

# THE HOMETOWN PROJECT



**2023  
IMPACT REPORT**



# WELL-KNOWN ARTISTS SUPPORTING LOCAL CAMPAIGNS IN THEIR HOMETOWNS

## OUR STORY

The Hometown Project is a political advocacy organization founded in 2017. We help elect progressive leaders at the local level by connecting well known actors, musicians & athletes (we call them Hometown Energizers) to voters in their hometowns. Our efforts bring attention to local candidates, campaigns and issues important to the community.

Since 2017, The Hometown Project has supported over 200 local candidates and GOTV campaigns in 18 states. Over 95 influential Hometown Energizers, including Selena Gomez in Texas, Sarah Jessica Parker in Ohio, Danny DeVito in New Jersey, Wanda Sykes in Virginia, Billy Crudup in Florida, Ariana DeBose in North Carolina and Kate Walsh in Arizona have appeared in geo-targeted video messages to help elect progressive candidates in their hometowns or promote statewide GOTV efforts in their home state.



# 2023 STORIES, VOICES, VOTES

## 2023 IMPACT REPORT

In 2023 The Hometown Project worked successfully in Virginia and New Jersey, with the participation of many artists hailing from those states. Danny DeVito, Wanda Sykes, Mark Ruffalo, Taissa Farmiga, Connie Britton, Dulé Hill and more created videos to mobilize voters in down-ballot local elections and in some cases supported progressive candidates running in these artists' hometown communities. In Virginia we partnered with Clean Virginia, an organization working to fight corruption in Virginia politics and promote clean energy policy. In New Jersey we partnered with the NJ State Democratic Majority (NJ SDM) and Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee (NJ DACC) to elevate the name ID and platforms of their highest priority local candidates. 18 of the 21 candidates we supported won!

# HOW IT WORKS



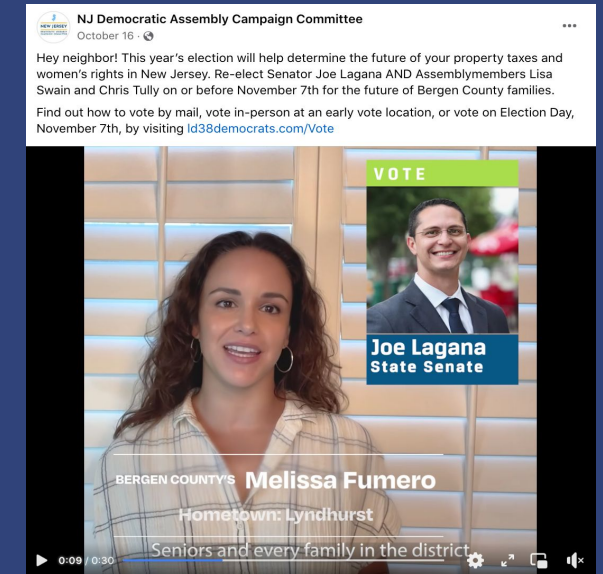
We partner with state-based organizations to support voter turnout & persuasion campaigns in competitive down ballot races.



We recruit Energizers -- influential actors, athletes & musicians that hail from the state, and we facilitate their engagement in local campaigns.



We introduce Energizers to local progressive causes and candidates in their hometowns.



We produce creative content with positive messaging to inspire and mobilize voters and to increase name ID of local candidates.

