> [New York Times – What's a Runoff, and Why Are There Two? Here's Why Georgia Matters](#)

<sup>25</sup> [The Atlantic – Georgia's Billion-Dollar Bonfire](#)

18-29	1,719,869	655,508	38%
30-34	731,702	308,604	42%
35-39	659,049	332,055	50%
40-44	627,230	356,873	57%
45-49	630,023	395,753	63%
50-54	650,066	437,023	67%
55-59	654,736	457,270	70%
60-64	593,777	430,763	73%
65-OVER	1,477,546	1,117,648	76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,743,998</b>	<b>4,491,497</b>	<b>58%</b>

- Compared to the November 2020 Election, every age group saw a drop in turnout; it is worth noting that turnout was higher in all age groups in the runoffs than in the 2016 November election.

New Registrations from November Election to January Runoffs		
Age Group	New Registrations	Percent of New Registrations
18-24	13,236	13%
25-29	9,475	9%
18-29	22,711	22%
30-34	13,564	13%
35-39	9,501	9%
40-44	10,077	10%
45-49	1,860	2%
50-54	9,857	10%
55-59	5,857	6%
60-64	7,306	7%
65-OVER	21,914	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>102,647</b>	<b>100%</b>

- Young voters represented 22% of all new registrations leading up to the runoff election.

Percentage Decrease in Votes – November 2020 Election and January 2021 Runoff Election			
	All Demographics	Asian-PI Males	White Males
18-24	-19%	16%	-16%
25-29	-23%	-21%	-21%
	Black Males	Asian-PI Females	White Females
18-24	-13%	-15%	-22%
25-29	-20%	-22%	-25%
	Black Females	Hispanic-Lat Males	Hispanic-Lat Females
18-24	-16%	-26%	-28%
25-29	-21%	-27%	-30%

- Black males ages 18-24 experiences the lowest percentage point decrease from their respective November 2020 election turnout.
- Youth Hispanic-Latin turnout had a notable drop for both males and females in the runoffs

## Sampling of Interviews and Takeaways

In addition to the literature review and data analysis, several organizers from the 2020 general election and 2021 runoff election provided input into engaging young voters. The interview takeaways below are a synthesis of the most insightful strategy and tactics used by political organizers.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Campus Votes Project</b>
<b>Context</b>	This organization was founded in 2012 and works to institutionalize student voting; the organization works with colleges and universities across the country. <sup>26</sup>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The organization has democracy fellows, but before the 2020, there were zero democracy fellows in the state of Georgia.</li> <li>▪ The organization <b>offered a short-term special election fellowship for the runoff elections</b>; this fellowship ran from November to the election in January.</li> <li>▪ <b>Peer-to-peer organizing was viewed as pivotal</b> in engaging young voters.</li> <li>▪ Democracy fellows were tasked with making a list of every individual that they knew on campus, usually through affiliation of common student organizations (e.g., athletic teams, Greek life, etc.). After compiling said lists, fellows individually followed up via phone calls and text messages to ensure voting plans were created and clear.</li> <li>▪ It was noted that the actual experience of “voting felt a lot different this year.”</li> <li>▪ <b>“Voting felt a lot more inclusive this year.”</b> In 2016, the interviewee described that voting took 10 minutes, but this year there was a three-hour early vote line in the primaries. However, near those voting lines, there were vendors giving gear to encourage civic engagement, pizza distributors, etc. It was described as a “party at the polls.”</li> <li>▪ <b>“Instagrammatics” were commonly used to engage younger voters</b> on social media.</li> <li>▪ There was a <b>greater focus on “micro-influencers” on social media</b>, rather than using exclusively celebrities. Young people entrenched in certain communities (e.g., leader of a student organization with 500 followers) would be financially compensated to promote civic engagement issues. See appendix 3 for an example.</li> <li>▪ For all of the new tactics and strategies deployed, the <b>standard issues with youth voter engagement remained</b>. For example, some college students do not know that the Secretary of State’s office is a resource for absentee ballots. A lot of the organizing efforts required focusing on registration and ballot access issues.</li> </ul>

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Georgia GOP</b>
<b>Context</b>	Interviewee worked as a regional field director for the Georgia GOP during both the 2020 general election in Georgia and in the 2021 Georgia Senate runoffs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviewee described their region as an area primarily composed of “Trumplican” voters aged 45-60.</li> <li>▪ They described that <b>there needs to be a shift from investing in physical door knocking/yard signs to peer-to-peer organizing</b>.</li> <li>▪ From a partisan perspective, the interviewee believed that broadly speaking, <b>Republican voter turnout was blunted due to messaging (i.e., then President Trump’s criticism of mail ballots in advance of the November election</b> and his subsequent critiques of the integrity of the election leading up to the runoffs.</li> <li>▪ <b>“If you don’t trust the vote, it doesn’t matter if you are young or old.”</b></li> <li>▪ The interviewee also <b>described a potential advantage for democratic turnout by having “fresh faces”</b> run for office during the runoffs, rather than incumbents.</li> </ul>

