



Maine Youth Power Spring Update

May 6, 2022

I am writing this on the way home from a rally for clean water for Passamaquoddy people and land sovereignty for all Wabanaki across Maine. Maine Youth Power young people showed up in solidarity three times in a week. We got an excellent feel for the Maine Statehouse for our newer members. We are seeing more and more the power of all of us showing up as a cross organization movement. Maine Youth Power is a youth movement building social power. We change what doesn't work for young people in Maine in an emergent, youth-led, positive and community building method. We are not here to only "empower" individuals, we know that each and everyone of our members has all the power they need. We are here to channel the power of rural young people and build a collective movement that strengthens all of us in demanding and building a state where we all thrive. This past season we [officially ratified and released our core values](#) as a movement which reflects our growth.

This winter, We set priorities for our legislative mini session

This January and February we surveyed over 75 young rural Mainers and found themes of what mattered most to everyone. We launched the Maine Youth Pledge, a set of legislation that we would be supporting through Maine's mini session. We worked with legislators such as Eloise Vitelli in building support for her bill on rural internet access, a bill which is now signed into law by the Governor. We organized in solidarity with Wabanaki Alliance and Wabanaki communities across Maine to help push their suite of three bills on vital Indigenous Sovereignty into fruition. We turned our network to call, write and demand the passing of closing Long Creek, the last youth prison in Maine. And we worked with Maine Youth Justice to pressure legislators to end the use of supine restraints on minors.

The session had its ups and down and bolstered our passion for being heard and continuing to push for bold sweeping policy changes.

We brought farmworker justice to rural Maine and joined Migrant Justice in demanding Hannaford grocery stores join the Milk with Dignity program. We are a Maine Coordinator for them and their network now and are flourishing in this relationship as it connects us with many other young people across the state. As we gather contacts we have built our a CRM system and are gaining skills using tools to keep our data in order and be more effective.

We are deeply working on our model for the midterms

We are going deep into the theories of Social Power and how we work to win. Maine Youth Power has been in the Organizing to Win Lab, a part of the Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing. We are engaging in this

deep analysis of our movement alongside 30 other youth focused organizations across the country! We are rooted in a long term vision as we plan our fall programs.

Pillars of midterm voter turnout and outreach program

- Partnering in rural Maine with youth-led organizations to help them turnout their people to vote by joining our movement.
- Using our cultivated network from the past year to host over 100 vote parties and turnout 3000 rural young Mainers to vote in Maine's second district.
- Continuing to experiment! The more experimentation we are able to test, the further we will be able to reach this midterm election and be ready to expand our program for 2024.

We are owning our small campaigns

Throughout the past months, Maine Youth Power reevaluated our local campaigns and redesigned our mentorship model to support our on the ground organizers. We are launching a summer campaign fellowship for those young folks who are excited to build power and win in their hometowns and beyond. Our first summer fellowship will be to continue to work on getting all gender restrooms in high schools across rural Maine.

We are hiring!

For the first time, we are hiring a full time co-director! Our hiring team carefully built the job description and application to specifically fit our vision for Maine Youth Power's future!

In four weeks, we had 12 applicants from across Maine, young people from all different backgrounds applied and we are currently enjoying the opportunity to interview each qualified applicant and continue our hiring process for co-director.

Coming up next

Kicking off in the first week of June, Maine Youth Power will be popping up at pride events, community fairs and festivals across rural Maine! We are more than excited to be officially out in the community, in person, making connections and building our list of voter turnout contacts for our programs. Imagine how effective and how wide our movement will expand as we are in person for the first time ever!

As always, please reach out and connect with us to support Maine Youth Power and our movement to build a state where young people thrive, centering human dignity, equity, access and a livable future.

In Solidarity,



Phoebe Dolan

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Maine Youth Power Director