



ALL  
HOMES  
FOR  
ALL

¡TECHOS  
PARA  
TODOS!

PROTEJAN  
LOS  
INQUILINOS

PROTECT  
TENANTS

STAND UNITED WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS.  
GENTRIFICATION IS RACIST VIOLENCE

DETROIT ACTION  
HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT!  
KEEP FAMILIES IN THEIR HOMES!  
DETROITACTION.ORG

# 2023

## IMPACT REPORT

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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hey Fam:

We are excited for you to join us again this year as we celebrate each other, our community and the pursuit of building people power together at Detroit Action. Our mission isn't to win campaigns or to change policy (those are important, though), it is to build a community of leaders who can change our world together. I don't take that responsibility lightly. When I became the Executive Director of Detroit Action, I wanted to be a part of an organization where my parents, my cousins, my friends - regardless of their backgrounds - could have political agency and be leaders. This year we have taken so many strides in that direction - by growing our staff, by offering leadership opportunities and training, and by meeting people wherever they are - literally and figuratively- through our digital and cultural programming. Together, we are achieving that vision and we are winning campaigns and changing policy.

Next year will be hard. Aside from "Election Season", the threat of fascism, white supremacy and corporate control on our communities is strong. Those forces incentivize us to be isolated individuals who pull ourselves up by our bootstraps instead of a powerful community that takes care of one another. A safe community is an organized community and if we want to keep our families and communities safe, then we need to organize. While we may see the impacts of a never-ending pandemic, a genocide, and increased corporate influence, our organizing must offer something different to people who are cynical of "politics as usual". To that end, while the rest of the world will be focused on the churn and burn of our political nonprofit industrial complex, we will use this moment to invest in our membership, our staff, and our issues.

While this may be my final year with you all as Executive Director, I am confident that we can build the type of community that we need to fight back against the forces of white supremacy, neoliberalism and fascism that aim to destroy our communities and exploit us and our families. We'll win by being disciplined, rigorous and joyful.

**THE CALL TO ACTION IS SIMPLE: GET IN THE FIGHT WITH US NEXT YEAR AND DEFEND DETROIT.**

In Solidarity,

Branden Snyder  
Executive Director  
Detroit Action



# ABOUT DETROIT ACTION: OUR VISION AND MISSION

Detroit Action (Detroit Action, a project of Tides Advocacy and the Detroit Action Education Fund, a project of Tides Center) is a grassroots member-led, community-based organization fighting for political power, racial and economic justice for working-class Black and Brown Detroiters. Our mission is to build the power of individuals and families to challenge the root cause of poverty, advance justice, and promote human development through neighborhood-driven community organizing and civic engagement.

To build an organization that serves as our members' and staff's political home, we believe in a Detroit Action where we can learn, build relationships and create the type of community that we deserve.

**WE ENVISION AN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE METRO DETROIT BUILT THROUGH MULTIGENERATIONAL, WORKING CLASS ORGANIZING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AT THE LOCAL AND STATE LEVEL TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL PEOPLE TO THRIVE.**

To achieve this vision, low and moderate income Metro Detroiters must build power to affect through deep relational organizing that focuses on developing people and addressing their immediate needs as we challenge institutions that create and perpetuate those needs.



Detroit Action is the marriage of the Detroit Action Commonwealth, a union of homeless and formerly incarcerated Detroiters organizing in soup kitchens and homeless shelters, and Good Jobs Now, a part of SEIU's "Fight for a Fair Economy campaign". Relunched with the support of the Center for Popular Democracy and the Alliance For Youth Action in 2019, Detroit Action seeks to be a union for Black and Brown Michiganders to build power and defend our communities. Since its relaunch DA has established itself as a year-round community organizing force by and for Detroiters.