# OUR “HOMETOWN ENERGIZER” STRATEGY



Motivate voter turnout down-ballot



Bring visibility to local elections

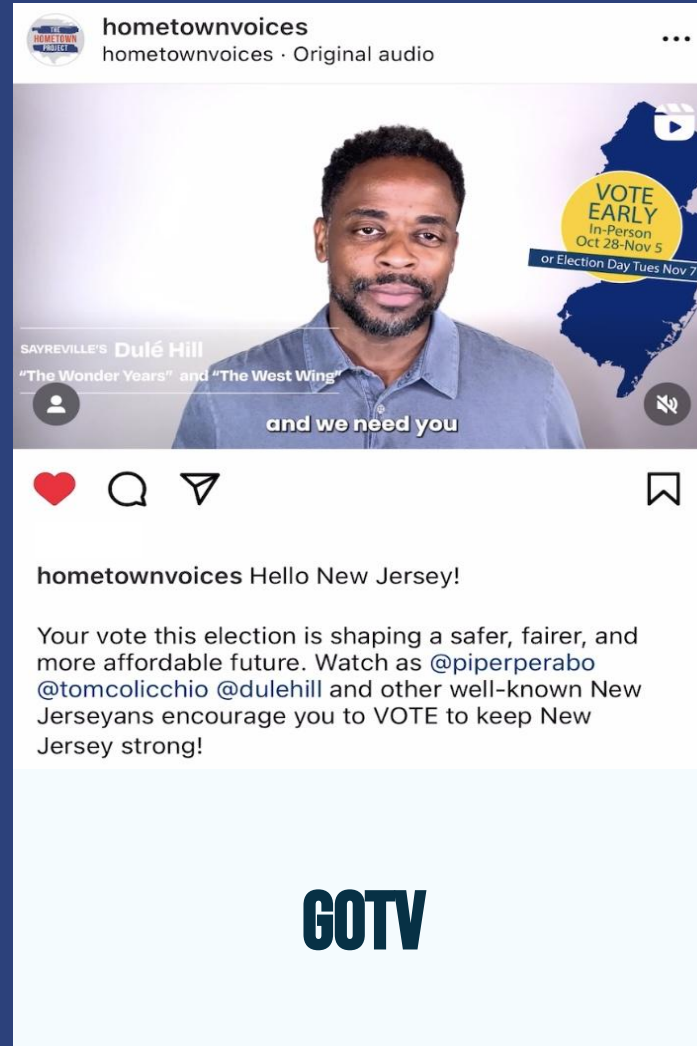


Support the next generation of leaders

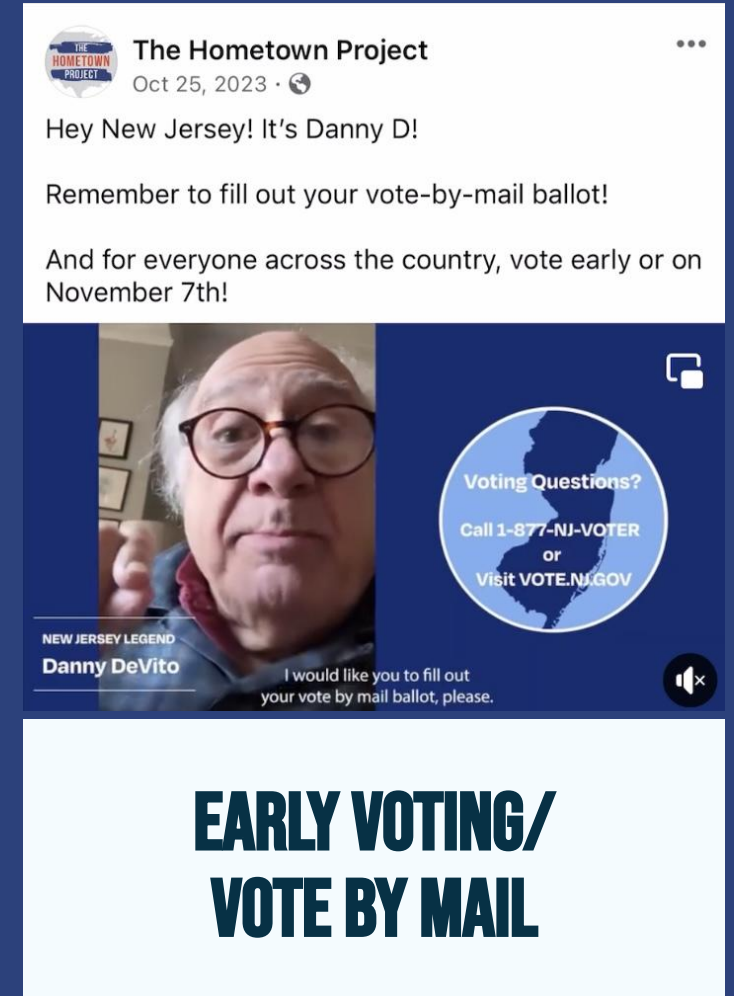
# HOMETOWN 2023 CAMPAIGNS



**ELECTORAL**



**GOTV**



# BENEFITS TO LOCAL CAMPAIGNS & CANDIDATES

- Reach key demographics and “unreachable voters” in a new way
- Energize voters and motivate voter turnout
- Generate awareness about local campaigns
- Boost morale among campaign volunteers and staff
- Provide a creative and fun way for voters to learn more about candidates’ goals as a community leader
- Drive traffic to website and social media pages



Joel de la Fuente, Actor, Hometown Board Member and proud New Jersey resident helped rally the crowd at a “100 Days Out Rally” in South Brunswick for NJ legislative district 16. With many incredible local elected officials and candidates in attendance, including the full LD 16 slate, State Senator Andrew Zwicker, Assemblyman Roy Freiman, and their running mate, Mitchell Drulis, spirits and energy were high as they kicked off a canvassing event. All 3 candidates won!

