WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU!

As you can see, we're doing all we can to stand up for democracy and good government. Help us promote a pro-democracy agenda for Wisconsin!

Fair maps… Automatic voter registration… Felon re-enfranchisement… Dark money disclosure… Public financing of elections… Please send us a generous tax-deductible gift so we can push this urgent pro-democracy agenda forward.

WAYS TO DONATE

Traditional giving
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Workplace giving
The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign is a member of Community Shares of Wisconsin (CSW). Workplace giving with Community Shares allows businesses and its member nonprofits to work together to build fair, just and sustainable communities. We receive 100% of all designated donations through CSW’s workplace giving programs.

Digital donations
Twice a year we participate in online days of giving. The first week in March we are part of Community Shares of Wisconsin’s The Big Share, a friendly online community platform to raise funds and visibility for 70 nonprofit organizations advancing social and environmental justice in Wisconsin. Giving Tuesday is a nationwide day of giving the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. This digital presence allows us to reach a new and more diversified pool of donor supporters.

All contributions to the Democracy Campaign are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Income - $436,600

Donations $234,100 (53%)
Grants $200,000 (46%)
Other $2,500 (<1%)
Program $277,500 (60%)
Management $18,000 (9%)
Sustaining $15,400 (3%)

Expense - $470,000

Donations $234,100 (50%)
Grants $200,000 (43%)
Other $3,500 (<1%)
Program $277,500 (60%)
Management $18,000 (9%)
Sustaining $15,400 (3%)

THANKS!

To all the individual donors, like you, who generously supported us this past year. To the following funders: the Brisco Fund, the Brico Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the Kate Foundation, the Joel and Sallie Blumenthal Foundation, and the Craig Newmark Philanthropic Fund.

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DEAR FRIEND,

One of the talks I gave this year was to the Wisconsin chapter of the American Association of University Women. I talked about the democracy we work toward every day. That’s the democracy we work toward every day.

In a democracy, voting should matter, every time, and in a democracy, every voter should have an equal voice. And many elected officials act as though their donors are their constituents — and not the people they actually represent.

And the primary reasons behind this dysfunction are gerrymandering and money in politics: the two issues they want. Especially those in the dominant party in Wisconsin -- don’t appear to care what the people want.

Of course, I pointed out that voting is crucial: Look at how different Wisconsin would be if Scott Walker had not been able to get the money to buy the elections. And many elected officials act as though their donors are their constituents -- and not the people they actually represent.

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This year, we also addressed other vital issues -- such as the need for a complete and accurate Census in Wisconsin and the moral imperative of re-enfranchising formerly incarcerated persons.

And Matt Rothschild gave talks on the history of voter suppression.

In the past year, Matt gave talks in DeForest, Egg Harbor, Hartford, Ladysmith, Madison, Menomonie, Milwaukee, Newbold, Ogema, Platteville, Racine, Shell Lake, Wausau, and Wisconsin Dells. Matt also spoke to classes at Monona High School and to an assembly at Middleton High School.

Matt Rothschild speaks to Fair Maps. Matt Rothschild speaks with WDC canvassers.

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On behalf of the staff of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, thank you for supporting our urgent work.

2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WE CAMPAIGNED TO BAN GERRYMANDERING.

We provided leadership and crucial resources to the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition (including a hand-picked coalition and the state map showing the counties that have passed Fair Maps resolutions and referendum data). We gave 18 public and private talks on the issue, and also talked at the Dane County Farmer’s Market on Saturday, July 27, collecting hundreds of signatures in just three hours on petitions to ban gerrymandering.

WE HELPED CRAFT A MODEL CAMPAIGN FINANCE BILL.

Working with Senator Chris Larson, we helped draft his “Campaign Integrity Package,” a series of bills that would undo much of the damage that was done in the disastrous rewrite of our campaign finance law in 2015. The Larson package would ban corporate donations to political parties, impose a veto on individual donations to political parties, reduce the amount that individuals could give to candidates, require “dark money” groups to disclose their donors, and require campaigns to list the names of their donors’ employers. (Cover photo: Senator Larson (middle) and Matt Rothschild stand with outside groups, including the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, to Amend and the League of Women Voters at the press conference to introduce the “Campaign Integrity Package.”)

WE TRACKED BIG MONEY AND DARK MONEY.

Our Data Analyst, David Julseth, coded tens of thousands of donors to candidates in Wisconsin and entered that information into our invaluable database, and also recorded the “independent expenditure” by outside groups. And our Research Director, Mike Bautzer, tracked down the spending by dark money “issue advocacy” groups. They noted that there was record spending in 2018 in Wisconsin.

