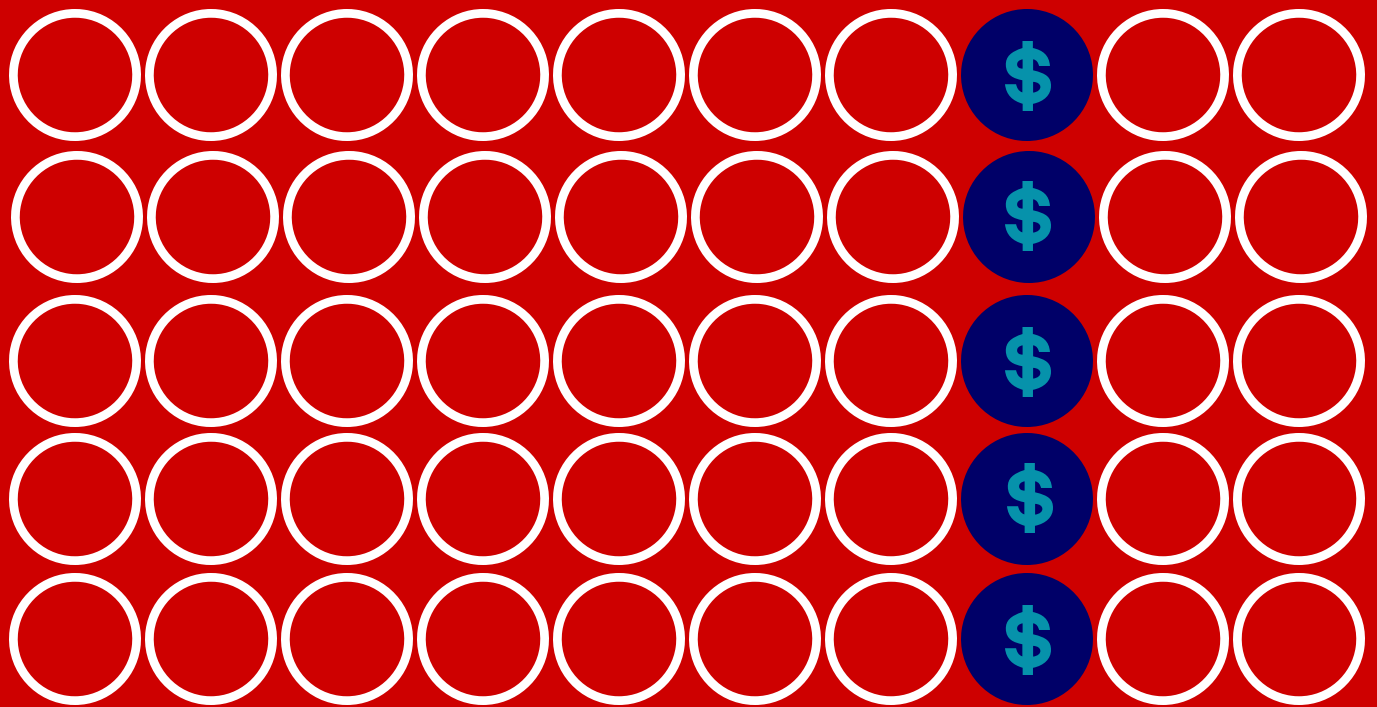


BUILDING TOMORROW

The Need For Sustained Investment in
America's Progressive Youth



GENERATION
PROGRESS

YOUNG PEOPLE FOR

Building Tomorrow: The Need for Sustained Investment in America's Progressive Youth

By Hannah Finnie, Andrea Sosa, Christin “Cici” Battle, and Maggie Thompson

April 2017

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WHERE WE ARE NOW

Young people often stand on the frontlines of social and progressive change, their ideas and commitment to social justice critical in advancing a progressive vision for the future. And yet, despite young people's investment in progressive change, the progressive movement often fails to invest in young people in the same meaningful and sustained manner. For far too long, progressive youth organizations have worked to elevate and center the voices of young people while lacking the funds to efficiently and fully transform young people's progressive values into long-term progressive change.

In the months since Donald Trump's presidency went from reality T.V. to reality, almost 100 new, volunteer-led organizations have formed.¹ These organizations are largely run and supported by young people new to political activism with few to no resources, but have almost single-handedly opened the floodgates for a new base of engaged and enraged progressive activists. Take the Women's March: founded organically and directly in response to Trump's anti-women posturing throughout the campaign trail, the collective protests were the largest demonstration in American history. And in the chaotic weeks following Trump's inauguration, congressional offices reported getting record numbers of calls and letters from constituents incensed by the new administration—calls and letters galvanized by this new wave of young progressive groups.

This is a moment. A moment where, if the progressive movement so chooses, it can drastically enlarge its base and, simultaneously, its opportunity to create a more progressive future. But unless the progressive movement chooses to invest in the long-term strategic infrastructure needed to sustain and organize this burst of young, progressive energy, the window will pass.

Now more than ever, the progressive movement needs to invest in young people.

