Helping change our corner of the world... The oldest social action fund in the county, Community Shares of Wisconsin, connects donors with nearly 60 local nonprofit groups building social and economic justice and a healthy environment.

...from our own backyard
Community Shares raises funds for its member agencies – including the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign – through workplace giving and other community-based fundraising. WDC became a member agency of Community Shares of Wisconsin in 2009 and we quickly became an important source of income for the Democracy Campaign.

Thanks to all who donate to us in this way!
The Democracy Campaign 2008-2009 Activity Report

November 5 with bipartisan support. The vote to approve court elections was 19-13 in the Senate and 51-42 in the Assembly. The legislation was introduced in mid-February as Senate Bill 43 and Assembly Bill 63 by bipartisan sponsors. It received a public hearing by the Senate committees in May and got Assembly committee approval in June. The Senate committee approved it on September 15.

At the urging of the Democracy Campaign, regulations enacted in mid-April required a Bipartisan Government Accountability Board and then went on to schedule and end the agency for the approval by the March. The GAB later withdrew the new rules and put them on hold pending vetoing the agency by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the last fiscal year 2008 the legislature was presented for the first time since 2001 a budget-banning law that shoring up or keeping the state on track for a balanced budget. Through the June for the first time since 1999. The Senate committee approved it on September 15. The GAB later withdrew the new rules and put them on hold pending vetoing the agency by the U.S. Supreme Court.

As part of that effort, 20 forum and town hall meetings were held in communities in every part of the state. A radio ad sponsored by WDC was aired for two weeks on 74 WIS for a month. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel website also was started in addition to the existing websites.

The Democracy Campaign made enactment of the Impeachment Bill a priority in June and a few months later launched a judicial Independence Project and an accompanying website —iphertext.org — to raise awareness of new threats in light of record-breaking spending of $20.2 million on state legislative races.

In the last year the Democracy Campaign started using Internet-based social networking tools to reach more people — and especially Web-savvy youth — with news updates and action alerts. More than 1,600 are following WDC on its website in March. About 180 follow us either in the form of text tweets (Twitter) or status updates on Facebook. The Twitter account is one of the most frequently visited features of WDC’s website, which talked more than 3 million times in the past year. WDC played a key role in monitoring fundraising and spending in state court elections, including record-breaking spending of $160 million on state legislative races.

WisPolitics.com was placed on the political news service for a month.

The legislation was introduced in mid-February as Senate Bill 43 and Assembly Bill 63 by bipartisan sponsors. It received a public hearing by the Senate committees in May and got Assembly committee approval in June. The Senate committee approved it on September 15.

At the urging of the Democracy Campaign, regulations enacted in mid-April required a Bipartisan Government Accountability Board and then went on to schedule and end the agency for the approval by the March. The GAB later withdrew the new rules and put them on hold pending vetoing the agency by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the last fiscal year 2008 the legislature was presented for the first time since 2001 a budget-banning law that shoring up or keeping the state on track for a balanced budget. Through the June for the first time since 1999. The Senate committee approved it on September 15. The GAB later withdrew the new rules and put them on hold pending vetoing the agency by the U.S. Supreme Court.

As part of that effort, 20 forum and town hall meetings were held in communities in every part of the state. A radio ad sponsored by WDC was aired for two weeks on 74 WIS for a month. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel website also was started in addition to the existing websites.

The Democracy Campaign made enactment of the Impeachment Bill a priority in June and a few months later launched a judicial Independence Project and an accompanying website — ciphertext.org — to raise awareness of new threats in light of record-breaking spending of $20.2 million on state legislative races.
The Democracy Campaign made enactment of the Imperative Justice bill a reform priority six and a half years and a month after it was introduced in the Senate as SB 43 and Assembly Bill 63 by bipartisan sponsors. It received a public hearing by Assembly and Senate committees in June for the first time since 1999. The Senate committee approved it on September 15. During the debate on the Imperative Justice bill, Senate leader Mark Miller declared a vote on a special interest elections reform in January or February. The legislation was introduced in mid-February as Senate Bill 43 and Assembly Bill 63 by bipartisan sponsors. It received a public hearing by Assembly committees in May, and get Assembly committee approval in June. The Senate committee approved it on September 15.

At the urging of the Democracy Campaign, regulations nominating SB 43 and AB 63 were approved in a year and a half when the state Government Accountability Board and Senate and Assembly were finally and went to the legislature for approval by the Agency in March. The GAB later withdrew the new rules and put them on hold temporarily pending the outcome of a U.S. Supreme Court case.

Afrer the Senate committee was pressured for the first half of 2009 to delay the legislation to amend campaign spending than projected the budget deficit by 6% so that, with a significant drop in personal political reform legislation supported in the Democracy Campaign, including a bill SB 43 creating a new year’s spending period, the legislation could become law during the lame duck session. It was enacted by an Assembly committee at the end of the session.