# 2023 TESTIMONIALS

"This is one of these things that really does win elections. These kinds of projects actually do... flip seats, they flip senate seats, they flip house seats, they flip governorship. They are the nuts and bolts of activism."

Molly Jong-Fast,  
Fast Politics Podcast

"The Hometown Project allowed us to engage with voters earlier than we would have in past cycles and bring awareness to voting early in a year when most voters did not even realize an election was going on. The use of Hometown Energizers from key local towns personalized our legislative races while also promoted early voting and highlighted our issues with trusted voices. This made the difference in keeping the majority and even winning back seats lost just two years ago."

Iris Delgado,  
NJ DACC

"The state legislature is really a place that affects your day to day life. The laws that are passed there affect you all the time... I am working on legislative District 11, Monmouth County... I want to make sure that my community where I grew up know that these races are coming up, and how they can be ready to vote and make changes that can work for our community."

Piper Perabo,  
Actor and Activist

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

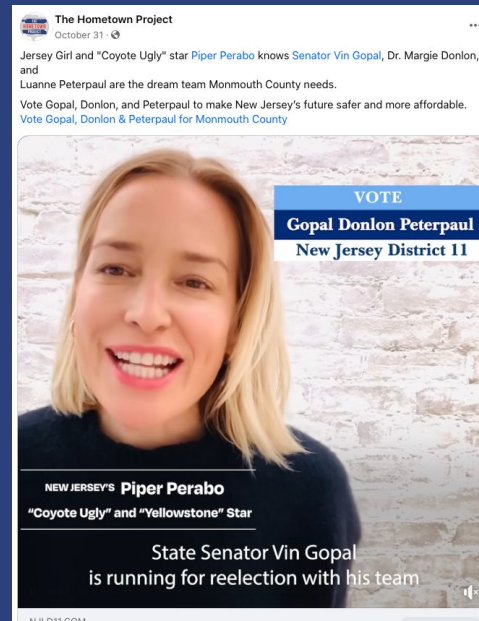
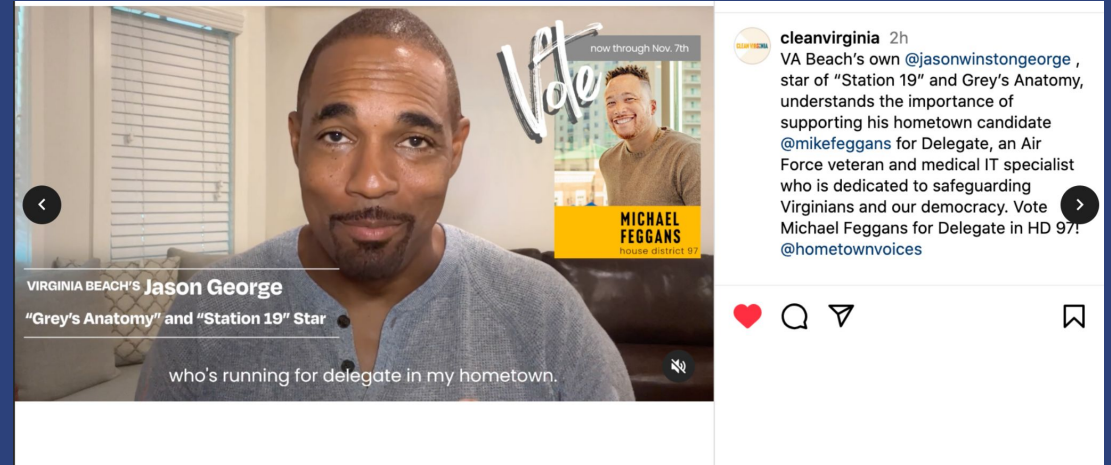
2023

# 2023 CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

In the 2023 election cycle, we produced 27 voter facing videos and 30+ banner ads concentrated in New Jersey and Virginia.

19 Energizers supported 20+ local candidates in crucial races in their hometowns. By developing, producing, and fielding geo-targeted videos and banners from our hometown artists and influencers, we brought these progressive candidates valuable name recognition and support.

Energizers in both states also helped Get Out the Vote with compilation videos showing their hometown pride and rallying voters to cast their ballots.



# 2023 VIRGINIA ENERGIZERS

Energizers are well known cultural leaders (artists, actors, athletes) who volunteer their time to participate in local politics and initiatives in their Hometown. Whether in person at a community event or online through heightened visibility on various digital platforms & social media, we provide a larger platform for local voices to be heard and inspire a more active, engaged, educated electorate.