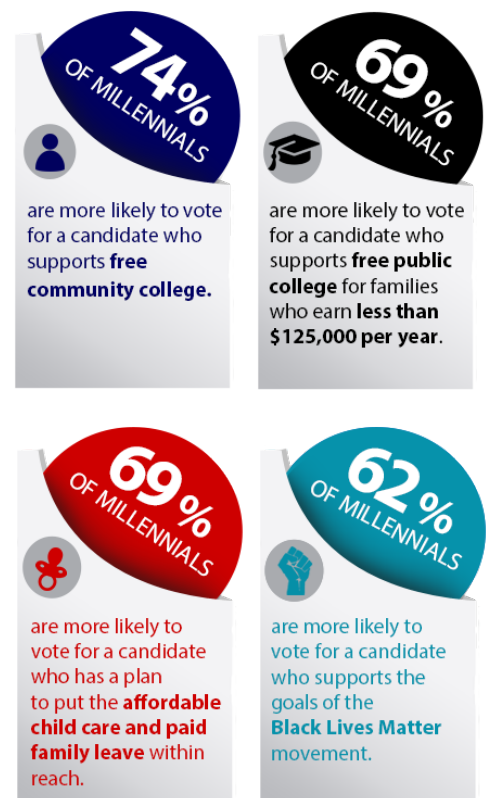
This report offers a path forward. Pulling from original interviews conducted with youth organizations as well as their publicly available financial data, we outline first the challenges that progressive youth organizations face and then the opportunities the progressive movement stands to gain should it choose to meaningfully engage with young people. By assessing the current landscape, both quantitatively and qualitatively, we hope to present a vision for a progressive, inclusive way forward.

HOW WE GOT HERE: FINANCIAL DISADVANTAGES FOR PROGRESSIVE YOUTH

The progressive energy that emerged after the 2016 presidential election is not entirely new. According to a September 2016 poll, the Millennial generation is one of the most progressive in history, with more than twice as many Millennials identifying as Democrats versus Republicans.² It's also worth noting that today's young Republicans look much different than those of previous generations—they often cross party lines on various issues, especially concerning social policy, and are decidedly less conservative.³ Thus, it's no surprise that regardless of party identification, young people today see progressive solutions as the answer to some of the most important questions facing our country.

When surveyed on potential solutions to major issues, Millennials overwhelmingly supported progressive policies—free community college, a \$15 minimum wage, and more. Across the board, young people resolutely support a progressive vision for a more inclusive, prosperous future. But as our research demonstrates, these progressive values exist in spite of—not because of—investment in youth from the progressive movement. Our analysis of the financial standing of some of the country's largest youth-focused organizations in four major areas (contributions, financial resources, spending, property value) shows that, despite having a much smaller base of young people to work with, conservative investment in youth has far outpaced that of the left.⁴ This divide has a real impact on young progressives, who often are forced by financial realities to give up their public service aspirations and lack the training and mentorship opportunities to take their progressive values to diverse positions of leadership. In order to push progressive policies forward, we first need to invest in young progressives.

Young people shouldn't have to choose between paying their rent and a fulfilling career in public service. What's more, the progressive movement's lack of investment isn't just costly for young people—it's costly for the progressive movement itself. As long as conservatives continue to outspend and outmatch investment in youth, progressives will continue to incur avoidable, harmful electoral and policy losses that are potentially irreversible.



CONTRIBUTIONS

To understand how progressive and conservative youth organizations invest in young people, we must understand how the progressive and conservative movements invest in youth organizations.

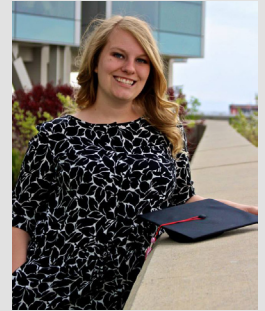
Youth-led and youth-serving organizations don't exist in a vacuum, and neither does their funding. While youth organizations work to serve young people, they are inevitably shaped—and therefore constrained—by funding. Funding streams, meanwhile, are often controlled by organizations and people with little if any youth representation. While we must hold youth organizations accountable for the ways in which they allocate their funding, we must also hold accountable their funders, who allocate their money and how it can be spent. Indeed, much of the discrepancy between how (and how much) conservative and progressive youth organizations invest in young people can be traced back to differences in the respective priorities of progressive and conservative funders.

Combing through six years of tax data, we found that between 2008 and 2014 conservative youth organizations received half a billion dollars more than progressive youth organizations in contributions. Contributions can consist of grants or donations from foundations, the government, and individuals. And as it turns out, conservative funders have placed a much larger emphasis on investing in youth, rightfully seeing investment in young people as a sound long-term decision. This allows conservative organizations to invest more in youth, creating the next generation of right-wing politicians, journalists, scholars, businesspeople, scientists, activists, and voters. As Figure 1 shows, between 2008 and 2014 (the most recent year in which data is available) contributions for conservative youth organizations grew while contributions toward progressive youth organizations flatlined.