<sup>26</sup> [Campus Votes Project](#)

- The interview was **unaware of any efforts to explicitly engage younger voters in advance of the runoff elections**. “We knew we would have a problem with retaining the vote,” indicating efforts were focused on retaining turnout instead of expanding it.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Republican National Committee</b>
<b>Context</b>	Interviewee worked for the Republican National Committee working to elect Republicans in both the 2020 general election in Georgia and in the 2021 Georgia Senate runoffs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When asked about efforts to engage younger voters, the interviewee described how the election had “more money in consumer data than ever before.” Rather than age, <b>targeting was focused on purchase habits</b> (e.g., if an individual was identified as someone that recently purchased a gun, they would be engaged).</li> <li>▪ There was a <b>recognition that diversity was a strong motivator</b> that was somewhat tapped into (i.e., promoting the “first” woman/person of color/etc. to run for a given position).</li> <li>▪ The interviewee commented that “<b>culture is still above politics, and it always will be.</b>” This was in reference to how the personality/profile of candidates can drive youth turnout.</li> <li>▪ Interviewee emphasized that Republicans struggled to compete to earn young voters in the runoffs; interviewee commented that an observed message delivered by Democrats to young Georgian voters was “<b>a vote for Warnock is a vote for \$2000,</b>” in reference to the proposed stimulus check.</li> </ul>

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Georgia Shift</b>
<b>Context</b>	“Georgia Shift is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization giving young people a seat at the table of democracy. We believe social change only comes by constantly providing hands-on education and direct-action opportunities, keeping young people engaged to train those who come after them.” <sup>27</sup>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>After the delays and dysfunction of the Georgia primaries, the interviewee was motivated to get involved before the general election.</b> They joined the organization with the foundational belief that the performance of the 2020 primaries would have been better if more young people were working the polls.</li> <li>▪ The interviewee utilized social media (including LinkedIn) to get Georgians aged 16-25 to work as poll workers throughout the election season.</li> <li>▪ The interviewee discussed that they tried to meet young people where they were by <b>emphasizing that being a poll worker is a well-paid opportunity</b> as well.</li> </ul>

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Campus Election Engagement Project</b>
“Working to help America’s 20 million college and university students vote, Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP) assists administrators, faculty, staff and student leaders to engage students in federal, state and local elections. Student voting promotes a more equitable and inclusive democracy and addresses past and present disenfranchisement. CEEP’s national nonpartisan efforts combine our powerful resources with personalized coaching. Schools use CEEP resources to help students register	

<sup>27</sup> [Georgia Shift](#)



to vote, navigate challenging voting laws, learn about issues and candidates, volunteer in elections and show up at the polls, whether virtually or in person.”<sup>28</sup>

- The organization **offered a fellowship program, paying each student \$1,000 a semester.** Once it became clear the runoffs would be taking place, the **fellowships were extended with additional compensation.**
- **Fellows were given a lot of discretion.** A few examples of student events included: watch parties for debates and other campaign events, “who I can vote for” event where students discussed the importance of exercising the right to vote, getting candidates to visit campus, etc.
- The interviewee described **two factors that motivated young Georgians to the polls during the 2020 election season: the state government’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the killing of George Floyd led to a mobilization of young people in Georgia.**
- Interviewee commented on how individuals claimed as dependents (**ages 17-24 did not receive stimulus check, and this was frustrating for many young Georgians;** this galvanized many young people to get involved.
- Interviewee described that many young people were “feeling left out” and “feeling like they don’t even matter.” The organization emphasized voting as a mechanism to have a voice. See appendix 1 for an example of collateral developed by the organization.
- **Early voting was heavily emphasized,** and internal marketing efforts worked to make this a priority for young voters.
- **Cameo, a company that allows for personalized videos from celebrities was used to engage specific young populations** (i.e., Jim O’Heir, who starred in the American sitcom Parks and Recreation, delivered tailored videos to several Georgian universities encouraging students to vote in the runoffs). The interviewee noted that 18 Cameo campaigns were used at different universities across Georgia.

<b>Individual</b>	<b>Political Scientist at Historically Black College and University in Georgia</b>
<b>Context</b>	Interviewee worked on registration efforts with their student body and faculty for both the 2020 general election in Georgia and in the 2021 Georgia Senate runoffs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviewee had a grant of about \$11,000 and used this to hire democracy fellows at their university. These fellows were students, and they all completed a training program.</li> <li>▪ Given the pandemic, the fact that most of students were at home was viewed as an opportunity. <b>“With students at home, we are magnifying our impact,” the interviewee noted.</b> Students were seen as a path to connect with household members.</li> <li>▪ The interviewee described the pandemic having a silver lining because of the ease of “relational outreach”, noting that <b>every student now had the ability to reach 2-3 more people.</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Professional athletes at the university were engaged to record public service announcements.</b></li> <li>▪ Given that many students were out of state, public service announcements were tailored to several states (i.e., specific voter registration processes by state).</li> <li>▪ Student organizations were tasked to compete in creating a campaign to emphasize “why voting matters.”</li> <li>▪ In some instances, the fellows mailed out voter registration forms directly to students.</li> <li>▪ After a student registered to vote, the interviewee described <b>comprehensive follow-up notes.</b> Students were mailed postcards that encouraged them to verify that their registration was processed. Students were reminded of their specific ballot deadlines and voting location.</li> </ul>

