



Ohio Young Democrats
www.ohioyd.org

2009 Strategic Plan



Introduction

The Ohio Young Democrats, as an organization composed of 14-35 year olds, play a unique role. As it became clear in the 2008 election, the youth demographic is one which has the power to swing elections, and one which will overwhelmingly identify with the ideals of the Democratic Party.

The Ohio Young Democrats are committed to organizing the power of this generation's vote, in the electorally significant swing state of Ohio. Ohio Democrats have twice posted huge wins this decade, first in 2006 and recently in 2008, driven to the polls by the scandals of Republican elected officials. In order to continue this success, the Democratic Party must embrace the growing and left-leaning vote block of 18-35 year olds, engaging leaders and expanding geographic and demographic influence in the youth community.

Among the success of federal Democratic candidates, the Ohio House of Representatives saw a significant and hard-fought shift in power as the Democrats won control for the first time since 1994.

In 2008, the Ohio Young Democrats pioneered a successful peer-to-peer voter contact program in six Republican-held Ohio House districts. OYD knocked on over 24,500 doors of 18-35 year olds in these six districts, encouraging voters to not only turn out and vote, but to vote the entire Democratic ticket. Democratic candidates won all six of these House districts, three candidates winning by less than 800 votes.

OYD has developed the following Strategic Plan to prepare the organization for the 2010 midterm elections. We recognize that 2009 is a critical year to build our infrastructure of members and chapters, creating a more expansive network of young people united in the common cause of promoting Democratic ideals and electing Democratic candidates.

With the Ohio Apportionment Board up for grabs in 2010, Ohio Democrats will need the youth demographic to push them to the win column. **Through this plan, the Ohio Young Democrats will be ready to lead this effort.**

As proof of our commitment to building a stronger organization, the Ohio Young Democrats have hired a full-time Executive Director. Though a substantial financial commitment, a dedicated staff member will multiply OYD's reach and pay dividends quickly.

Ohio Young Democrats: Building leaders today, for a better tomorrow



MEMBERSHIP

Goal: *Expand the geographic influence of Ohio Young Democrats and train the next generation of the party leaders and elected officials.*

Objective: Increase participation in existing chapters, showing a 15% increase in membership list from current size.

Strategies:

- Create a Chapter Mentorship Program, assigning a board member from a geographically close and established chapter to new chapters.
- Create a Chapter Membership Kit for distribution to current chapters, including sections on *Fundraising and Finance, Membership Recruitment and Retention, Running an Effective Meeting, Communications, Web 2.0, Community Relations, and Campaigns*
- Create an email listserv or sharepoint site for presidents and membership officers to share ideas
- Produce a monthly OYD e-newsletter to share ideas and celebrate successes
- Make OYD Executive Director available to help with administrative support for planning and executing meetings and events
- Coordinate with other progressive groups (unions, environmental, etc) to find best ways to reach out to their members across the state
- If available in a chapter's jurisdiction, an OYD RUN2009 candidate will be closely allied with the chapter, creating an opportunity for members to invest in a peers' campaign and gain campaign management experience
- Provide ideas for local OYDCares events

Objective: Charter 10 new county chapters by January 2010.

Strategies:

- Coordinate with county chairs, Obama Field Organizers, Labor, Elected Officials and former candidates to seek out interested young leaders
- Identify fast-growing and young counties for specific focus
- Use Ohio Democratic Party voter file to search for young Dems to contact



MEMBERSHIP (Continued)

Objective: Increase High School student participation in the Democratic Party, creating life-long Democrats, through the creation of 20 new High School chapters (at least 1 meeting) before June 2009.

Strategies:

- Assign regional/county representatives from OYD for close interaction with high school students to allow for continuity
- Outreach to Political Science or Government teachers

Objective: Encourage communication and coordination between high school chapters, creating a network of students to encourage and offer advice student-to-student

Strategies:

- Kick off statewide High School Outreach with a High School Summit state meeting in September 2009
- Collect advice for structure and topics from YDA High School caucus and High School chapters created during the 08-09 school year
- Build list of interested high school students through networking on Facebook and MySpace over the summer



FUNDRAISING

Goal: *Create a financially sustainable organization through multi-approach fundraising, allowing for investment in OYD's future and the growth of chapters.*

Objective: Execute six regional fundraisers per year, splitting proceeds with participating local chapters in order to raise awareness of and funds for state and local chapters.

Strategies:

- OYD Finance committee will work to identify chapters interested in this partnership
- Local chapter will secure a location for the event and work with OYD to establish sponsorship and ticket prices
- OYD will secure well-known speaker to headline event
- Targeted to raise \$2000 per event, or \$6000 for OYD over the year

Objective: Sign up 150 Legacy Partners by April 15, 2009, securing an average of \$15 in monthly donation commitments from each partner.