The discrepancy in how much funders on the right and left contribute is undeniable—and undeniably important. But equally important as how much funders are giving is how funders are giving. As earlier iterations of this report from both Generation Progress and Young People For note, progressive institutions tend to give grants to youth organizations inconsistently and impatiently, often centered

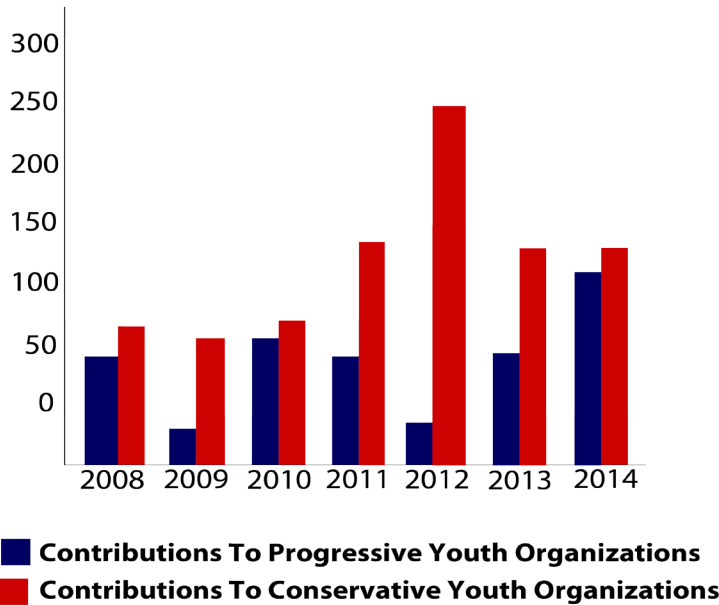
IMPACT SPOTLIGHT: SARAH DUENSING

Sarah Duensing is a 23-year-old self-described progressive Democrat living in Washington, D.C. Originally from Utah, Sarah was the



Secretary of her Young Democrats club in high school, and in college majored in political science, volunteered with local political campaigns, and interned with the Utah House of Representatives. Though she dreamed of working on Capitol Hill for a member of Congress after college, she found that financial constraints held her back. She discussed her hopes to intern on the hill with an internship advisor at her school, who told her that because she was in a red state, there were only scholarships for conservative internships. She was also advised to work for a conservative representative or organization in order to receive funding, but eschewed this guidance, not wanting to compromise her beliefs. Sarah moved to D.C. after college, again hoping to turn her dream of working in politics into reality. But after countless times of being told the only way to get a job on the hill was to complete an unpaid internship, she gave up. As Sarah puts it: "There are many times in my life that I have been forced to choose paid work at someplace that was irrelevant to my goals, such as a testing center or Old Navy, instead of political engagement, just because I needed to pay the rent."

Figure 1: Contributions in Millions for Conservative and Progressive Youth Organizations, 2008-2014











Note: In 2014, the Roosevelt Institute received a surge in contributions totaling over \$58 million, almost single-handedly accounting for the atypical rise in contributions for progressive youth organizations. Excepting that one organization in 2014, contributions to progressive youth organizations have remained stagnant since 2008.

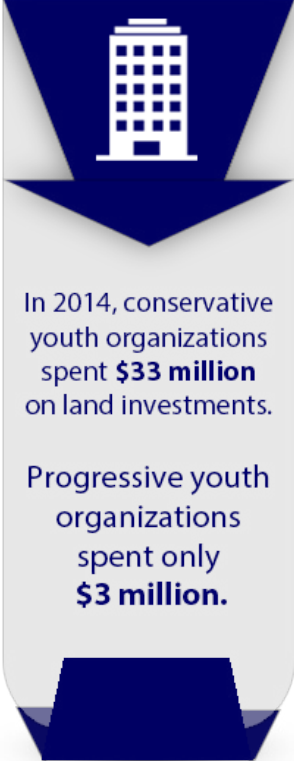
In 2008 and 2014 conservative youth organizations received **half a billion** dollars more than progressive youth organizations in contributions.

around election years to swell youth voter registration.⁵⁶ Conservative grants, on the other hand, favor long-term investments in capacity-building, focusing on leadership development and training. The previous reports also mention, importantly, that while many progressive funders force progressive groups to fight for funding, conservative foundations grant money to multiple organizations working on similar portfolios of work. Moreover, grants from right-wing foundations are often allocated broadly, or for general funds, allowing their grantees flexibility to spend the money more attuned to their needs and priorities. Progressive institutions, on the other hand, tend to make their grants much more narrow in scope, limiting the ability of progressive youth organizations to create the infrastructure needed to build the next generation of progressive leaders.