<sup>28</sup> [Campus Election Engagement Project](#)

- The interviewee noted that **there was a target to contact each student 4 times leading up to the election**, and this target was achieved.
- The interviewee **noted that voter suppression in Georgia is a very real and present obstacle**. They gave the example of a polling site for their students being switched to a further/less accessible location.
- The interviewee emphasized trying to keep civic engagement as a “low rumble,” consistently engaging students (e.g., providing students reminders when they move to update their registration). They described wanting to embed civic education into the freshmen orientation as well.
- The interviewee **expressed a desire for more data to improve the ability to organize**. A provided example was a desire to better understand the kinds of jobs African-Americans are working. “Are they 9 to 5? If that’s when polling is open, what are the lunch hour rules and regulations?” The **interviewee emphasized that active voter suppression tactics are seeking to roll back the progress made to date**.
- This year messaging was perceived as more authentic and inclusive. Terms like “soccer moms” and “NASCAR dads” are “patronizing” and tend to dissuade engagement.
- Interviewee noted how **young leadership at the local and national stage played a role in keeping young people engaged throughout the election season**. They provided the example of the Tweet from Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (see figure 4) in the leadup to the runoffs.
- Interviewee noted that **“people have cultivated new taste buds for political messaging,”** and that young voters are more receptive to authentic/direct messaging.
- The interviewee described **2020 as being a year with seamless organization, more grassroots efforts, and coalitions of coalitions**.
- The **interviewee described multiple new tactics observed in the 2020 election**. 1) ‘Party at the Mailbox’ was introduced in Georgia during the runoffs. Georgians could sign up to receive paraphernalia and voting information. The interview described thousands being delivered. 2) Students hosted roundtables to discuss issues and broadcasted the roundtables on Facebook Live. 3) ‘I am a voter’ facemasks were distributed. 4) Once the runoffs were announced, the high schools and colleges were engaged to provide a list of students that would be turning 18 and eligible to vote in the runoffs.



Figure 4 Referenced Tweet by Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley

<b>Organization</b>	<b>The New Georgia Project</b>
<b>About</b>	“The New Georgia Project is a nonpartisan effort to register and civically engage Georgians.” <sup>29</sup>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>There was an explicit effort from November 7<sup>th</sup> to January 5<sup>th</sup> to register young people that were turning 18 and became eligible to vote in the runoffs.</b></li> <li>▪ Interviewee described that <b>the organization hosted graduation parties for high school seniors to engage younger folks to become politically involved.</b></li> </ul>

<sup>29</sup> [New Georgia Project](#)

- There was a deliberate effort to meet young people during their regular day-to-day activities. An example was provided where organizers would go to barber shops to reach younger voters.
- Younger voters were motivated to turnout during the runoffs after “having Georgia vote for a blue president for the first time since 1992...it was really an energizer.”
- **The messaging leading up to the runoffs was “we’re not finished.”**
- Acknowledging the hardships of the COVID-19 pandemic, **organizers held events tailored events based off of community needs** (e.g., grocery food box distribution, holiday toy drive, etc.). **There was a significant emphasis in holding events that served as proper community aide.**
- The interviewee described a huge virtual push. There were numerous town halls on a range of topics and voting in the November election was not always the primary topic.
- The interviewee noted that **virtual events had their limits, given a prominent technology divide in Georgia.** They described Tallahassee, Georgia as an example of a community that required in-person engagement. They noted how Liberty county and Atlanta could be different states, and there was a need to very intentionally tailor outreach efforts.
- “We called the hell out of people,” the interviewee commented when describing phone/SMS outreach efforts.
- **The interviewee concluded that “the conception that we did all of this in a year is very wrong...there are people who have been doing this work for decades.”**

