



Notes from the Field

Over the past year, USAction Education Fund partners in 19 states have conducted one of the largest and most successful non-partisan civic participation programs in the history of the nation. USAEF partners added 550,000 new voters to the rolls and made more than 10 million contacts with new and infrequent voters—evidenced in this year's massive voter turnout. In the last 2 weeks, 10,000 USAEF volunteers were in the streets, knocking on doors and calling potential voters to help increase voter turnout. We thought we'd share some of the more exciting stories we've heard from the field:

- Much of our success relied on a massive volunteer effort: 6,200 volunteers knocked on doors and made calls to new and infrequent voters in Florida, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, Maine, Ohio, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Iowa, Colorado, New Mexico and Washington. The weekend before the election volunteers spent 2,257 volunteer hours calling 56,425 voters—that's more hours than an average full time employee works in a year!
- In Oregon, Florida and West Virginia record numbers of new and infrequent voters voted early. In Orlando almost a third of our list had voted before Election Day!
- We also saw a surge of participation among single women. In rural LaCrosse, Wisconsin we registered 500 unmarried women in the 3 weeks before Election Day. In Las Vegas, early voting was heavily concentrated among the single women that Women's Voices, Women's Vote and USAEF organized.
- In Florida, we teamed with ten local daycare centers to offer free childcare on Election Day to help make voting easier and more accessible. Voters called 866-MOM-VOTE to drop

their children off at a licensed daycare centers, and get free rides to the polls. The participating centers are located in communities with high concentrations of single mothers—women who don't vote regularly.

- In Michigan, we organized the first centralized "ride to the polls" operation among non-partisan groups in Detroit's history. The program was organized by a large coalition of citizen groups, including the Michigan Citizens Education Fund, the NAACP, local churches, and the MOSES organizing coalition. The United Auto Workers donated 25 vans, and firefighters and police officers volunteered their knowledge of the city, helping solve one of the traditional problems of ride operations: getting lost.

All over America, newly registered and infrequent voters stood in 2-4 hour lines to cast their vote. In precincts that our partners worked in we witnessed astounding turnout:

By 10 am, voter turnout in Latino precincts in Phoenix, Arizona had already surpassed the total number of voters who voted in 2000. Similarly, by noon in Des Moines, Iowa, turnout at African American precincts was twice that of total turnout in 2000. In 36 precincts in Chester, PA, turnout at 5 pm was 150 percent of the entire 2000 turnout. Precincts near the University of New Hampshire reported 90 percent turnout. And in Florida, scene of last election's debacle, turnout in some precincts was up to 230% higher than the projected turnout for the entire day. Finally, in Portland, OR—where voters vote by mail—virtually every voter we registered in our targeted precincts had voted by Monday evening.