Figure 2: Financial Health of Progressive and Conservative Youth-Led and Youth-Serving Organizations (measured by total revenue, 2014)

Progressive Youth Organizations	Total Revenue (2014)	Conservative Youth Organizations	Total Revenue (2014)
 NEXTGEN CLIMATE	\$13,330,373.00	 Charles Koch INSTITUTE	\$37,041,550.00
 GLSEN	\$6,270,021.00	 YOUNG AMERICA'S	\$23,148,860.00
 ROOSEVELT INSTITUTE REIMAGINE THE RULES	\$6,220,151.00	 The Federalist Society for Law & Public Policy Studies	\$18,197,890.00
 FEMINIST MAJORITY FOUNDATION equality around the world	\$6,173,153.00	 CAMPUS REFORM	\$14,894,507.00
 Advocates for Youth Rights. Respect. Responsibility.	\$5,942,390.00	 INSTITUTE FOR HUMANE STUDIES AT GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY	\$12,148,796.00
TOTAL	\$37,936,088.00	TOTAL	\$105,431,611.00

Note: The organizations included here are the largest progressive and conservative youth organizations in terms of expenditures of the organizations studied and with publicly available financial information. In some cases, figures were determined from Form 990s but may not be representative of spending on youth programming. Form 990s include overall financial information, therefore for organizations that work on numerous issues and demographics it may not be possible to obtain youth-specific information. For example, the Roosevelt Institute works to support youth organizing but its affiliation with the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library may skew its figures.



In 2014, conservative youth organizations spent **\$33 million** on land investments.









Progressive youth organizations spent only **\$3 million**.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Because of increased funding, conservative youth organizations have much more money to spend—and far fewer young people to spend it on.

In 2014, due in large part to differences in contributions, conservative youth organizations had nearly three times as much money as progressive youth organizations. In and of itself, that's a huge advantage. But when you consider that conservative organizations have three times as much money and half as many young people to spend it on, that gap becomes even more insurmountable.⁷ Again, these figures are more than just numbers, they're barriers for engaging and empowering a new generation of progressive leaders. For every six dollars conservative youth organizations can spend on

Figure 3: Spending on Youth on the Left and Right (measured by total expenditures, 2014)

Progressive Youth Organizations	Total Expenditures (2014)	Conservative Youth Organization	Total Expenditures (2014)
 NEXTGEN CLIMATE	\$10,991,563.00	 YOUNG AMERICAS	\$19,434,635.00
 Advocates for Youth <small>Rights. Respect. Responsibility.</small>	\$6,866,088.00	 Charles Koch INSTITUTE	\$17,242,481.00
 FEMINIST MAJORITY FOUNDATION <small>Equality around the world.</small>	\$6,265,880.00	 The Federalist Society <small>for Law & Public Policy Studies</small>	\$15,077,690.00
 GLSEN	\$6,038,097.00	 CAMPUS REFORM	\$13,576,928.00
 ROOSEVELT INSTITUTE <small>REIMAGINE THE RULES</small>	\$5,984,271.00	 INSTITUTE FOR HUMANE STUDIES <small>OF GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY</small>	\$11,590,380.00
TOTAL	\$36,145,899.00	TOTAL	\$76,922,114.00

Note: The organizations included here are the largest progressive and conservative youth organizations in terms of expenditures of the organizations studied and with publicly available financial information. In some cases, figures were determined from Form 990s but may not be representative of spending on youth programming. Form 990s include overall financial information, therefore for organizations that work on numerous issues and demographics it may not be possible to obtain youth-specific information. For example, the Roosevelt Institute works to support youth organizing but its affiliation with the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library may skew its figures.



paid internships for college students or travel stipends to national conferences, progressive youth organizations have just one dollar.

To measure this discrepancy, we looked at the total revenue of some of the largest national youth-serving and youth-led organizations (a full list of the organizations we measured can be found in the appendix). Total revenue, derived from subtracting the total expenses of an organization from its net assets, represents a powerful measure for the financial well-being of an organization. Overall, we found that in 2014 the five largest conservative youth organizations' aggregate revenue totaled just over \$100 million, while the aggregate revenue of the five largest progressive youth organizations fell just under \$38 million. That's a difference of approximately \$72 million in financial resources. The advantage narrows slightly when comparing the top 10 youth organizations on both sides, but is still staggering: we found that

the top 10 conservative youth organizations had a combined total revenue of approximately \$142 million, while the combined total revenue of the top 10 progressive youth organizations was \$55 million, or 60 percent smaller. And in 2014, the single largest conservative youth organization (in total revenue) had more money than the four largest progressive youth organizations combined.

THE CONGRESSIONAL INTERNSHIP TRAP

One key way to gain policy and political experience is to intern on Capitol Hill. Hundreds of young people flood Washington D.C. each semester to put in long hours and hard work in Senate and House offices. But these prestigious internships are often unpaid — out of the 100 Senate offices, 50 do not offer paid internships. And if you want to work for a progressive senator, your odds of scoring a position that comes with a little cash are even lower.

27

REPUBLICAN
SENATORS OFFER
PAID INTERNSHIPS

15

DEMOCRATIC OR
INDEPENDENT
SENATORS OFFER PAID
INTERNSHIPS

Taken together, the picture looks grim for progressive youth organizations and the progressive youth they serve. But it's even more grim when viewed in context of broader historical trends, which show that not only do progressive youth organizations have much less money to spend than conservative youth organizations, but that this gap is growing. In 2008, the top five conservative youth organizations had a 2-to-1 financial advantage over progressive youth organizations. In 2014, the most recent year of data available, that gap has widened to nearly 3-to-1. And in that same time period, between 2008 and 2014, the proportion of young people who identify as liberal versus conservative has grown. In other words, between 2008 and 2014 progressive youth organizations had (comparatively) less and less money to spend investing in young people, but more and more young people to spend it on.