Organization	Planned Parenthood
About	<p>“Planned Parenthood is a trusted health care provider, an informed educator, a passionate advocate, and a global partner helping similar organizations around the world. Planned Parenthood delivers vital reproductive health care, sex education, and information to millions of people worldwide.”<sup>30</sup></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planned Parenthood works to engage young people well in advance of being eligible to vote. A component of their youth outreach programs includes advocacy and civic education.</li> <li>▪ The interviewee <b>described the general election and the runoffs as “two totally different campaigns.”</b> They noted that <b>organizing was “easier because we could do more mobile outreach.”</b></li> <li>▪ <b>“The primaries were so horrible in Georgia that people were energized to get involved.”</b> They noted “we went and we protested in the summer, and we said <b>we’ll take our protesting to the polls.</b>”</li> <li>▪ The interviewee noted that many organizations sought to invest more in digital organizing, but <b>the pandemic accelerated to an unprecedented investment in digital organizing.</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Digital organizing forced creativity and intentionality.</b> Since people were fatigued already by spending so much time behind screens, <b>organizers needed to create thoughtful events to encourage engagement.</b> House parties, DJ sessions, and virtual BINGO were all examples of events used to engage young people.</li> <li>▪ “The realization that there would be a runoff was galvanizing.” The interview commented that there were less distractions (i.e., focus on the Senate), and voter outreach organizations seem to collaborate in lockstep.</li> <li>▪ During the runoff, there was notable involvement from entertainers (e.g., drive-in concerts).</li> <li>▪ The interviewee noted how there were notably more young messengers for the runoff election. They described entertainers both local and national using social media persistently to emphasize the importance of this election.</li> </ul>

<sup>30</sup> [Planned Parenthood](#)

- The interviewee noted that **the prospect of a stimulus check was also enticing for many young voters**; they noted this was exacerbated because “Georgia’s unemployment system was horrible.”
- “There was a lot of mutual aid and intentionality” regarding campaigning/civic engagement efforts.

## Insights and Recommendations

After conducting an analysis of the 2020 election and 2020 Senate runoffs in Georgia and interviewing organizers in the state, a few common themes emerged. While these themes vary in applicability with Rock the Vote’s national presence, these themes may better inform programmatic operations and organizational strategy (particularly in Georgia).

### Demographic Changes Demand Inclusivity

This policy analysis exercise made clear that demographics are changing in Georgia, and so is political organizing. Younger voters in Georgia are more diverse, and the interviews with organizers emphasized the importance of tailoring engagement to diversity.

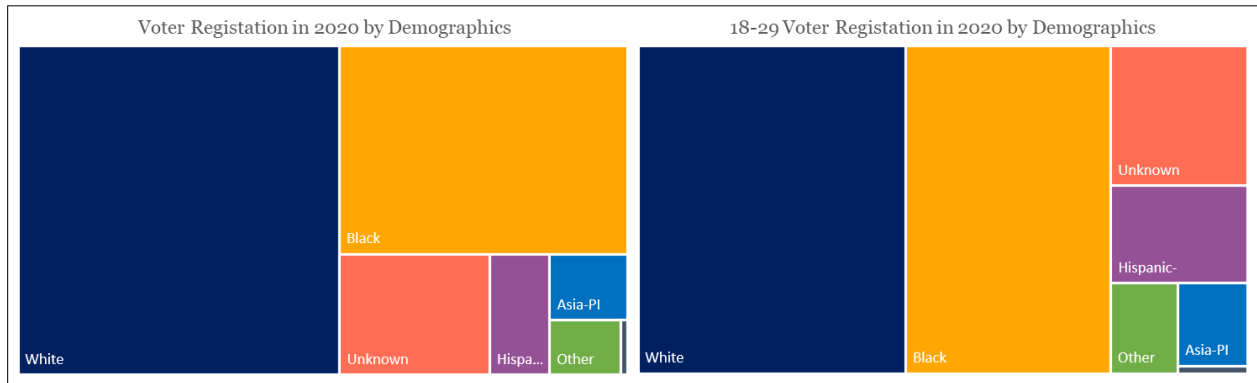


Figure 5 2020 Registration Breakdown by Demographics - Georgia 2020 (Note that Native Americans are represented on the bottom right of the figure)

Interviewees raised several examples of actions and practices that demonstrated inclusivity. These include:

- Showcasing diverse candidates running for state and local offices as a means to generate enthusiasm with younger voters
- Investing in social media platforms popular with younger adults (i.e., TikTok)
- Using the latest services used by younger adults such as Cameo, a service where you can pay celebrities to deliver a tailored message
- Communicating in a colloquial vernacular, rather than in cliché inauthentic platitudes
- Holding events intended to first help targeted communities (e.g., deliver groceries, hold a toy drive, etc.), and then engage on political matters

Combining the insights from the analysis and the interviews, this recommendation can be used to inform future programming and youth engagement for RtV.

## Localized Voices Have Power

A resounding theme from the interviews is the importance of elevating local voices. National figures will continuously play their respective role in political organizing, but 2020 in Georgia represented a significant investment in local voices. Two tangible examples in which this was done were:

**Micro-influencers (MIs)** – numerous interviewees from various organizations described deploying MIs throughout the election cycle. These MIs were individuals that had a strong social fabric in their given community (e.g., student organization leader at a university campus, young professional in Atlanta, etc.). Organizations would compensate young Georgians to post information on how to request mail ballots, information on the positions various candidates held, and other elections related information. These organizations described MIs as being more effective than mega celebrities since the content would be delivered from a trusted source. Interviewees described MIs as having high levels of engagement with their community. Tactically, Rock the Vote can explore options to create a comprehensive MI programs and evaluate any funding allocated to national influencers.