We are an organization that believes in placing its values at the center of its organizing and campaigns. Here are the organization's guiding values:

- Centering the most impacted
- Leaderful movements
- Multiple strategies for power
- Embracing Radical Politics
- Holistic organizing
- Intersectionality and Interdependence
- Anti-capitalist/anti-racism
- Pan-Africanism and Internationalism
- Abolition
- Radical Love and Tenderness

Driven by our values, our organization's work is upheld by three pillar

**Racial Justice**

Our society faces a myriad of challenges deeply rooted in white supremacy. Creating an economy that works for us all means creating big, bold intersectional solutions that challenge our core problems.

**Democracy & Structural Reform**

Building an inclusive people's movement to reclaim our democracy for the many from the influence of the very wealthy and the corporations they control.

**Abolition**

An end to the systems that perpetuate structural racism, patriarchy and economic oppression including mass incarceration, austerity, and disparities in education, healthcare, and food access.

We approach community organizing and electoral politics from a leadership development perspective with an eye towards justice, employing the tools to build a true Michigan for all.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: CAMPAIGN WINS

**1. Housing and Economic Justice As Centerpiece:** Detroit Action is building an infrastructure that allows it to build and sustain long-term power in Detroit. Detroit Action-driven campaigns serve the purpose of both winning on critical economic justice issues in the city of Detroit, state of Michigan and building new infrastructure, new leadership, and a real and sustainable power base. We have spent the greater part of 2023 focused on initiatives including statewide rent control and right to counsel as a part of the Rent Is Too Damn High Coalition. In September, we took to the streets of Lansing, along with 400 of our friends from around the state, to demand for tenant protections and investments in affordable housing. This action culminated in occupying the Michigan State House and partying on the Capitol lawn.

In 2023, we were able to win an additional \$2.5M investment into Detroit's right to counsel program by the state legislature. This investment was championed by Senator Stephanie Chang and Representative Donovan McKinney. In addition to this investment by our state legislature, we were also able to win an additional \$500,000 investment by our city government.

In November, our "Home Keeper Warriors" won a years-long fight to reform our city and county's property tax assessment practices. The recent reform ordinance creates better safe guards for property tax assessments in order to prevent the foreclosure and sale of occupied homes.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: CAMPAIGN WINS

Finally, our staff and 20 of our members attended the 2023 Center for Popular Democracy's People's Convention, where attendees had an opportunity to learn more about everyday issues that affect their daily lives and participate in an action on a Pennsylvania corporate landlord. At the 2023 People's Convention, CPD unveiled their "One Big National Campaign" which unifies state affiliates on an organizing campaign against corporate landlords to create support for social housing.

**2. Policy Work:** In 2023, we joined voting rights organizations and long-time partners, Promote the Vote, in organizing legislator support for Michigan HB 4596, which would improve youth voter turnout by pre-registering 16-year-old Michiganders and move them into the state's qualified voter file upon reaching the age of 17½.

A second bill (HB 4534) would address the disenfranchisement of people on parole by requiring the Michigan Department of Corrections to provide both identification and information about voter registration to people who have been convicted of felonies upon their release from prison.





# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: CAMPAIGN WINS

**3. Year-Round Voter Education and Engagement:** Detroit Action provided visitors to its social media platforms with information on registration, primary and general election timelines, ballot content, polling places, voter ID requirements, absentee ballots, voter rights at the polls, and nonpartisan election protections. We also took to the streets, laundromats, barbershops, and festivals to register voters and sign up new members for our organization.

Throughout 2023, Detroit Action utilized its Online to Offline program to register voters through our “Be-A-Voter” webportal and used its year round field program to reach out to voters to register them and to engage them in our issue organizing campaigns. Detroit Action hopes to unveil its Detroit Action civic engagement digital app, created with support from 4th and Main, Inc - a local software development firm- and the Rap Snacks Foundation - ahead of the election as a one stop shop to educate voters and update them on opportunities to be involved in the organization’s campaigns.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: CAMPAIGN WINS