SPENDING

Conservative youth organizations don't just have more money—they're spending more, too.

Conservative youth organizations aren't simply raking in hundreds of millions more dollars into their coffers and saving it for later. They're actively out-spending progressive youth organizations, laying the groundwork for the next generation of leaders. According to our analysis, in 2014 the five progressive youth organizations with the largest total expenditures spent just over \$36 million. The five largest conservative youth organizations, meanwhile, spent over twice as much, at just under \$77 million. Again, it's worth noting that conservative youth organizations not only spend more money, but spend it on fewer people, as they have a much smaller constituency within the Millennial generation. For progressive youth, this makes it all the harder to score that coveted paid internship, or receive a travel scholarship for an upcoming conference. In strictly financial terms, it pays to be young and conservative—literally.

Resource Imbalance Not Limited to the Non-Profit Sector

While this report focuses on the expenditures on youth by 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations, the imbalance between youth investment on the left and right isn't confined to non-profits. Political spending by party committees and super PACs also demonstrates a paucity of investment in young progressives. During the 2016 election cycle, the College Republicans spent over \$6 million, while the College Democrats did not have their own budget within the Democratic National Committee and were supported by less than one full-time staff person.^{8 9} This resource imbalance is especially disconcerting given that Millennials are the most progressive generational voting bloc, and in multiple polls are shown to align more closely with the values of the Democratic party.

It is more difficult to gauge the spending imbalance on youth programs specifically by super PACs because of their more lax reporting requirements. However, according to data from the Center for Responsive Politics, in the 2016 election cycle conservative

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT: ANDY KIM

In college, Andy helped found a group to ensure all students, regardless of their citizenship status, would receive equal financial aid



packages from his school. After working with the university administration and undocumented students and allies in the community, just before Andy graduated the school adopted a tuition equity policy ensuring everyone would receive the same financial aid package. Because of his work, he was later invited to speak about tuition equity on a panel at a conference. The organizers of the conference indicated that there would be financial support, but Andy later found out there was no travel support for speakers. Now a PhD student at another university, Andy wasn't able to fund the trip out of pocket. Though he had established himself as a young progressive leader, because the conference didn't offer funds, he was left without a way to get to the conference. He was eventually able to get to the conference, after reaching out to his undergraduate alma mater for financial assistance.

super PACs spent \$655.2 million whereas liberal super PACs spent just \$437.5 million.¹⁰ As our research demonstrates, investment in long-term youth infrastructure by non-profits is imbalanced in favor of conservative organizations, but this spending imbalance is by no means isolated to the non-profit sector.

PROPERTY VALUE

Conservative youth organizations are building a base of young conservative leaders—literally.

Brick by brick, youth-led and youth-serving conservative organizations are building the next generation of conservative leaders. By investing in property, such as office buildings or retreat centers, conservative youth organizations are making strategically sound long-term investments in young people. While purchasing—rather than renting—office space incurs significant costs upfront, it pays dividends in the long-run by saving on rental costs. Conversely, an organization that does not have land or building investments demonstrates less of an ability to invest in the types of long-term movement building that are critical for success.

Our research shows that conservative youth organizations devote considerable resources to land and building investments, which are evidence of an organization's dedication and ability to support long-term infrastructure. Progressive youth organizations, meanwhile, own next to no land or building investments. In 2014, conservative youth organizations spent a combined \$33 million on land and building investments. Progressive youth organizations spent just a fraction of that: \$3 million. Moreover, five of the conservative youth organizations we studied held some sort of land or building investment in 2014, while just two progressive youth organizations could say the same. By investing in property value, conservative youth organizations are looking toward the future: making smart investments today to save money down the line, freeing up funds to devote specifically to the young people they serve.

Without changes in how funding is allocated, progressive youth organizations will continue to face constraints—like needing to rent an office rather than purchase—that will push long-term capacity building out of reach.



Many job openings have a de-facto requirement that an applicant complete an unpaid internship before being considered for a staff position.

This requirement freezes thousands of talented young people out of staff positions on Capitol Hill, in campaigns, and with non-profit organizations.

When one considers that these unpaid internships are often located in the cities with the highest cost of living in the country, it is downright impractical and cruel.

- Inklusv

Inklusv ensures that staff, consultants, and vendors of color are found at every professional level within advocacy, policy, and campaigns and elections.



There is a lot of unfulfilled potential. Students in particular need more support from experienced organizers and resources to get them started with their work.

- Power Shift Network

Power Shift Network mobilizes young people to mitigate climate change.

Taken together, these four areas—contributions, financial resources, spending, and property value—show a bleak financial picture for progressive youth. Inflexible and infrequent contributions force progressive youth organizations to work within constrained financial resources, reducing spending and preventing the development of infrastructure and long-term growth needed to progress. In order to right the ship, progressive youth organizations and their funders must prioritize sustained, long-term investment in youth.