WE PROMOTED VOTER PROTECTION.

Beverly Speer, our Outreach and Advocacy Director, worked with coalition partners to promote automatic voter registration and other voter protection policies. She and coalition partners met with Senate Majority Leader John Shilling’s staff, the governor’s staff, and the staff of the Wisconsin Elections Commission on this issue. And Matt Rothschild gave talks on the history of voter suppression.

WE LINKED THE FIGHT FOR EQUITY WITH THE FIGHT FOR THE CITIZEN’S UNITED.

This year, Martin Luther King Day fell on the exact same date as the anniversary of the Citizens United decision. We saw this opportunity first to show that Martin Luther King fought against gerrymandering and used the slogan, “Property is intended to serve life, and no man has the right to sell himself as a slave.” And second, we used this opportunity to show the links between the fight for campaign finance reform and the fight for racial equity.

WE FED THE MEDIA.

We posted dozens of original items on our website, which we shared on social media. And we promoted these items to the mainstream media, with pick-ups from the AP, the Capital Times, the Journal Sentinel, Urban Milwaukee, USA Today, the Wisconsin Examiner, and Wisconsin State Journal. We also appeared on several Wisconsin radio shows, including Resistance Radio, WFAW, WFDL, WPR, WBOI, and WORF. We were also interviewed by reporters from many news outlets, including Bloomberg and The New York Times.

WE GAVE TALKS ALL ACROSS WISCONSIN.

In the past year, Matt gave talks in DeForest, Egg Harbor, Hartford, Ladysmith, Madison, Menomonie, Milwaukee, Newbold, Ogema, Platteville, Racine, Shell Lake, Wausau, and Wisconsin Dells. Matt also spoke to classes at Monona High School and to an assembly at Middleton High School.

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Bill Franks, member of WDC board of directors, and Matt Rothschild speak at the press event on the twentieth anniversary of the Citizens United decision.

WE FLEW AN AMERICUS BRIEF ON THE LAME-DUCK SESSION.

We joined the League of Women Voters and applauded the applauded the League’s democracy in its "Continuous Session: Our Brief noted that it’s the case, no lobbyist could give to candidates because they’re not allowed to give while the Legislature is in session, under current law. And no campaign could accept the donations.

WE FLEW A COMPLAINT WITH THE WISCONSIN ETHICS COMMISSION AGAINST BRIAN HAGEDORN.

His campaign committee failed to provide information, as required by law, about the occupations of 37 percent of the people who gave more than $200. Shortly after we filed our complaint, his campaign released its report and supplied most of the missing information.

WE TESTIFIED AGAINST MARCY’S LAW AND THE ARTICLE V CONVENTION PROPOSAL.

Designed ostensibly as a “voters’ right” bill, Marcy’s Law would violate the Sixth Amendment rights of the accused to face their accuser. We were one of the few voices to testify at the State Capitol against this bill. We testifying against Article V and the new convention that would tie the hands of the federal government in times of economic crisis and would place all of our rights on the chopping block.

WE PROMPTED VOTER PROTECTION.

Beverly Speer, our Outreach and Advocacy Director, worked with coalition partners to promote automatic voter registration and other voter protection policies. She and coalition partners met with Senate Majority Leader Jen Shilling’s staff, the governor’s staff, and the staff of the Wisconsin Elections Commission on this issue. And Matt Rothschild gave talks on the history of voter suppression.

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In the past year, Matt gave talks in DeForest, Egg Harbor, Hartford, Ladysmith, Madison, Menomonie, Milwaukee, Newbold, Ogema, Platteville, Racine, Shell Lake, Wausau, and Wisconsin Dells. Matt also spoke to classes at Monona High School and to an assembly at Middleton High School.

Matt Rothschild speaks to Fair Maps. Matt Rothschild speaks with WDC canvassers.

I’m proud to be going to WDC because of the fantastic work you do in keeping a close eye on the money in politics and the struggle to keep our democracy alive and well. -- Rose Sime

More is now on us -- and Wisconsin Democracy Campaign gives us direction and inspiration! -- Elaine A. Swanson

The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign is also working with the Wisconsin Counties Coalition to ensure a complete and accurate Wisconsin Census. “Captain Census” from Wisconsin Voices is on the right.

Matt Rothschild
Executive Director
DEAR FRIEND,

One of the talks I gave this year was to the Wisconsin chapter of the American Association of University Women. My assigned topic was “Why Voting is Important – Especially When It Doesn’t Seem to Make a Difference.”

I pointed out that voting participation, look at how different Wisconsin would be if Scott Walker had lost the recall if truly voting doesn’t seem to matter sometimes because our elected officials, especially those in the dominant party, don’t seem to care to what the people want.