We recruited 7 well known artists to support local campaigns and candidates in their home state of Virginia.

Our Energizers supported 12 different candidates running in key House of Delegates and Senate districts.



Connie Britton  
Lynchburg, VA



Mark Ruffalo  
Virginia Beach, VA



Wanda Sykes  
Portsmouth, VA



Jason George  
Virginia Beach, VA



Rob Huebel  
Alexandria, VA



Jason Mraz  
Mechanicsville, VA

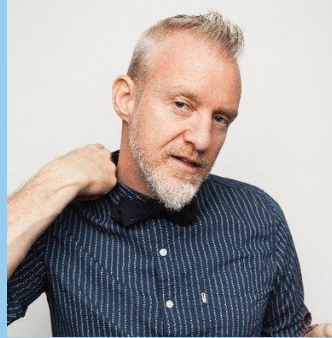


Patton Oswalt  
Sterling, VA

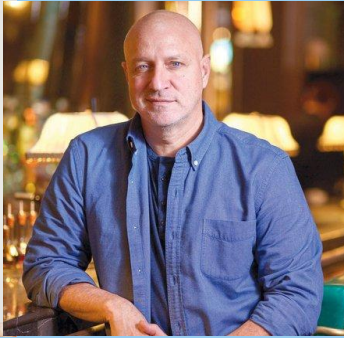
# 2023 NEW JERSEY ENERGIZERS

We recruited 10 well known artists to support local campaigns and candidates in their home state of New Jersey.

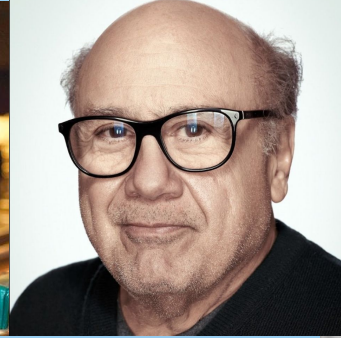
Our Energizers supported 9 different candidates across 3 state legislative districts (Districts 11, 16 and 38), reaching voters in Monmouth County, Essex County, and Bergen County among other key areas in the 2023 election cycle.



Chris Barron  
Princeton, NJ



Tom Colicchio  
Elizabeth, NJ



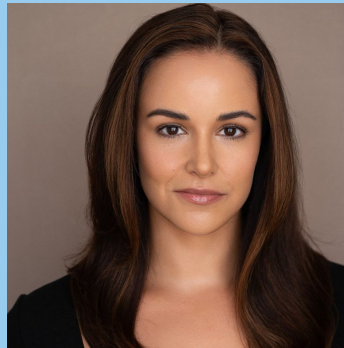
Danny DeVito  
Asbury Park, NJ



Joel de la Fuente  
Maplewood, NJ



Taissa Farmiga  
Whitehouse, NJ



Melissa Fumero  
Lyndhurst, NJ



Dulé Hill  
Sayreville, NJ



Mary McCormack  
Plainfield, NJ



Piper Perabo  
Toms River, NJ

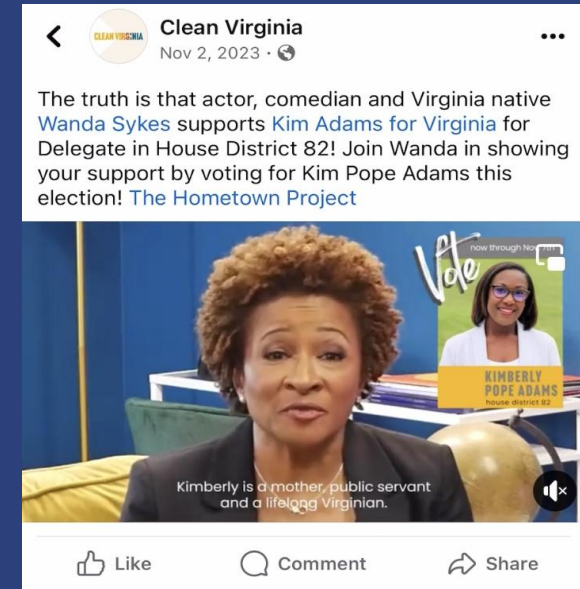


Michael Zegen  
Ridgewood, NJ

# CREATIVE CONTENT

We take a unique approach to audience targeting by focusing on values. Using research done by Harmony Labs, we identified our key audience as “Tough Cookies”.