**4. Targeted Youth Engagement:** Young people are an invaluable asset to the movement and must be cultivated as active participants in the democratic process. Detroit Action developed and delivered a suite of youth-focused activities and events to ensure they were. In 2023, Detroit Action launched its yearly Gamechanger and Voices of Detroit Youth fellowships. The Gamechanger cohort was composed of five 18-to-35-year-olds who received intensive community organizing training and engaged in field practice under their mentorship of seasoned community activists. In September of 2023, we launched our High School Youth Organizing committee at Melvindale High School. This committee is composed of Melvindale students, aged 13-18, who are interested in learning more about their own leadership and winning campaigns to end the school to prison pipeline.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

A key component to Detroit Action's work included the identification, training, and development of grassroots leaders dedicated to building long-term power and creating sustainable change in their communities. Over the last year, we built leadership in the following ways:

In January, we hosted the WILD Project's Youth Empowerment Project summit in Detroit and trained over 100 youth leaders from around the country on creating a public narrative and using it for action.

In June, we sent 11 of our staff members to the annual Ohio Organizing Collaborative and ISIAH Minnesota Weeklong Organizing Trainings. These trainings brought together over 200 leaders from across the midwest to teach ordinary people to unleash their capacity to impact the social, political, environmental, and economic decisions affecting their lives.

Finally, in December, with support from the People's Action Homes Guarantee campaign, we hosted our first Daylong Organizing training with 15 member-leaders from across our organization.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Some of the topics covered include:

- The principles and techniques of community organizing to build power
- Utilizing the tools to make and sustain relationships
- Discovering your self-interest and understand the self-interest of others
- The public arena, as a medium of exchange
- Analyzing and impacting power structures through power analysis
- Building support with money and media
- Facilitating an effective meeting
- Creating the building blocks of a power organization
- Launching and winning strategic campaigns
- Structuring personal and organizational time effectively
- How to analyze and act on community issues from a metropolitan perspective

With the support of the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, ISAI AH, People's Action and many others, we aim to create a training arch that engages our base on political education through a pop-ed lens while providing them with organizing skills. In the upcoming year, through one day and week-long training formats, we will equip all of our member leaders to reshape our community and be powerful public leaders.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: POLITICS AS (UN)USUAL

In 2022, Michigan elected Democrats leaders in all three branches of government, a first since the early 1980s. The 2022 Blue Trifecta presents a new test for our movement: now in power, who will actually stand up for our communities? There are new opportunities on the horizon because of this trifecta, and our time to be able to shape party politics is impacted by the rising star of Governor Gretchen Whitmer, the movement of the Michigan Presidential Primary and the incoming influx of political organizations into the state for the 2024 U.S. Senate race. While Detroit Action and other progressive organizations were able to win some key victories in the State legislature or locally, significant parts of our policy platform stalled in the legislature. In many cases, our calls were often ignored by Democrats in power. This creates an important moment in time; how can Detroit Action and other progressive organizations committed to building power actually win our policy platform? To that end, DA, along with many of our key organizing partners are undergoing an experiment of organizational alignment and strategy.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: POLITICS AS (UN)USUAL

Our goal is that by the beginning of 2025 our groups have greater influence with the Speaker of the House and Governor and we are able to move some of our major issue priorities forward that are stalled right now.

To grow our influence now so that we can win immediate changes and begin to change the landscape we said we needed to do work together in 3 areas:

- Elections & Politics - to deliberately enter into 2-3 state house races together to build and flex our political power.
- Comms & Narrative - to articulate through our words and actions a common narrative that reinforces our issue priorities, lifts up the values that unite our communities, and invites others to join us.
- Organizing - to center base building in all of our work and position it NOT as a competing project with these others but as the central driver of the others

Time will tell what happens to our newest crop of progressive elected officials who were swept into office during the Blue Trifecta of 2022. But what is certain is they will each need a unified support system capable of defending them and electing other champions who share a common narrative and wave the same flag as our organization.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: MUTUAL AID: SOLIDARITY NOT CHARITY