**Ambassador and Fellowship Programs** – Every interviewee spoken with that belonged to an organization with an ambassador/fellowship program spoke favorably of said program. A few of the key advantages of these programs include:

- Creating a platform where ambassadors/fellows can pioneer innovative civic events
- Establishing a trusted messenger on campus to communicate to their respective community
- Developing a channel to understand where challenges are for young voters; this was helpful in 2020 due to the pandemic and widespread usage of mail voting
- Setting up a pipeline from campuses to civic organizations; many of the interviewees spoken with had previously served as an ambassador/fellow

In an election year where it could have been incredibly challenging to reach younger voters (i.e., remote universities, remote work, etc.), these programs served as a mechanism to continue engagement. The ambassadors were paid either hourly or via a stipend. Interviewees also emphasized the importance of employing ambassadors/fellows in non-election years as well, since instituting a culture of civic engagement requires persistence.

Rock the Vote does have an ambassador program, and it can build on the momentum of 2020 by continuing to identify ways to engage current/former/future ambassadors.

## Young People Can be a Bridge to Older Demographics

Interview after interview emphasized the criticality of peer-to-peer organizing during the 2020 election. All age groups in Georgia saw an increase in numbers of registered voters and votes cast. As many Georgians remained in their homes throughout the pandemic, interviewees noted how this was viewed as an opportunity. Interviewees perceived young Georgians as a channel to reach the entire household.

This experience in 2020 could serve as a template for organizing and engagement in future election cycles. Tactically, young voters could be segmented into three categories from the feedback provided in the interviews:

- 1 – Unlikely Voter – Unlikely to register and/or vote (due to a range of barriers)
- 2 – Finish line Voter – Likely going to register and/or vote but needs to be engaged
- 3 – Certainly will vote, and this individual can recruit others

Rock the Vote can explore its existing segmentation of young voters and further study what factors lead to peer-to-peer organizing.

## The Issues Matter

In discussing what motivated young voters to turnout in 2020 three topics were regularly referenced:

1. **Killing of George Floyd and Summer Protests** – Interviewees described that the killing of George Floyd and the subsequent police brutality protests engaged young Georgians. One interviewee described the momentum as “continuing our protests from the summer into the polls in November, January, and beyond.”
2. **The June Primaries** – During the primary elections in June 2020, Georgian voters faced long lines and malfunctioning voting machines; one voter for example waited five hours in line to vote after never receiving a requested absentee ballot.<sup>31</sup> Interviewees described being infuriated and motivated after the bungled primaries.
3. **Federal and State COVID-19 Response:** Interviewees commented how there was significant interest in holding their elected officials for the COVID-19 pandemic response. It was noted that the seemingly inadequate response combined with the exclusion of college students from stimulus checks motivated young people to vote in November.

While these issues were defining for 2020, it was evident that organizers engaged young voter around meaningful issues. Interviewees described how conversations with young Georgians consistently focused on issues that would outlive a single election. This insight can be used to train future RtV affiliates and ambassadors.

## Automatic Voter Registration is Notable

After conducting a literature review and analyzing the data from 2016 and 2020, automatic voter registration is an unignorable factor when studying the increase in youth voter registration. Georgia’s adoption of automatic voter registration was approved administratively “through a joint agreement with the state’s secretary of state, attorney general, and division of motor vehicles.”<sup>32</sup> It would be in the interest of organizations like Rock the Vote to advocate for the institutionalization of automatic voter registration from political turbulence. This is raised since automatic voter registration was accomplished through administrative means.

---

<sup>31</sup> [New York Times – ‘I Refuse Not to Be Heard’: Georgia in Uproar Over Voting Meltdown](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Gazette-Mail](#)



# Appendix 1 – Campus Election Engagement Project, Presidential Nonpartisan-Candidate Guide

The Campus Election Engagement Project created nonpartisan guides for both the November and January elections. Guides were developed in a manner targeted towards young voters, and each guide outlined several political issues.