We crafted color palettes and messages to appeal to this group, instead of typical political color palettes and designs. Hometown heroes, moms, family, and nostalgia helped tell the story of the candidates and made our content stand out from typical political ads. We keep our content positive and fun, and avoid negative messages and partisan politics. This approach allowed us to reach voter groups whose turnout is crucial, especially in an odd-year election.



# TURNING OUT VOTERS BANNER ADS



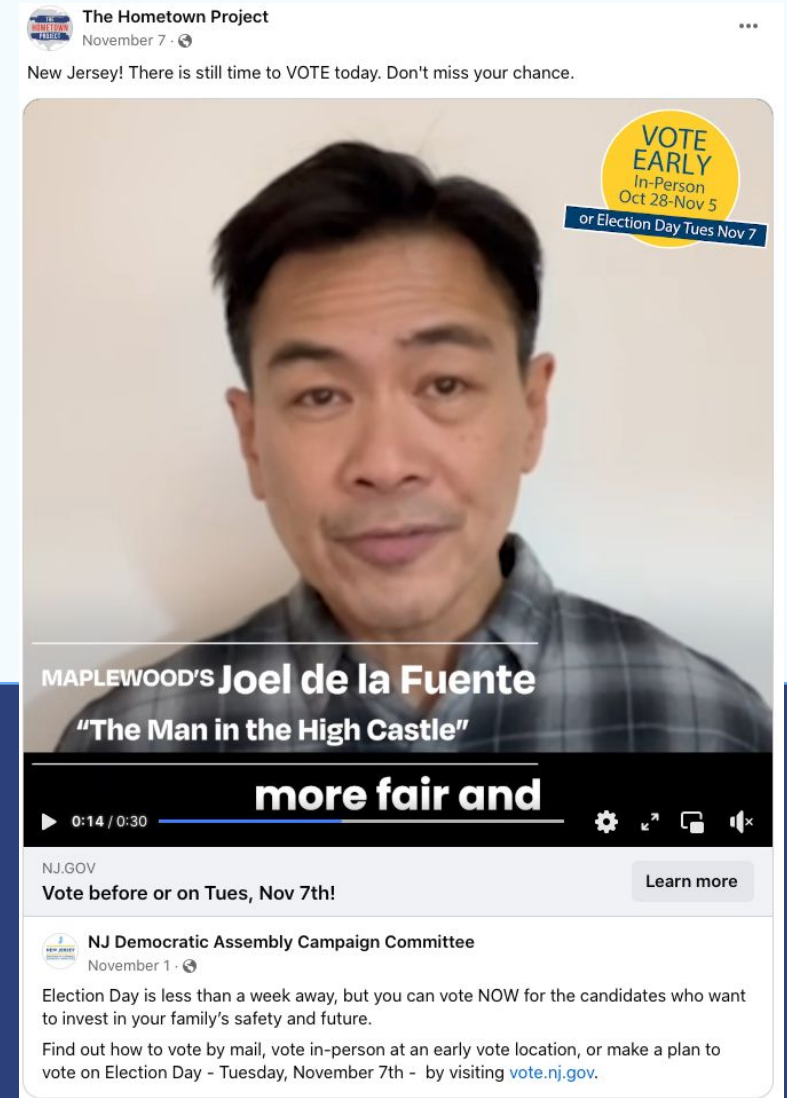
Banner ads allow us to reinforce the messages of our video ads and reach voters with different media consumption habits. As with our videos, the color palettes of our banner ads steered away from typical political colors. This year, we incorporated many colors from Clean Virginia and the New Jersey candidate branding, helping to build their identity and narrative.

# TURNING OUT VOTERS GOTV

We used Programmatic ads to target NJ and VA priority voters with nonpartisan “Get Out The Vote” voter education videos. This campaign utilized social media ads on Facebook in New Jersey, and digital ads, such as on Youtube and Hulu in Virginia. In practice, the people in these audiences were particularly hard to reach (not surprising if they're tough voters to turn out in the first place).

## 2023 GOTV STATISTICS:

- 6 GOTV digital ads in NJ and 3 GOTV ads in VA
- Video and banner ad digital presence reached an estimated 2.5 million voters
- Videos were watched in entirety 5 million+ times.
- Creative content garnered over 20 million impressions in total in the 2023 election cycle



# GOTV

## EARLY VOTING/ VOTE BY MAIL

**The Hometown Project**  
October 25 · 🌐


Hey New Jersey! It's Danny D!  
Remember to fill out your vote-by-mail ballot!  
And for everyone across the country, vote early or on November 7th!



And you wanna figure something out?