**DETROIT ACTION BELIEVES IN MUTUAL AID AND SERVICES AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP NEW RELATIONSHIPS AND EDUCATE OUR COMMUNITY ON THE ROOT CAUSE OF ISSUES WHILE PROVIDING KEY SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING.**

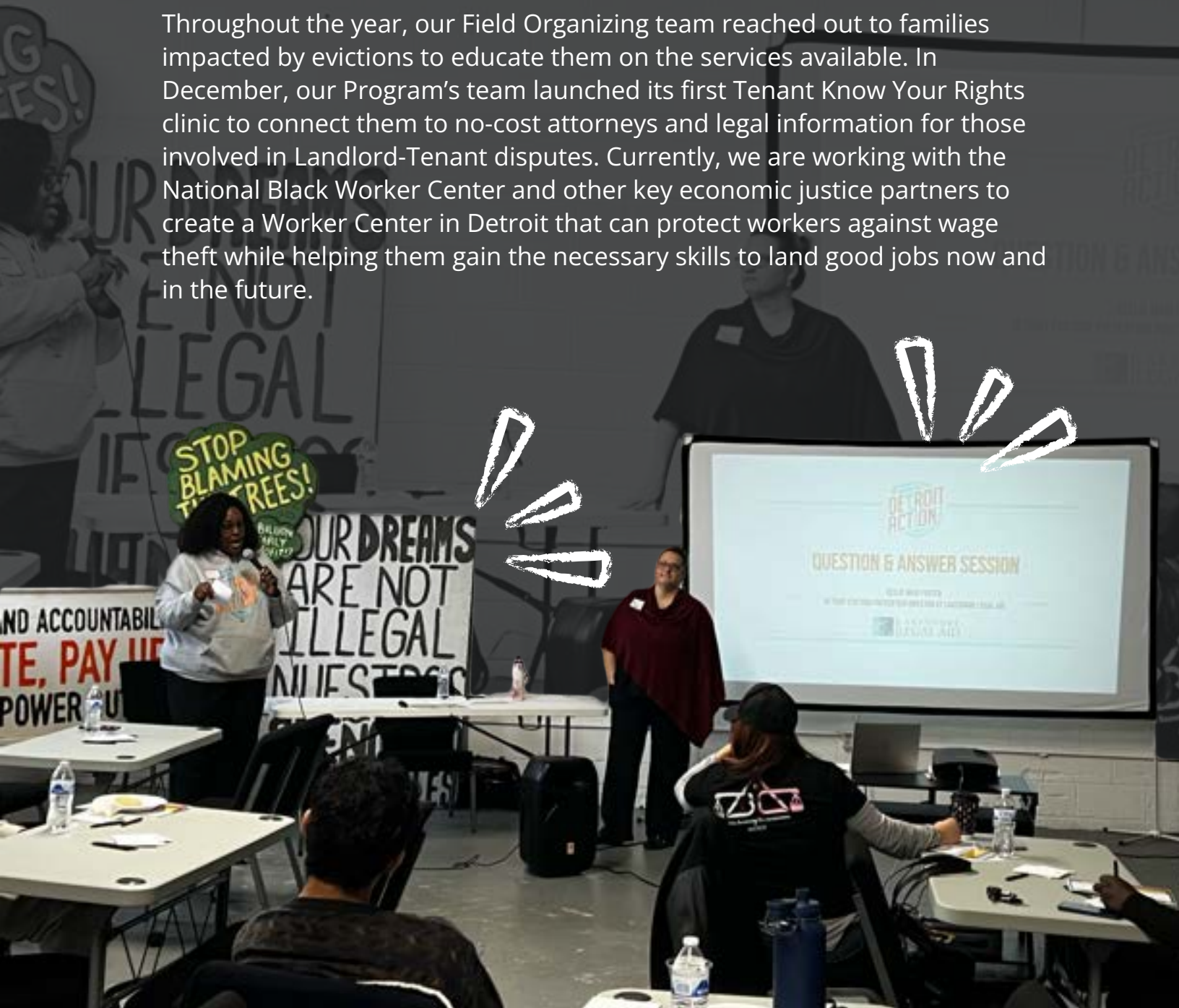
Our Programs department utilizes services as an opportunity to challenge the inequality that is seen in our community while creating an opportunity to organize those who are in need to become victors instead of victims against the system.