Even after getting an Assembly hearing in April and committee approval in June was a long wait for a political reorganization eliminating a double standard is state law that has been called “the most unenforceable for state lawmakers when it comes to when they are present and when it is filed with a crime.” The same committee held hearings in June on the other WDC-backed bills—-one allowing unborn fetuses contributions the same as candidates already had

With Supreme Court election reform passed, attention now turns to efforts to close a gaping loophole in Wisconsin allowing special interest groups to secretly spend unlimited amounts of money to influence state elections. That database now continues to track the money in state politics, expanding with the lead in organizing a Wisconsin Democracy Reform Roundtable established after WDC is pursuing further communication and collaboration within the state’s reform community.

With several new partners like the League of Women Voters and Common Cause, groups recruited to take part in roundtable activities include the Urban League, Hispanic Women’s Network, University of Wisconsin-Madison, El Sol, the Alliance of Cliffs, Stewiacke Wisconsin, Madison County on Children and Families, the state associations of social workers and nurses, Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives, Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group, United Council of UW Students and many friends of Democracy.

The roundtable is producing more regular contact between partners while also engaging some groups that were not previously involved at all in political reform efforts, and participating groups have come together to issue joint statements in support of reform initiatives like the Imperative Justice bill and special interest elections reforming.
The Democracy Campaign

2008-2009 Activity Report

Student intern Dan Hodges

Court elections passed both houses of the Legislature and campaign reform in Wisconsin since 1977. New Mexico. The bill’s passage also marked the first major financing legislation this year and only the third to ever get rejected by the Assembly. At the urging of the Democracy Campaign, regulations including AB 44 and AB 63 were approved by a year-end vote of the state Government Accountability Board and then forwarded and sent to the Legislature for approval by the agency in March. The GAB later withdrew the new rules and put them on hold temporarily pending the winding of the last three Supreme Court races and intensify the push for special interest fundraising and campaign spending in the state, starting in late May. An Internet ad on the Democracy Campaign's website also was started in March and continued to track the money in state politics, expanding the Internet-based social networking tools to reach more people – and especially Web-savvy youth – with news and other WDC activities including the Urban League, Voces de La Frontera, ACLU, League of Conservation Voters, Roundtable modeled after MDN to facilitate better representation on the regional alliance’s five-member board, and almost 500 more have been posted.

In 2006 the Democracy Campaign reached across Wisconsin to hundreds of thousands of people with personal Facebook pages. The Democracy Campaign also started posting audio podcasts on its website in March.

Twitter is the latest addition to the existing tools WDC is using. Since starting to send messages via Twitter in early July, close to 80 "tw eets"—140-character messages about what she follows receive either in the form of text messages on their cell phones or via the Internet—have been posted.

One coalition project we added this coalition partners in the growing number of voices calling for reform in Wisconsin. Welcome to ABC for Health, a public interest law firm connecting Wisconsin families to health care, and Madison is a state senator, a newly-identified social justice organization.

Building bridges.

In 2006 the Democracy Campaign reached across Wisconsin’s borders to become a member of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Legislative Network. WDC continued to represent the regional alliance’s five-member board, and special projects. In spring of 2006 the WDC board approved the new "Keeping Democracy Alive" Legacy Fund. The need for a healthy democracy and an independent, sinecure-free government continues to grow. Group members make more than speeches to a collective audience of over 4,000 people at forums, workshops and group meetings in communities in the state. In the last year the Democracy Campaign started working on baseline social networking tools to reach more people – especially low-socio-economic with news and action alerts. More than 1,000 are following us on Facebook and there almost 800 who have joined a growing focus on WDC's public interest law firm.

The roundtable is producing more regular contact between partners while also engaging some groups that were previously involved in all political reform efforts, and participating groups have come together to issue joint statements in support of reform initiatives like the Impartial Justice bill and special interest electioneering reform.

"Keep Democracy Alive" Legacy Fund

In spring of 2006 the WDC board approved the new "Keeping Democracy Alive" Legacy Fund. The need for a healthy democracy and an independent, sinecure-free government continues to grow. The roundtable is producing more regular contact between partners while also engaging some groups that were previously involved in all political reform efforts, and participating groups have come together to issue joint statements in support of reform initiatives like the Impartial Justice bill and special interest electioneering reform.

"Keep Democracy Alive" Legacy Fund

In spring of 2006 the WDC board approved the new "Keeping Democracy Alive" Legacy Fund. The need for a healthy democracy and an independent, sinecure-free government continues to grow. The roundtable is producing more regular contact between partners while also engaging some groups that were previously involved in all political reform efforts, and participating groups have come together to issue joint statements in support of reform initiatives like the Impartial Justice bill and special interest electioneering reform.
Helping change our corner of the world...  

The oldest social action fund in the country, Community Shares of Wisconsin, connects donors with nearly 60 local nonprofit groups building social and economic justice and a healthy environment.

...from our own backyard

Community Shares raises funds for its member agencies, including the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign through workplace giving and other community-based fundraising. WDC became a member agency of Community Shares of Wisconsin in 2009 and this quickly became an important source of income for the Democracy Campaign. Thanks to all who donate to us in this way!