**The Hometown Project**  
October 28 · 🌐

"Brooklyn Nine Nine's" Melissa Fumero rings her family in Jersey to make sure they are voting early by mail and SO SHOULD YOU.  
Call YOUR relatives and make sure they vote early, or on election day - November 7th.  
[#VoteNewJersey](#)



[VOTE.NJ.GOV](#)  
**Don't Wait Until Election Day to Vote!** [Learn more](#)

**NJ Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee**  
October 5 · 🌐

Hey, New Jersey - it's Melissa Fumero from Lyndhurst (and Brooklyn Nine-Nine!)  
Make sure to return your vote by mail ballot before November 7th! Mail ballots a... [See more](#)

**Clean Virginia** ✓  
[@clean\\_virginia](#)

Born and raised in VA, comedian [@pattonoswalt](#) knows how crucial the upcoming election is, which is why he's urging everyone to get out and vote this year! Vote early through Nov. 4th, or in-person on Election Day: Tuesday, Nov. 7th. Visit [yourballot.org](#) to make a plan!



0:08 or you can vote in person on Tuesday, November 7th.

12:46 PM · Oct 4, 2023 · 1,276 Views

# 2023 VIRGINIA CANDIDATES

The Hometown Project and our electoral partners support and give voice to progressive, diverse candidates who are connected to their communities and have a proven record of constructive, positive work within their districts. Artists are promoting candidates who share their values and who will work on behalf of their community to seek solutions to help all of their constituents, and not to serve the interests of national organizations and agendas. We make a dedicated effort to ensure diversity of our candidates from many perspectives including gender, age, and ethnicity. Our goal is to ensure that our candidates are informed, balanced representatives and reflections of the community they serve.



**KIMBERLY POPE ADAMS**  
*HD, 82*



**NADARIUS CLARK**  
*HD, 84*



**JOSHUA COLE**  
*HD, 65*



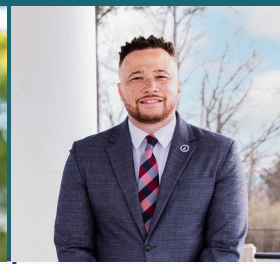
**JOSH THOMAS**  
*HD, 21*



**SCHUYLER  
VANVALKENBURG**  
*SD, 16*



**RODNEY WILLETT**  
*HD, 58*



**MICHAEL FEGGANS**  
*HD, 97*



**PHIL HERNANDEZ**  
*HD, 94*



**DANICA ROEM**  
*SD, 30*



**TRAVIS NEMBHARD**  
*HD, 22*



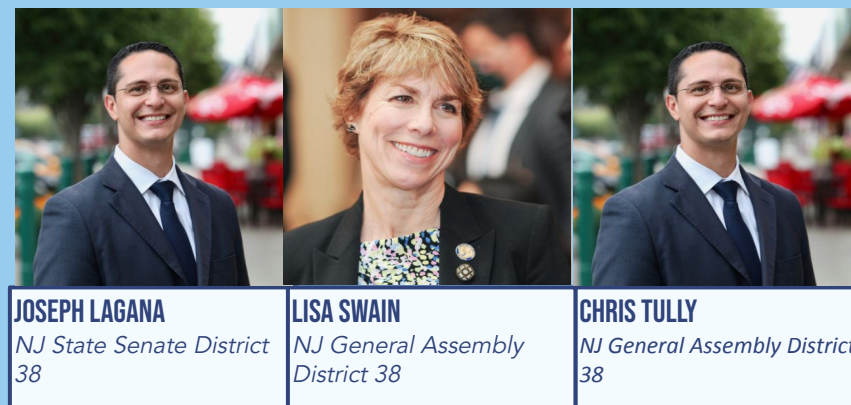
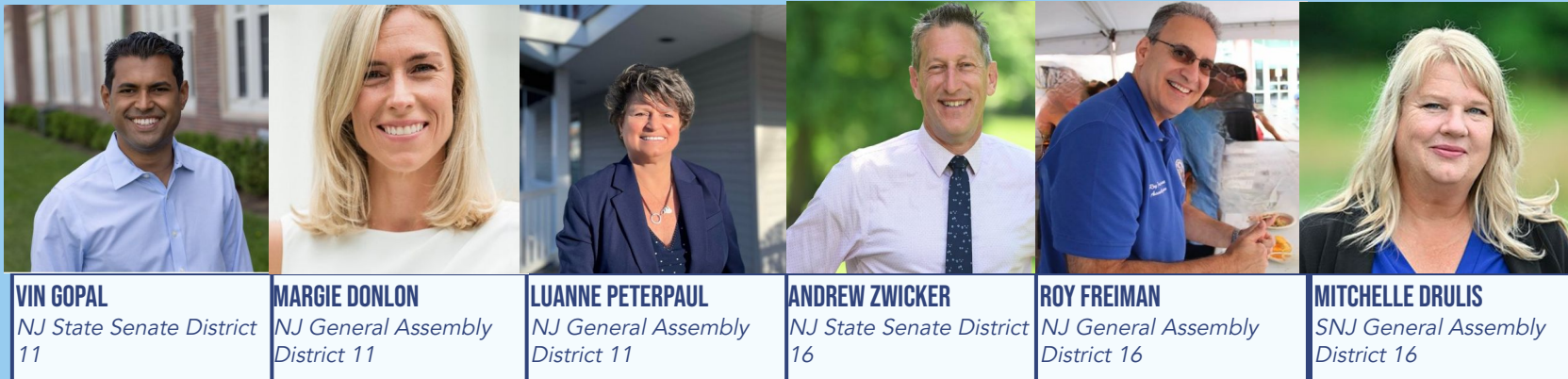
**RUSSET PERRY**  
*SD, 31*