INVESTING IN A LONG-TERM STRATEGY

As our research has shown, the progressive movement has by and large failed to fully invest in and realize the potential of young people. But young people are of critical importance to the success of progressives. They push the narrative forward by challenging the status quo and thrusting its evolution forward. While conservatives frequently reference the past, offering a return to a theoretically picturesque bygone era, progressives often speak to the future. Young people are that future, but the progressive movement isn't speaking their language.

The conservative movement, meanwhile, offers a strong case study on how to successfully invest in long-term youth development. Historically, the movement has centered its funding priorities around long-term strategies like instilling conservative values and building the next generation of conservative leaders. The current conservative political climate did not happen by chance. Conservatives have long understood that in order to build power, they must foster the next generation of legislators and public servants, scholars and journalists, business professionals and activists. For years, as our data has shown, conservatives have invested heavily in long-term leadership development organizations that train young people to advance the goals of their movement—and have steadily reaped the benefits of their investments. Following conservatives' dedication to leadership development, young conservatives have filled the halls of Congress, the executive branch, and the courts, along with other, less overtly political but no less important, spheres of influence.

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT: JAMIRA BURLEY

Jamira is a young progressive who credits access to youth development programs for the opportunities she gained to advance her



career. Growing up in Philadelphia, Jamira found herself in an environment that did not prioritize education. Progressive youth programs allowed her to hone her skills as a leader and enabled her to dream bigger. She became the first of her immediate family to graduate from high school, and took significant steps to advance her career, eventually serving as the National Deputy Millennial Vote Director of Hillary for America. Jamira says the youth programs that invested in her laid the foundation for her leadership: "If I didn't have access to these programs, my life would be extremely different. Accordingly to statistics, I would be pregnant, incarcerated, or the victim of a violent crime."

With more strategic and sustained funding streams, progressive youth organizations can build a long-term strategy that will enable the progressive movement to create change for years to come. To envision what a youth-centered strategy can look like, we outline opportunities in the progressive youth movement that, with the right resources, can be the first steps toward achieving long-term progressive wins, including creating a leadership pipeline, reaching young, historically marginalized populations, and building a unified, multi-issue approach.



Given the opportunity to create change and the access to mentoring opportunities, there are **thousands of young people who are capable of transforming their community, state, and the nation.**

- Inklusv

Inklusv ensures that staff, consultants, and vendors of color are found at every professional level within advocacy, policy, and campaigns and elections.

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE AND PROGRESSIVE PIPELINE

With financial support for long-term leadership building, progressive youth organizations can catapult young people into positions of leadership.

The lack of financial support for long-term progressive leadership building has prevented youth organizations from truly engaging in long-term leadership development in the form of training, mentorship, job placement, networking, and resources. As a result, the progressive pipeline has fallen behind in elevating young progressives to diverse positions of leadership. Progressive leaders lack access to the resources needed to bring their values to the halls of Congress, the board rooms of businesses, the front of the classroom, or the front page of the newspaper. The progressive movement must simultaneously cultivate the next generation of progressive policymakers and propel young people with progressive values into positions of leadership within business, media, schools, science, and more. In order to build power, progressives need to permeate new industries and sectors and bring their ideas and activism with them.



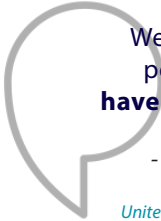
The youth infrastructure on the progressive side has been historically anemic. Unfortunately, today, it still is. It's modern manifestation, that bloomed in the aftermath of the 2004 election, started with a solid cohort of organizations, but, lack of investment and lack of attention from progressive leaders has left the space in disarray. **Progressives continually miss the opportunity to invest in young progressive leaders.**

- Roosevelt Institute

Roosevelt Institute is a network of over 10,000 students working to advance solutions in their communities across the country.

The lack of an effective and diverse progressive pipeline has not only done a disservice to young progressives, but has also hindered youth-serving organizations themselves. The lack of a new, well-trained cohort of leaders, paired with the lack of resources to cultivate them, impairs effective succession planning and the transfer of institutional knowledge. These are essential functions that ensure the sustainability of progressive youth organizations. As a result, they have fallen behind while their conservative counterparts reap the benefits of a generationally diversified and extensive network of conservative leaders.

Young progressives should be viewed as a vibrant community of developing activists and intellectuals that will move on to lead institutions, businesses, and governments. With additional funding, we can think broadly, investing in young people with varied interests who will bring their progressive values into whichever industry they choose and augmenting the power of the progressive movement through its people. Increased funding would also help the movement be intentional about incorporating and centering diverse voices and perspectives into the pipeline. Diversity in gender identity and expression, sexuality, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and other lived experiences, provides a vital infusion of perspective and is critical to building the power of the progressive youth movement.



We have the chance to include people in our movement that **have not been included before.**

- United States Student Association

United States Student Association is the country's largest national student association.

.....

DIVERSIFYING THE PROGRESSIVE YOUTH MOVEMENT

By investing in long-term youth infrastructure, progressive youth organizations could widen their reach, working to include and center traditionally marginalized voices.