See <a href="#">Guides.vote</a> for more online guides with links and sources	Volunteer for Joe Biden <a href="http://joebiden.com">joebiden.com</a>	Volunteer for Donald Trump <a href="http://donaldjtrump.com">donaldjtrump.com</a>
<b>AFFORDABLE CARE ACT</b> Support Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare? Support a public option?	Yes. Wants public option <a href="#">“like Medicare” to “build on the Affordable Care Act.”</a> Raise subsidies and tax credits to lower premiums.	No on both. <a href="#">“Terminate”</a> Obamacare and <a href="#">“replace with a plan that’s far better.”</a> Filed <a href="#">Supreme Court brief to overturn.</a>
<b>CAMPAIGN FINANCE</b> Limit campaign contributions? Support public funding and expanded disclosure?	Yes. <a href="#">Eliminate all private donations</a> from federal elections; <a href="#">replace solely by public funding.</a> Would expand required disclosure.	No. <a href="#">Dislikes</a> using taxpayer money for public funding. <a href="#">Opposed</a> House <a href="#">bill</a> that supported it and expanded disclosure rules.
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b> Is human-caused climate change a serious threat? Limit greenhouse gases or fund renewable energy?	Yes. <a href="#">“An existential threat.”</a> Rejoin Paris Climate Agreement to limit emissions. Introduced \$2 trillion plan <a href="#">to boost clean energy and rebuild infrastructure.</a>	No. <a href="#">“Don’t know that it’s manmade.”</a> Climate scientists have <a href="#">“political agenda”</a> risking <a href="#">“millions of jobs.”</a> <a href="#">Cut renewables funding.</a> <a href="#">Withdrew U.S.</a> from Paris Agreement.
<b>COURTS—SUPREME COURT</b> Pick Ruth Bader Ginsburg replacement now or let November winner choose?	Wait for next president. Doing so now is <a href="#">“a gigantic mistake and abuse of power.”</a> See <a href="#">CEEP Supreme Court Guide.</a>	Replace now. Thinks election will <a href="#">“end up in the Supreme Court,”</a> so fill the vacancy now. See <a href="#">CEEP Supreme Court Guide.</a>
<b>COVID-19</b> Plan for dealing with COVID? Support Trump withdrawal from World Health Organization (WHO)?	<a href="#">Emergency paid leave for all affected, more testing, strong federal response, wearing masks, and strengthening social distancing.</a> Opposed WHO withdrawal: <a href="#">“Strengthening global health”</a> makes Americans safer. Says Trump <a href="#">“quit on this country.”</a>	States must take <a href="#">main responsibility for testing.</a> <a href="#">Opposes mandatory masks.</a> <a href="#">Invest in developing vaccines.</a> Ban on China flights saved <a href="#">“thousands and thousands”</a> of lives. WHO <a href="#">“failed to make the requested and greatly needed reforms.”</a>
<b>COVID CRISIS – ECONOMIC RESPONSE</b> What should COVID stimulus bills prioritize?	<a href="#">Much bigger stimulus, with aid to states and cities.</a> Supports <a href="#">“trillion-dollar infrastructure program.”</a> with tougher conditions on business bailouts and focus on <a href="#">small business and essential workers.</a>	Reduce <a href="#">capital gains and payroll taxes,</a> limit business liability. <a href="#">Three-month student loan deferral.</a> Opposes <a href="#">congressional oversight of stimulus bailouts.</a> Payments to workers should include <a href="#">“incentive to work.”</a>
<b>EDUCATION</b> Support free (or highly subsidized) public college tuition or loan forgiveness for low-income students?	<a href="#">Yes.</a> Two years free community college. <a href="#">Free public 4-year college</a> if families make below \$125,000. Cover <a href="#">student-debt payments</a> for public college and some others if earning under \$125,000, max payment <a href="#">5% of income.</a>	Unclear. Proposed deep cuts to federal financial aid programs and ending public service loan forgiveness. Proposed <a href="#">borrowers pay</a> 12.5% of discretionary yearly income with loans forgiven after 15-25 years.
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b> Tighten or loosen environmental protections?	Tighten. <a href="#">Rescind permit for Keystone pipeline.</a> Preserve and implement <a href="#">Clean Air Act,</a> and ban new drilling on public lands. <a href="#">Let existing fracking continue.</a>	Loosen <a href="#">environmental review laws.</a> Supports <a href="#">EPA cutbacks</a> and <a href="#">Keystone pipeline.</a> <a href="#">“We are reclaiming America’s proud heritage</a> as a nation of builders.”
<b>GUN LAWS</b> More restrictive legislation on guns? Stricter background checks and bans on assault rifles?	Yes. Gun violence is a <a href="#">“public health epidemic.”</a> <a href="#">Ban assault rifles and high-capacity magazines;</a> <a href="#">background checks for all gun sales.</a>	<a href="#">Mostly no.</a> Said <a href="#">would support background checks.</a> Later <a href="#">opposed House bill mandating them.</a> <a href="#">Rescinded rule</a> stopping mentally impaired from owning firearms.