**JOEL GRIFFIN**  
*SD, 27*

# 2023 NEW JERSEY CANDIDATES

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## REACHING KEY VOTERS | DIGITAL STRATEGY

We believe that our videos can reach beyond the “usual suspects”, the relatively small slice of the electorate that Democratic campaigns frequently micro-target.

We adopted a broad targeting strategy: Progressives, Democrat-leaners and many voters on the conservative side of the middle.

More than 70% of our ad spend budget went to programmatic ads, and combining programmatic along with Facebook gave us the best chance of contacting our target voters in the two weeks before the election.

Combining video ads and programmatic banners helped us reach voters with different digital media consumption habits.



# DISTRIBUTION OVERVIEW VIRGINIA

## VIRGINIA

*Total Impressions: 4,576,444*

*Video Ad Impressions: 2,500,169*

*Banner Ad Impressions: 1,279,942*

*Video Ad Completions: 1,220,251*

*Clicks: 12,495*

*Video Views: 2,033,752*

*Completion Rate: 60%*

*Overall CPM: \$20*

*Races: 12*

*Races Won: 9*

*Cost Per Voter: \$ 0.31*



Estimated Reach: ~350,000 highly targeted voters in crucial districts and priority zip codes

In Virginia, Democrats won back the House and maintained control of the Senate! Partnering with Clean Virginia, we supported 12 Virginia state legislative candidates, 9 of whom won.

# DISTRIBUTION OVERVIEW NEW JERSEY

## NEW JERSEY DACC

*Total Impressions: 11,679,768*  
*Video Ad Impressions: 10,740,349*  
*Banner Ad Impressions: 939,419*  
*Video Ad Completions: 1,664,664*  
*Clicks: 31,980*  
*Video Views: 4,896,076*  
*Completion Rate: 34%*  
*Overall CPM: \$18*  
*Races: 6*  
*Races Won: 6*  
*Cost Per Voter: \$ 0.25*



## NEW JERSEY SDM

*Total Impressions: 4,706,303*  
*Video Ad Impressions: 4,128,922*  
*Banner Ad Impressions: 577,381*  
*Video Ad Completions: 2,400,409*  
*Clicks: 2,332*  
*Video Views: 3,043,232*  
*Completion Rate: 64.88%*  
*Overall CPM: \$42*  
*Races: 3*  
*Races Won: 3*  
*Cost Per Voter: \$ 0.59*

## FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM IN NEW JERSEY:

On Facebook and Instagram we reached 281,526 list matched New Jersey voters an average of 12.87 times. Overall, we served 3.6 million impressions on FB/IG. CTR for FB/IG was .43% which is average for what we see with video content. 13,649 voters completed the videos on Facebook and Instagram. Throughout all platforms we served over 11,680,968 ad impressions.

# WANDA SYKES VIDEO COMPARISON

Showcasing Energizer Wanda Sykes' charisma, we crafted two house distinct video ads for Virginia candidate Nadarius Clark. The first version adopted a lighthearted tone, featuring a playful childhood photo of Wanda, to engage viewers and establish her connection with Clark. The second video, opting for a more formal tone, highlighted shared values and Clark's commitment to key local issues. Interestingly, the lighthearted pre-roll video significantly outperformed the formal one, demonstrating the effectiveness of emotional connection and humor in voter engagement.