Despite disadvantages in financial resources, the progressive movement possesses one enormous advantage over their conservative counterparts: young progressives vastly outnumber young conservatives. And yet, the progressive movement isn't reaching all young people. Limited and narrow funding sources have impaired the ability of progressive youth organizations to reach, cultivate, and provide long-term support for young progressives—especially those from traditionally marginalized communities. With the right investment, progressive youth organizations can reach and thus include communities historically left behind, enabling the movement to broaden its intersectionality and its base.

Thinking Outside Campuses

One of the clearest ways progressive youth organizations could infuse diverse voices and experiences if they had funding would be through increased recruitment to young leaders outside of traditional four-year public or private colleges. Many youth organizations overwhelmingly center college campuses as their primary point of outreach to young people, and have been historically less present at community colleges, tribal colleges, Hispanic-serving institutions, and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

Moreover, by focusing solely on communities currently enrolled in higher education, we neglect the large numbers of young people not attending college. In recent years, more young people are finding themselves outside of college campuses, as tuition rates have increased and enrollment rates have consistently dropped. In fact, census data show that enrollment levels in 2015 were estimated at 19.1 million, a decrease of 1.2 million from the 20.3 million people enrolled in 2010.¹¹ Full-time students ranging in ages 18-34 accounted for almost half of the drop and community college enrollment among young people has decreased steadily since 2012.^{12 13} Given increased and diversified funding, progressive youth organizations could reach past traditional four-year campuses to engage young progressives in a concerted effort not ever seen before.

With an infusion of different perspectives, experiences, and identities, the progressive movement can move toward a more inclusive agenda that centers the experiences of the most marginalized communities in our society.

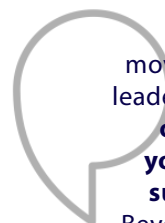
Creating a Multi-Issue, Intersectional Approach

In addition to reaching diverse progressives, increased funding would also allow progressive youth organizations to engage in intersectional, multi-issue organizing. Progressive investment in youth programs often focuses on mobilizing young people around short-term campaigns, like canvassing for particular legislation, or getting them to the polls to elect a certain candidate. Tying funding to single issues or candidates can reduce a youth organization's ability to engage in rapid response work to respond to changes in the political landscape. It also reduces the capacity of organizations to engage in leadership development and training that may not immediately demonstrate campaign results but increases skills and capacity across the sector. While this kind of funding has had success in achieving progressive short-term wins, it neglects the long-term strategies needed to enact sustained progressive change.

By giving progressive youth organizations the ability to move beyond short-term single-issue initiatives, progressive youth organizations

AMERICA'S STUDENT DEBT CRISIS

There are a number of reasons why young people are increasingly looking outside the traditional four-year campus: college tuition is growing unsustainably and young people are seeking new paths to success that steer away from a college education. They are pursuing free online classes or entrepreneurship opportunities outside of the college classroom. In envisioning a long term strategy, the progressive youth movement needs to be mindful of these changes and adapt accordingly. In order to truly strengthen the breadth of the movement, progressive organizations need to take meaningful steps to diversify the spaces they find themselves in.



The deepest gaps in our movement are within the youth leadership frame. **There is a lack of opportunities to engage youth in leadership roles for sustainable periods of time.** Beyond cycles, we need to think about how we grow and invest in the leadership development of young people, especially young people color. If we hope to shift the leadership of today's progressive movement we cannot do it under the same guise as we have for years before.

- *Planned Parenthood Generation Action*

Planned Parenthood Generation Action works with young activists to organize for reproductive freedom.

have a better chance of centering intersectionality in their work. The word “intersectionality,” originally coined by civil rights advocate and critical race theory scholar Kimberle Crenshaw, has been used as a way of recognizing how different forms of oppression interact in people’s lives and experiences. By centering this idea, youth organizations will be better equipped to advocate for progressive solutions that acknowledge the multifaceted nature of the issues that young people face.

With funding that is both more substantial and more strategic, youth organizations have the opportunity to expand the progressive landscape, bringing in previously marginalized communities and putting out intersectional, unified approaches to progressive change. In order to create true long-term change, youth organizations require the funding to create a leadership pipeline, reach young people from historically marginalized populations, and build a unified, multi-issue vision.

WHERE WE CAN GO

The unprecedented inflow of young progressive energy, paired with the formation of nascent organizations all spurred by an anti-Donald Trump agenda, makes clear that young Americans are eager to be a part of a movement that supports a more just and equal future for us all. This, after all, is the heart of modern progressivism. In order to harness and bolster that energy, a robust infrastructure must be built that not only recruits young people to become progressive voters, but engages them for a lifetime of progressive advocacy and participatory citizenship.