ISSUES	BIDEN (D)	TRUMP (R)
<b>IMMIGRATION</b> Path to citizenship for 11 million undocumented residents, including DACA participants brought to U.S. as children? Position on border walls and limiting asylum?	Yes. Reinstates DACA program. Supports <a href="#">"roadmap to legal status and citizenship for unauthorized immigrants."</a> <a href="#">"Building a wall will do little to deter criminals and cartels seeking to exploit our borders."</a> "Modernize" immigration, allow more total visas.	No. <a href="#">Tried to end DACA program; overruled by Supreme Court.</a> Said would <a href="#">veto</a> DACA path to citizenship. Earlier said might <a href="#">support</a> as part of broader deal. <a href="#">Declared national emergency</a> to pay for <a href="#">border wall</a> . Tightened <a href="#">legal immigration</a> and <a href="#">asylum</a> limits.
<b>IRAN</b> Support Trump withdrawal from Iran nuclear treaty? Require congressional approval for military to attack Iran?	Oppose withdrawal. "No illusions" on Iran, but diplomacy is <a href="#">"only way out."</a> Trump <a href="#">lacks authority</a> to launch attacks. Backs <a href="#">relief from sanctions</a> during pandemic.	Yes. <a href="#">Withdrew from treaty. Imposed sanctions. Ordered killing of Iranian general in Iraq.</a> Vetoes <a href="#">requiring congressional authorization</a> for military attack.
<b>LABOR</b> Support "right-to-work" laws, banning unions from mandating dues for workers they represent?	No. Repeal Taft-Hartley provisions <a href="#">that let states impose right-to-work laws.</a> Penalize "companies that interfere with workers' organizing efforts."	Yes. Supports <a href="#">right-to-work laws</a> as creating more flexibility. Issued order <a href="#">making it easier to fire federal employees.</a> <a href="#">Revoked Obama order tightening wage and hour rules.</a>
<b>LEGAL ABORTION</b> Keep legal or ban?	Legal. Supports <a href="#">"right to choose."</a> <a href="#">"Codify Roe v. Wade"</a> into law. Until 2019, <a href="#">backed</a> existing federal abortion funding ban.	Ban. <a href="#">"Strongly pro-life."</a> First president to <a href="#">attend March for Life.</a> Promised to appoint justices <a href="#">to overturn Roe v. Wade.</a>
<b>LGBTQ RIGHTS</b> Support protection from discrimination in employment, education, adoption, credit, housing, and public services.	Yes. <a href="#">First supported gay marriage in 2012.</a> <a href="#">"Protect LGBTQ+ people from discrimination."</a> Supports <a href="#">Equality Act to give federal anti-discrimination protection.</a>	No. Prohibiting job discrimination for sexual orientation was a <a href="#">"horrible"</a> decision. Rolled back LGBTQ <a href="#">health care protections</a> to protect religious freedom. Previously <a href="#">mixed.</a>
<b>MARIJUANA</b> Decriminalize or keep illegal?	<a href="#">Decriminalize use.</a> <a href="#">"Expunge all cannabis use convictions, end incarceration for drug use alone."</a> Don't interfere with states. But <a href="#">doesn't support full federal legalization.</a>	Keep illegal. Rescinded rule <a href="#">preventing federal prosecutions in states where legal.</a> Proposed <a href="#">removing medical marijuana protections.</a>
<b>MINIMUM WAGE</b> Raise federal hourly minimum wage above current \$7.25?	Yes. <a href="#">"\$15 an hour minimum wage is long overdue."</a> <a href="#">Index to median hourly wage,</a> with automatic minimum increases.	No. <a href="#">Threatened to veto \$15 minimum when House passed it.</a>
<b>PLANNED PARENTHOOD</b> Can Planned Parenthood receive federal funds for non-abortion-related care?	Yes. Will <a href="#">restore federal funding to Planned Parenthood and other family-planning programs.</a>	No. <a href="#">Blocked groups providing abortion referrals from receiving federal family-planning funds.</a>
<b>POLICE</b> Restrict police use of force and increase public oversight? Position on sending federal law enforcement agents to cities against wishes of mayors and governors?	Yes. <a href="#">More community policing, ban chokeholds. Root out</a> unlawful policing, systemic racism, prosecutorial misconduct. <a href="#">Doesn't support defunding.</a> Trump deployments furthered <a href="#">"chaos and division."</a>	No. Police are <a href="#">"under siege."</a> <a href="#">Cut back active federal oversight</a> of excess force, though supported <a href="#">database</a> to track it. Said deployment of federal agents was necessary <a href="#">to restore "law and order."</a>
<b>SOCIAL SECURITY</b> Partly privatize Social Security or raise retirement age to stabilize program?	No. Make Social Security solvent by adding <a href="#">new tax on high earners to match what middle class already pays.</a> Expand benefits and reject privatization.	Unclear. Proposed <a href="#">\$35 billion cuts</a> to Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income, with <a href="#">possible cuts to overall entitlements.</a>
<b>TAXES</b> Raise or lower taxes on the wealthy and corporations?	Raise <a href="#">corporate tax and capital gains rates.</a> <a href="#">"Get rid of" most of "Trump's \$2 trillion tax cut,"</a> which wealthy people <a href="#">"don't need."</a>	Lower. <a href="#">"Historic tax cut ... unleashing economic growth and jobs" that gave "relief for hard-working Americans."</a>
<b>VOTING RULES</b> Strict ID and other rules to combat possible fraud, even if limit access?	No. <a href="#">Restore Voting Rights Act.</a> Challenge state laws limiting voting rights. Support automatic and same-day voter registration.	Yes. Seeks <a href="#">stronger voter ID requirements.</a> Voter ID opponents <a href="#">"intend to cheat."</a>

Editor's note: Also see our [longer version](#) and [Green & Libertarian responses](#). [Campus Election Engagement Project](#) is a nonpartisan effort to help colleges engage students in elections. Sources include [Votessmart.org](#), [FactCheck.org](#), [Politifact.com](#) and candidate statements. [Vote411.org](#) and [Ballotready.org](#) offer guides to local races.