Strategies:

- Intensive Email Campaign to OYD's 4500 email list. Emails will be sent between March 9 and April 10, promoting OYD's value
- Each email will emphasize the importance of investing in OYD to the future of the Democratic Party
- Create specialized email campaign consisting of three emails over the same time period to County Chairs, ODP Exec Committee Members and other party leaders
- By becoming a Legacy Partner, donors will receive discounted rates to OYD events, and have names listed on the OYD website
- Targeted to raise \$2,250 per month or \$27,000 over the year

Objective: Host the First Annual Ohio Young Democrats Recognition Dinner, celebrating the achievements of young candidates and youth activists over the past year and thanking our donors for their support.

Strategies:

- Sell table sponsorships to Elected Officials, County Parties, OYD chapters, partner organizations and high dollar individuals
- Secure high-profile Keynote Speaker
- Targeted to raise \$20,000 after expenses



FUNDRAISING (Continued)

Objective: Secure investments from high dollar donors in both Ohio and across the nation, averaging 3 meetings and 40 hours of call time per month.

Strategies:

- Through donor research, President and Executive Director will both call and meet with potential donors
- Targeted to raise \$10,000 per month, or \$120,000 over the year



CAMPAIGNS

Goal: *Recruit, train and support young Democratic candidates, building the farm team for tomorrow's state and national leaders.*

Objective: Through the Run2009 program, sponsor nine to twelve young candidates for office in diverse geographic areas.

Strategies:

- OYD Run2009 Coordinator will launch program with an application process in March 2009
- Application will emphasize candidate's willingness to raise the necessary resources and spend the time talking to voters
- Run2009 candidates will be the only eligible candidates for funding through OYD in 2009, address donors at the First Annual OYD Recognition Dinner and will be promoted through profiles on www.ohioyd.org and in press releases
- OYD Run2009 Coordinator will secure mentors for Run2009 candidates, matching to appropriate geographic area and addressing candidate's areas for improvement

Objective: Host April training and provide best practice campaign tools at least once per month for all other young democrats running for office.

Strategies:

- Plan and execute a candidate series of trainings at the OYD Spring Convention, inviting elected officials and campaign professionals to share tools for success
- Create an e-newsletter for current candidates and potential candidates with periodic information on best practices in areas including voter contact, fundraising, scheduling, messaging



COMMUNICATIONS 2.0

Goal: *Enhance recruitment and fundraising by promoting Ohio Young Democrats with a common message across multiple mediums, frequently seeking interaction with different audiences.*

Objective: Utilize Web 2.0 platforms to attract potential members to a vibrant and active organization, resulting in an additional 10,000 emails subscribers by December 2009.

Strategies:

- Require OYD Executive Board members and encourage OYD chapter presidents to regularly update Twitter status with OYD activities and news while interacting with potential members
- Sync all communications with Facebook information
- Actively seek out and ‘friend’ young progressives in various networks, following membership chapter creation plan
- Utilize search engines to find individuals and organizations online who are writing about OYD or demographics and topics that address OYD’s mission, and communicate with individuals and organizations to encourage continued exposure
- Set a weekly schedule for OYD officers, presidents and members to post blog entries on www.ohioyd.org
- Use LinkedIN OYD group to post any employment or internship opportunities in government or campaigns
- Create an online social network to connect young Ohio political activists, allowing for interaction outside the meeting structure

Objective: Seek opportunities daily in every public facing communication to define and display the OYD brand.

Strategies:

- Create a common ‘look’ across different mediums, including press releases, emails, officer email signatures, and website content
- Utilize Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to ensure when someone is searching for a young, progressive organization, www.ohioyd.org appears in the results
- Cross-post all OYD emails and press releases to the website
- Develop an online press strategy, including different types of promotional content.
- Regularly update content on pages of OYD website will be



COMMUNICATIONS 2.0 (Continued)

- Maintain a personal relationship with Ohio bloggers in order to break news and promote OYD

Objective: Host two in-person trainings at OYD meetings and post four webinar trainings to www.ohioyd.org to empower chapter leaders and members to utilize Communications 2.0 opportunities.

Strategies:

- OYD Communications 2.0 committee will seek out professionals as guest lecturers for trainings and webinars
- Sessions will have different audiences: general, with broad overview for any viewers; chapter-building, for chapter leaders; and campaign-focused, for Run2009 candidates
- OYD Communications 2.0 committee will archive any trainings for future reference

Objective: Effectively manage all data, updating bimonthly, allowing for its use across different OYD programs and initiatives.

Strategies:

- Upload all OYD member and finance data to Ohio Democratic Party and America Votes voter files, utilizing tags to track lists
- Hire an intern, managed by the OYD Executive Director, to ensure consistent outcome
- Include standards for data management in OYD bylaws to require proper transition and upkeep of data

Objective: Properly manage products produced for and by OYD, creating an archive of information for future generations of leaders.

Strategies:

- Archive, online, all plans, chapter manuals, flyers, and training materials, limiting access where appropriate on sensitive information
- Require, through bylaws, for outgoing OYD officers to write a summary of opportunities and challenges presented by their position
- Post meeting minutes to website within 48 hours of meeting.