In May, we launched our first Mental Health Day of Action with an event that educated our community on the importance of mental healthcare and the need for additional resources within our community. At our Mental Health Day of Action, we signed up Detroit Action member-leaders and other members of the community to be trained on Mental Health First Aid in order to become Mental Health First Aid responders. Through this process, we aimed to build deep relationships with service clients and grow our membership over time.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: MUTUAL AID: SOLIDARITY NOT CHARITY

Throughout the year, our Field Organizing team reached out to families impacted by evictions to educate them on the services available. In December, our Program's team launched its first Tenant Know Your Rights clinic to connect them to no-cost attorneys and legal information for those involved in Landlord-Tenant disputes. Currently, we are working with the National Black Worker Center and other key economic justice partners to create a Worker Center in Detroit that can protect workers against wage theft while helping them gain the necessary skills to land good jobs now and in the future.





# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: FOR THE MANY, FOR THE CULTURE

At Detroit Action we believe that culture eats strategy for lunch and that our people's lives are at the intersection of culture, community and policy. To this effect, Detroit Action organizes artists, influencers and other creatives to build the world that we want to see using their time, talents and treasurers.

Our work to recruit, train and develop artists and creatives as community leaders is year round. In March, Detroit Action launched our monthly Culture Series Happy Hours, which brings together Detroit-area creatives and activists from all walks of life to build community and learn.

We celebrated the culture of Detroit and our residents through our first "313 Day", an event named after the Detroit area code, held on March 13th that featured Detroit artists, an education on the history of activism and organizing. In true Detroit fashion, we have a vegan twist on a Detroit staple - the Coney Hot Dog.

**OUR CULTURE WORK EXISTS AS A MEANS TO EDUCATE OUR MEMBERSHIP, IN A FUN AND CREATIVE WAY, WHILE ORGANIZING THEM TO TAKE ACTION ON OUR CAMPAIGNS.**



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: FOR THE MANY, FOR THE CULTURE

In July, we hosted two nights of an interactive play “Dot’s Home Live”, based on the award-winning video game Dot’s Home, with support from the local theater ensemble, A Host of People, and our national partner PowerSwitch Action. Dot’s Home story is set in Detroit and follows a young Black woman, Dot, who is living in her grandmother’s beloved home, as she relives key moments in her family history where race, place and home collide in difficult choices.

**DOT’S HOME LIVE TRANSFORMS A SINGLE-PLAYER GAMING EXPERIENCE INTO A COLLECTIVE ONE, WHERE AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION DETERMINES THE OUTCOME OF THE STORY.**



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: FOR THE MANY, FOR THE CULTURE

This production and its video game inspiration are a part of the Rise-Home Stories Project -- a groundbreaking collaboration between artists and organizers who developed this game together over the course of the last four years. The game has gone on to win 2022 Game of the Year at Games for Change, and recently won the Cultural Impact Award from Apple through the App Store Awards.

In addition to innovative ideas like Dot's Home, Detroit Action sponsored one of the main community stages at the annual SouthWest Fest in Detroit. SouthWestFest is a free large scale music and art festival organized by a collective of young Southwest Detroit creatives. Detroit Action not only hosted a stage, but used the space to engage in popular education sessions with festival goers on prison abolition as a part of our Black August campaign and energy utility accountability. At SouthWest Fest, Detroit Action was able to register voters, engage new voters as well as launch our Spanish-speaking housing justice campaign.

Finally, we hosted our annual Neighborhood Summit and Power Summit, a celebration of our organization and moment for political education and decision making. This year's Neighborhood Summit was keynoted by local journalist and historian Ken Coleman who provided a history of Detroit's housing crisis and the century of activism that has surrounded it. Our Fall Power Summit featured a virtual appearance from Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson.



# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: SOLIDARITY FOREVER

## SOLIDARITY AT DETROIT ACTION IS A VERB.


We believe in a future where Michigan is at the forefront of a multiracial democracy; a place where our communities have the freedom to thrive and access to good jobs, good neighborhoods and good schools.

Our staff and members were on the frontlines with striking UAW auto workers in one of the largest auto strikes seen in the United States in generations. Our team provided water and snacks to striking Detroit casino workers as well as supported our friends at SEIU Healthcare MI in local nursing home strikes. This year, we even celebrated with members of IATSE, SEIU and UniteHere at the launch of the first ever Industry Standards Board for downtown sports arenas where our Executive Director, Branden Snyder was appointed as a member of the board to represent the community at large.




# 2023 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW: SOLIDARITY FOREVER

This year, we also brought together Arab and Muslim Detroiters and Detroit Action members to celebrate and build community at our Pre-Ramadan Celebration at the Detroit Muslim Center. At our Pre Ramadan Celebration, we were joined by local Muslim allies like Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, State Representative Abraham Aiyash, Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib and our allies at EMGAGE and APIA-Votes. Finally, in October, we supported local Arab and Muslim activists in the streets at marches and protests following the attacks of October 7 in calling for a permanent ceasefire.



**OUR BELIEF IN SOLIDARITY EXTENDS BEYOND MICHIGAN AND THE BORDERS OF THE UNITED STATES; WE BELIEVE THAT WE ARE BOUND IN A UNITED STRUGGLE WITH OTHERS ACROSS THE GLOBE AGAINST THE FORCES OF FASCISM, WHITE SUPREMACY AND UNFETTERED CAPITALISM.**



In February, our Executive Director traveled to India to learn from organizers on the ground and train the next batch of leaders in community organizing with MAAD, a national youth workforce and community organizing social enterprise based in Goa, India



NUMBERS ON THE

**B O A R D**

Active Subscribers 33258

New Leaders 154

Action Takers 1340

Active Volunteers 118

New Members 225

Calls Made 30976

Doors Knocked 3996

Events in the Last Year 92

Text Sent 158651



# DETROIT ACTION IN THE PRESS

## DTE

OMNY: [As complaints mount, DTE has used millions of dollars to help influence politics in Lansing on both sides of the aisle. Does that leave Michiganders out in the cold?](#)

## Dot's Home

WDET: [Radio](#)

Metro Times: [Acclaimed Detroit-based mobile game is now an interactive play](#)

Detroit Free Press: [Detroit Housing has a video game - Dot's Home](#)

Outlier: [Experience Detroit housing challenges through participatory play 'Dot's Home Live'](#)

## Housing

FOX2: [Detroit residents say they've been overtaxed, demand compensation](#)

WDET: [Radio](#)

Crain's Detroit: [Detroit's effort to compensate over-assessed residents appears to be first in U.S.](#)

Axios: [Overtaxed Detroit homeowners get some help](#)

Detroit News: [Detroiters weigh new benefits for overtaxed homeowners](#)

Michigan Advance: [200 residents call for rent control at Michigan Capitol rally](#)

Michigan Advance: [The rent is too damn high: Dems plan to tackle housing costs in Michigan](#)

Outlier: [Blight tickets? Unpaid taxes? Wayne County will still sell you Detroit properties](#)

MarketPlace: [Home prices in Detroit are on the upswing](#)

# DETROIT ACTION IN THE PRESS

## Political/Budgets

Michigan Advance: [Updated: Whitmer's 5th budget proposal spends \\$79B for education, safety, infrastructure and more](#)

MarketWatch: [Biden's State of the Union highlighted 'near record-low' Black unemployment. Here's the full story.](#)

Crain's Detroit: [Duggan, in State of the City address, pushes funding for crime prevention, defends tax incentives](#)

Michigan Advance: [Duggan pledges to enlist citizens to reduce gun violence](#)