## STATISTICS:

### Childhood Photo

Served Impressions: 81,254

Video Views: 43,477

Clicks: 582

CTR: 0.72%

VCR Pre-Roll: 53.51%

### Issues:

Served Impressions: 73,107

Video Views: 39,708

Clicks: 214

CTR: 0.29%

VCR Pre-Roll: 54.31%



Clark/Sykes: Childhood Photo



Clark/Sykes: Issues

**WE FACILITATED THE INVOLVEMENT OF 19 ENERGIZERS:**

**59%**

**WOMEN ENERGIZERS**

**37%**

**ENERGIZERS OF COLOR**

**WE SUPPORTED 21 CANDIDATES IN NEW JERSEY AND VIRGINIA**

**33%**

**WOMEN CANDIDATES**

**29%**

**CANDIDATES OF COLOR**

## 2023 STATISTICS

**2.5 MILLION**  
VOTERS REACHED

**20 MILLION**  
IMPRESSIONS ACROSS VA AND NJ

**5+ MILLION**  
WATCHES IN ENTIRETY

**18 OUT OF 21**  
CANDIDATES WON

# 2023 PRESS



HOW THE HOMETOWN PROJECT IS HELPING TO BOOST VOTER TURNOUT



THE MESSENGER - HOLLYWOOD GOES HOME: HELPING DEMS WIN DOWN BALLOT



PIX 11 INTERVIEW THE HOMETOWN PROJECT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING



MOLLY JONG-FAST INTERVIEWS FOUNDER PETER SALETT ON HER PODCAST 'FAST POLITICS'

# THE HOMETOWN PROJECT TEAM



Founder & Chair  
of Advisory Board  
Peter Salett



Executive Director  
Erin Frederick



Program Director  
Amy DiPrima Forste



Development & Fundraising  
Malinda Logan



Art Director/Illustrator:  
Kimmy Tsai



Digital Distribution Lead  
Colin Delany



Program Coordinator  
Paige Scott



Lead Editor  
Justin Cannon



Head Writer  
Grace Critchfield

## Graphic Design Team:

Ben Tostado  
Sara Tyler  
Michelle Gold  
Dylan Sheridan

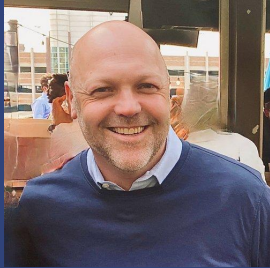
## 2023 Writers:

Alexis Buryk  
Rob Kutner  
Laura Mannino  
Maggie Hart  
Seth Herzog

# ADVISORY BOARD



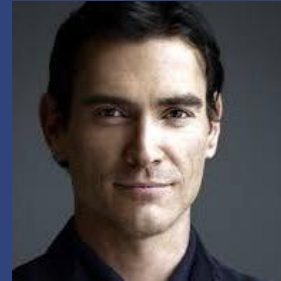
Connie Britton  
Actor, Producer & Activist



Greg Beswick  
Political Government Relations  
Executive



Josh Charles  
Actor & Activist



Billy Crudup  
Actor



Laura Dawn  
Art Not War



Joel de la Fuente  
Actor & Activist



Kelly Convirs-Fowler  
Virginia Delegate



Jason George  
Actor, Producer & Activist



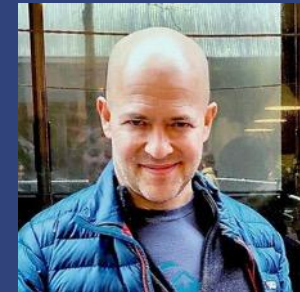
Qasim Rashid  
Civil Rights Attorney & Activist



Piper Perabo  
Actor & Activist



Whit Jones  
Lead Locally



Paul Kogan  
Tech Entrepreneur, ex-CEO



Edward Norton  
Actor, Filmmaker & Activist



Mark Ruffalo  
Actor & Activist



Chris Sampson  
EVP Programming at Superfly



Tracey Scott-Wilson  
Film & TV Producer & Writer

## OUR ROAD AHEAD

# 2024

We look to the 2024 year with bold determination moving into a challenging presidential election year. We are planning an extensive electoral program in multiple states as well as GOTV initiatives to mobilize voters in key states this cycle. Our state based work in 2024 will likely encompass voter turnout initiatives in Arizona, Michigan, Montana, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Texas.

We are excited to analyze the data from our recent work and apply those learnings to our multi-state campaigns this coming year.

We look forward to partnering with grassroots organizations to amplify their messages and support their candidates.

As an organization moving into our eighth election cycle, we are also looking forward to spinning off from our former fiscal sponsor to become an independent entity, and building the capacity to respond to the demand for this work and further grow our programs in future years.