



These Women Living With HIV Are Getting Out the Vote

How members of Vote Positive USA make an impact in battleground states.

November 2, 2020 By [Trent Straube](#)

Since last fall, members of Vote Positive USA, a nonprofit group of women and transgender people living with HIV, have been busy applying the lessons of HIV advocacy to the 2020 election. Notably, they've been registering, educating and motivating voters in the battleground, or swing, states of Pennsylvania, Colorado, Texas and Georgia. And they're talking about much more than national HIV policy.

Kenya Moussa of Vote Positive PA puts together informational packets for voters. Courtesy of Vote Positive PA

In addition to informing the public on how to vote safely during the COVID-19 pandemic and handing out water and snacks to people waiting in hours-long lines to vote, members of Vote Positive are phone banking and tackling tough issues on the ballot, including abortion rights in Colorado to health care access for all.

For example, Vote Positive advocates reached out to over 100,000 residents in Philadelphia and encouraged them to vote yes on Question 1, a ballot measure demanding that the police end its stop-and-frisk policy, which disproportionately affects African Americans. “Many of the voters we’ve spoken to didn’t even know ending illegal stop- and-frisk was on their ballot,” said Andrea Johnson, a Vote Positive organizer in Pennsylvania, in a press release about the group’s efforts. “We’re making sure that people in support get out and vote, and we’re having tough conversations with people who mistakenly believe that stop-and-frisk makes our communities

safer.”

Members of Vote Positive Colorado do outreach via phone banking. Courtesy of Vote Positive CO

“Health care, reproductive rights, basic safety and dignity for Black people, immigrants, people of color, LGB and trans people—these are all on the ballot,” explained Naina Khanna, director of [Vote Positive USA](#), which launched in the fall of 2019. “We were really clear that it’s no longer enough just to talk about the Ryan White program, ADAP [the AIDS Drug Assistance Program], the National HIV/AIDS Strategy. When our elected leaders and enacted policies actively dismantle human rights, these programs are like Band-Aids on bullet holes. We demand and will fight for leadership that fundamentally believes our communities are precious, that understands that health care, housing, water and food are human rights, that believes in science and respects our agency to make decisions about our reproductive futures.”

Members of Vote Positive USA have also created [online voter guides](#) for Pennsylvania, regions of Colorado and for Houston.

Shannon Robinson of Vote Positive Colorado registers new voters. Courtesy of Vote Positive CO

Earlier this year, POZ ran a selection of tips from PWN-USA's election tool kit. For more, see [Vote 2020](#). And don't miss the [current issue of POZ](#), pictured below, which features election-related content.

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