And the primary reasons behind this dysfunction are gerrymandering and money in politics – the two issues that we devote most of our attention to here at the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.

Our maps are not rigged that many elected officials feel they are in safe districts they can willfully ignore a huge chunk of their constituents.

And many elected officials act as though their donors are their constituents – in other words, don’t suppose to represent.

This year, we also addressed other vital issues – such as the need for a complete and accurate Census in Wisconsin, which is the American Constitution’s manifest purpose. “Captain Census” from Wisconsin Public Television was against corporate personhood, and we circulated this report and supplied most of the missing information.

We post cards of original items on our website, which we shared on social media. And we promoted these items to the mainstream media, with pick-ups from The Capital Times, The Journal Sentinel, Urban Milwaukee, U.S. News & World Report, the Wisconsin Examiner, and Wisconsin State Journal. We also appeared on several Wisconsin radio shows, including Resistance Radio, WFAW, WFDL, WPR, WOJB, and WORT. We were also interviewed by reporters from many news outlets, including Bloomberg and The New York Times.

On behalf of the staff of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, thank you for supporting our urgent work.

I’m proud to be giving to WDC because of the fantastic work you do in keeping a close eye on the money in politics and the struggle to keep our democracy alive and well. – Rose Slone

Mike Buelow
Executive Director
DEAR FRIEND,

One of the talks I gave this year was to the Wisconsin chapter of the American Association of University Women. That’s the democracy we work towards every day. It’s democracy where everyone should have an equal voice.

On issue after issue, whether it’s Medicaid expansion or sensible gun laws or legalizing medical marijuana, especially those in the dominant party in Wisconsin – don’t appear to care what the people want. And the primary reasons behind this dysfunction are gerrymandering and money in politics: the two issues that we devote most of our attention to here at the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.

Our maps are so rigged that many elected officials feel they are in such safe districts they can willfully ignore a huge chunk of their constituents. And many elected officials act as though their donors are their constituents – and not what the people actually are supposed to represent.

This year, we also addressed other vital issues – such as the need for a complete and accurate Wisconsin census. “Captain Census” from Wisconsin Working Women, Rose Sime, provided us with a close-up on the money in politics and the moral imperative of re-establishing formally incarcerated persons. Women.

And Matt Rothschild gave talks on the history of voter suppression. His campaign committee failed to provide information, as required by law, about the occupations of 37 percent of donors’ employers. [Cover photo: Senator Larson (middle) and Matt Rothschild stand with other clean government advocates from Wisconsin United, Newbold, Madison, Oshkosh, Milwaukee, Stevens Point, and West Bend. Matt also spoke to classes at Madison College and Wisconsin Heights. Matt also spoke to classes at Johnson County Community College and as an assembly at Middleton High School.]

The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign is also working with the Wisconsin Counties Coalition to ensure a complete and accurate Wisconsin census. “Captain Census” from Wisconsin Working Women is on the right.

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That’s the democracy we work towards every day.

On behalf of the staff of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, I’m proud to be going to WDC because of the fantastic work you do in keeping our democracy vibrant and alive.—— Rose Sime

More is now on us - and Wisconsin Democracy Campaign gives us direction and inspiration! — Elaine A. Swanson

MATT BUELLOW
Executive Director

2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. We planned and led a new edition of our “Fair Maps” campaign, which won the support of two-thirds of Wisconsin residents. We also joined the League of Women Voters case and exposed the absurdity that the Legislature somehow was in “continuous session.” Our brief noted that if that’s the case, no lobbyist could give to candidates because they’re accused to face their accuser. We were one of the few voices to testify at the State Capitol against this bill. We also successfully argued to the court that the “continuous session” never occurs. We joined the League of Women Voters case and exposed the absurdity that the Legislature somehow was in “continuous session.” Our brief noted that if that’s the case, no lobbyist could give to candidates because they’re accused to face their accuser. We were one of the few voices to testify at the State Capitol against this bill. We also successfully argued to the court that the “continuous session” never occurs.

2. We helped craft a model campaign finance bill.

3. We tracked Big Money and Dark Money.

4. We promoted voter protection.

5. We linked the fight for racial equity with the fight against Citizens United.

6. We fed the media.

7. We gave talks all across Wisconsin.

8. We filed an amicus brief on the lameduck session.

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10. We gave talks to classes at Monona High School and to an assembly at Middleton High School.

Matt Rothschild spoke to Fair Maps. Take half-attendees in need and voted “yes” for successful passage of the tower (the maps approved this for use by all other cellular carriers). We also successfully argued to the court that the “continuous session” never occurs.

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