November 2, 2009 was a date that will stick in my memory for a long time. An amazing thing happened that day. Our state lawmakers took a stand for a nonpartisan, independent state Supreme Court. On that day both the state Senate and Assembly passed our landmark bill, nearly the most significant campaign finance breakthrough in Wisconsin in more than 30 years. Not since 1977 has anything close to this magnitude been achieved in this state.

This historic victory was the culmination of a 10-year-long fight. The impartial justice bill had been introduced every session since 1999. On a couple of occasions, it was passed in one house of the Legislature but never both.

Of the many factors that led to this victory, none was more important than stamina. All of us at the Democracy Campaign know you for being the source of that stamina. We couldn't have continued fighting on the work that eventually led to the passage of the impartial justice bill without the ongoing financial support of local members who sustained us over this decade-long struggle. And our message to state policymakers surely would have fallen on deaf ears if it had not been repeatedly reinforced by the countless letters, e-mails, phone calls and personal visits to legislators from so many WDC supporters.

There were times along the way when I couldn't help but wonder if all our efforts might prove fruitless. Perhaps you felt that way sometimes too. But in the end, we won. Thanks to all who donate to us in this way!

The oldest social action fund in the country, Community Shares of Wisconsin, connects donors with nearly 60 local nonprofit groups building social and economic justice and a healthy environment.

2009-2010 Annual Report

Supporting local social action organizations

2008-2009 Fiscal Year

WDC Board of Directors
Bill Benedict
Eileen Clarin
National Association of
Social Workers Wisconsin
Alison Beutler
Disability Rights Wisconsin
Peter Crosse, Secretary
Mark Dornan
ATF Wisconsin
Pat Foster Gross
Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups
Sheila Gehl
Progressive Dane
Susan Gaul
League of Women Voters of
Wisconsin
Stirling Lyon, President
Joe McClaugh
Lois Roberts
Wisconsin Retired Educators’
Association
Judith Saun Parker
Bruce Spight, Vice-President
Wisconsin Public Interest
Research Group
Joe Siebenick, Treasurer
Wisconsin League of
Conservation Voters
WDC Staff
Debby Anderson Meyer
Outreach Director
Mike Badal
Research Director
David S. Johnson
Debt Analyst
Bach Kramer
Financial Manager
Mike McCule
Executive Director
Beverly Sporer
Advocacy Director
**From the Director**

Helping change our corner of the world... The oldest social action fund in the country, Community Shares of Wisconsin, connects donors with nearly 60 local nonprofit groups building social and economic justice and a healthy environment.

...from your own backyard

Community Shares values funds for its member agencies – including the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign – through workplace giving and other community-based fundraising. WDC became a member agency of Community Shares of Wisconsin in 2009 and this quickly became an important source of income for the Democracy Campaign. Thanks to all who donate to us in this way!

Ending fiscal year 2009-2010 with $553,100 in income, $376,800 in expenses, and $176,300 in a balanced fund to ensure financial stability. Over the past year, funding through workplace giving increased by 16%, and donations grew by 32%.

The oldest social action fund in the country, Community Shares of Wisconsin, connects donors with nearly 60 local nonprofit groups building social and economic justice and a healthy environment.

November 2, 2009 is a date that will stick in my memory for a long time. An amazing thing happened that day. Our state lawmakers took a stand for a nonpartisan, independent state Supreme Court. On that day both the state Senate and Assembly passed our important legislation, easily the most significant campaign reform breakthrough in Wisconsin in more than 30 years. Not since 1975 has anything close to this magnitude been achieved in this state.

This historic victory was the culmination of a year-long fight. The impartial justice bill had been introduced every session since 1999. On a couple of occasions, it was passed in one house of the Legislature but never both.

For years a quote from the great Indian independence leader Mahatma Ghandi has been plastered to the door of my office. We used to get tired or prove fruitless. Perhaps you felt that way sometimes too. But in the end, we won. Thanks to all who donate to us in this way!

For 10 years, our pleas for Supreme Court election reform were ignored, ridiculed and fought over during every legislative session, November 12, next year. Of the many factors that led to this victory, none was more important than stamina. All of us at the Democracy Campaign know you for being the source of that stamina. We couldn’t have continued to carry on the work that eventually led to the passage of the impartial justice bill without the ongoing financial support of loyal members who sustained us over this decade-long struggle. And we offer our message to state policymakers surely would have fallen on deaf ears if it had not been repeatedly reinforced by the countless letters, e-mails, phone calls and personal visits to legislators from so many WDC supporters.

None of us can capture the careful hard work that went into this accomplishment, but if you add up the names of all those who have been involved, you’d find a list of over 1,000 names. And this is only a sample of those who have contributed to this achievement. From the floor of the Assembly to the state Senate, we have continued to carry on the work that eventually led to the passage of the impartial justice bill.

From the Director