The first step toward a more sustainable progressive youth movement is increased funding to youth-led and youth-serving organizations that is both flexible and consistent. As conservative funders continue to pour more and more money into the next generations, progressive youth organizations must receive the support they need to invest in not only future progressive politicians, but writers and journalists, businesspeople, scientists, teachers, and more who will take their progressive values with them into their communities throughout their entire lives. When progressive organizations have the resources and funding to cast a wide net—reaching into traditionally

The Way to a More Progressive Future



underserved communities and welcoming new voices into spaces previously only open to a select few—the movement will become more diverse, opening up opportunities for stronger alliances and more intersectional coalitions. With funded internships, far-reaching networking opportunities, and national platforms available to a diverse group of young progressives, the number of visible leaders grows, increasing the reach of progressive messages and placing progressive leadership at the forefront of the national narrative.

Progressive policies win at the ballot box, and those wins are often made possible by the continuous organizing and engagement of America’s youth. In order to turn those one-off wins into long-term, sustainable change that can be passed on from generation to generation, the progressive youth movement needs an aggressive influx of time, money, and attention that can help draw out the best and the brightest of America’s next generation of leaders.

METHODOLOGY

In order to derive an understanding of the comparative financial status of progressive and conservative youth organizations, we examined their 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 Form 990s. Form 990s provide the public with financial information about non-profit organizations. To obtain these forms, we used multiple online databases, including but not limited to Guidestar, the Economic Research Institute’s Non-Profit Organization Information, and ProPublica’s Non-Profit Explorer. As of this release, data from 2015 and 2016 were not yet publicly available, and were therefore excluded from this report. The organizations studied, and their classifications as either conservative or progressive, are drawn from Generation Progress’ (then Campus Progress’s) original report on investment in youth.¹⁴

Data on contributions can be found in the “Contributions” line, or Part I of Form 990, line 8. Total revenue was drawn from the “Total Revenue” cell, or line 12 of Part I. Spending information was gathered from the “Total Expenses” line, or line 18 of Part I. We derived property values by combining land and building investments found in Schedule D, Part VI. Tax statuses for each organization were drawn from the tax status listed on its Form 990, Section I under “Tax-Exempt Status.”

Some data could not be found because the youth organization was part of a larger organization and data specific to the youth program was not publicly available, or the youth organization was new and did not yet have publicly available Form 990s, or, to the best of our knowledge, the youth organization simply did not have a publicly available Form 990.

APPENDIX

The organizations examined in our quantitative analysis, and their ideological leaning, include:

Accuracy In Academia	Conservative
Advocates for Youth	Progressive
America's Future Foundation	Conservative
American Civil Rights Institute	Conservative
Attn: <i>(formerly Our Time)</i>	Progressive
Black Youth Vote	Progressive
Bus Federation, The	Progressive
Campus Camp Wellstone	Progressive
Campus Pride	Progressive
Center for Individual Rights	Conservative
Center for Progressive Leadership	Progressive
Charles Koch Institute	Conservative
Clare Booth Luce Policy Institute	Conservative
College Democrats of America	Progressive
Collegiate Network	Conservative
Crossroads Generation	Conservative
David Horowitz Freedom Center and Freedom Center Students	Conservative
Democracy Matters	Progressive
Democracy Matters Inc.	Progressive
Drum Major Institute Scholars	Progressive
Energy Action Coalition	Progressive
Federalist Society, The	Conservative
Feminist Majority	Progressive
Foundation For Economic Education	Conservative
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education	Conservative
Fund for American Studies, The	Conservative
Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network	Progressive
Generation Opportunity Institute	Conservative
Generation Progress <i>(formerly Campus Progress)</i>	Progressive
Generational Alliance	Progressive
Generational Crossroads	Progressive
Heritage Young Leader's Program	Conservative
Hip Hop Caucus Education Fund	Progressive
Human Rights Campaign Youth & Campus	Progressive
Independent Women's Forum	Conservative

Institute for Humane Studies	Conservative
Intercollegiate Studies Institute	Conservative
Leadership Institute and Campus Reform (Campus Leadership Project)	Conservative
League of Young Voters Education Fund	Progressive
LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc.	Progressive
Maverick PAC	Conservative
Mobilize	Progressive
NAACP Youth & College Division	Progressive
Native Youth Leadership Alliance	Progressive
Network of Enlightened Women	Conservative
NextGen Climate Action	Progressive
NextGen Climate America Inc.	Progressive
Office of the National Black Student Union Inc.	Progressive
Responsible Endowments Coalition, The	Progressive
Rock the Vote	Progressive
Rock the Vote Action Fund	Progressive
Roosevelt Institute	Progressive
Sierra Student Coalition	Progressive
Student Farmworker Alliance Inc.	Progressive
Student Labor Action Project	Progressive
Students for Liberty	Conservative
Students for Life of America	Conservative
United States Public Interest Research Group Education Group	Progressive
United States Student Association	Progressive
United States Student Association Foundation	Progressive
United Students Against Sweatshops	Progressive
United We Dream Network Inc.	Progressive
United for Reproductive and Gender Equality (<i>formerly Choice USA</i>)	Progressive
Voto Latino Inc.	Progressive
Young America's Foundation	Conservative
Young Democrats of America	Progressive
Young Democrats of America PAC	Progressive
Young People For	Progressive
Youth for Western Civilization	Conservative

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