## Appendix 2 – Automatic Voter Registration in Georgia

The Brennan Center for Justice conducted a study to understand the impact of automatic voter registration for multiple states, including Georgia<sup>33</sup>. The content below is directly pulled from the Brennan Center for Justice’s report. The intent of this appendix is to offer insight into the increase in voter registrations since the 2016 election.

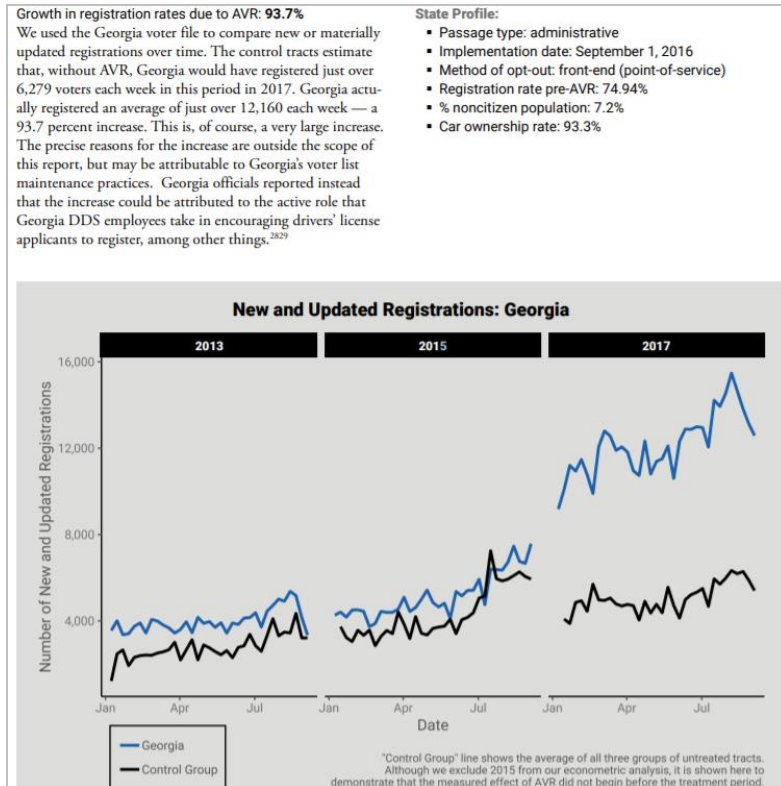


Figure 5 Screenshot (1/2) from the Brennan Center for Justice 'AVR Impact on State' Report

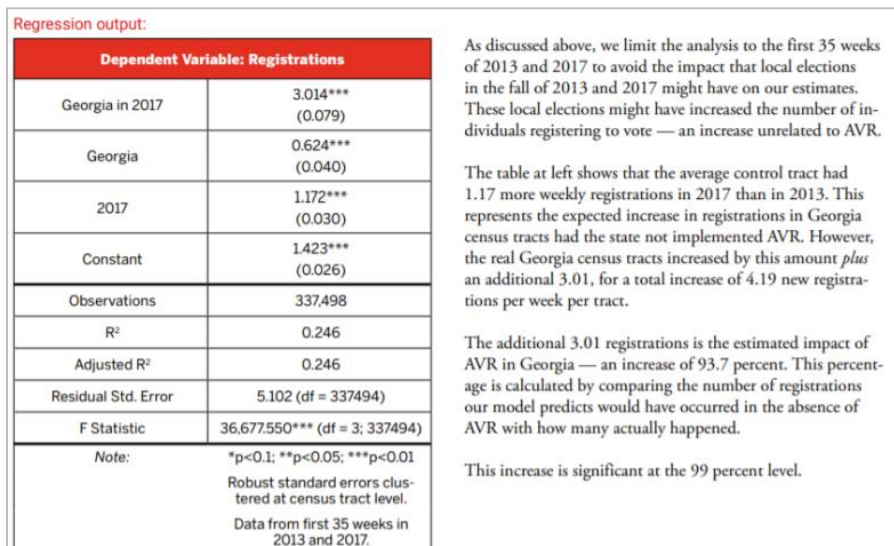


Figure 6 Screenshot (1/2) from the Brennan Center for Justice 'AVR Impact on State' Report

<sup>33</sup> [Brennan Center for Justice – AVR Impact on State Voter Registration](#)

## Appendix 3 – Instagraphic Example

The Instagram account ‘soyouwanttotalkabout’ was referenced as an example of “instagraphics” that communicated effectively with younger voters. Interviewees referenced a range of accounts on Instagram that developed content intended to civically engage younger voters.