Axios: [Michigan Central becomes State of Detroit's main character](#)

## Elections

Michigan Advance: [Study: Michigan youth turnout far outpaced the national average in the 2022 election](#)

Crain's Detroit: [Branden Snyder wants young people to get into politics](#)

WaPo: [Democrats worry their most loyal voters won't turn out for Biden in 2024](#)

Detroit News: [Michigan: Gen Z politicians struggle to get a foot in the door](#)

USA Today: [Trump takes up a lot of oxygen, but voting rights groups have a lot more on their minds](#)

## Economy/Capitalism

YES! Magazine: [A People's Prosperity](#)

## Palestine/Arab Voters

NBC News: [Poll shows Biden support slumping among Michigan Muslims](#)

The Arab Daily News: [Americans rally to support Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib targeted by Islamophobic racism](#)



# DETROIT ACTION IN THE PRESS

## Surveillance/ShotSpotter

Michigan Public: [Detroit's new violence prevention program announces its first six partner groups](#)

Bridge Detroit: ['ShotSpotter' says mistakes are rare, but Detroiters want more transparency](#)

## Miscellaneous

Reckon: [Pandemic-boosted SNAP benefits can ease the pain of inflation, so why are they ending?](#)

WWJ: [WWJ: NewsRadio On-Demand](#)

Metro Times: [Detroit cities rally behind LGBTQ residents after Hamtramck's Pride flag ban](#)

WCPT: [Net Roots Radio Live Broadcast](#)

Public News Service: [Art Collaboration This Weekend for Black August in Detroit](#)

CBS: ["We're going to win:" UAW president announces strike vote results](#)

Michigan Advance: [Metro Detroit cities rally behind LGBTQ+ residents after Hamtramck's Pride flag ban](#)



# WHAT'S NEXT IN 2024

2024 is going to be a heck of a year. In the 2022 gubernatorial election 4.3 million voters cast ballots, a record turnout of 56% of the voting age population. Changes to voter registration laws in 2018 (Proposal 3 - Promote the Vote) that included automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration and no-reason absentee voting are credited with, in part, increasing voter turnout. We know that more can be done by our elected officials and we know that we have so much more to do in order to build the type of organization and the type of power that we deserve. Here are just a few developments for the new year:

**College Organizing:** Young people need to be continually engaged in order to believe in the political process and learn how the electoral system works and why their vote matters.

Detroit Action is excited to launch its new student and young person focused turnout and community organizing initiative called

## **Michigan Student Action.**

In Michigan, engaging students in the electoral process is not just about youth participation; it is a strategic move that can sway the outcome of elections while creating a long-term pipeline of engaged leaders.



# WHAT'S NEXT IN 2024

Following the success of our Wayne State University chapter, we will launch Michigan Student Action chapters at 17 schools across Michigan that can be a political home for students across the state. Michigan Student Action will implement a year-round issue organizing, leadership development and political education program every year.

**Economic Justice:** We want to continue to fight for an economy that works for everyone and not just the wealthy. Following the success of our Housing Know Your Rights programming, we will be launching our Good Jobs Now worker center, in collaboration with the National Black Worker Center network to develop and deliver workers' rights organizing and training, leadership development and conduct outreach to unions to strengthen the our community and provide quality jobs for Black and Brown Detroiters.

While this is a year of transition, we are excited to see what is next and to build long lasting power.



# THANK YOU

## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT



- Alliance for Youth Action
- Alliance for Youth Organizing
- Center for Popular Democracy
- Democracy for All Action Fund
- Economic Policy Institute
- Fidelity Charitable
- Ford Foundation
- Funder Collaborative for Youth Organizing
- Kresge Foundation
- Healthy Democracy Fund
- Hearthland Fund
- NEO Philanthropy
- New American Majority Fund
- PowerSwitch Action
- Powering a New Economy Fund
- Tides Foundation
- Skillman Foundation
- Way to Rise
- Way to Win
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation



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