



Dear friends of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin,

Sixteen days have passed since the November 8 election. So I wanted to take this moment to say it: thank you, thank you, a million times thank you.

Thanks to you, and to everyone else who helped—together, we ensured that democracy could survive in Wisconsin. Together, we did it.

We defied history—the history that says that Democrats should be doomed in a midterm election with a Democratic president. The history that said 2022 should have felt a lot like the shellacking of 2010. The history that said the Senate race should have been a landslide defeat rather than a nailbiter, and that Republican state legislators, with their hyper-gerrymandered maps, should've grabbed a supermajority.

There were painful losses this year. No sugar-coating that. But there were also extraordinary victories, victories that could so easily not have happened. What made them possible is simple: people. People who refused to give up or tune out. People who decided to live their values. People who did the work.

This is a message of gratitude for those people—including you.

Any political battle of the magnitude of the Democratic efforts in Wisconsin's 2022 midterm elections involves thousands of heroes. It would be impossible to name all of them in one email, and so this message is, by necessity, woefully incomplete. And yet, be forewarned, it is also long.

If you do have time to review it, I hope you'll read it in the spirit in which it is intended: as a meditation of gratitude, a way of pausing to reflect on the monumental effort by so many talented people to see to it that our beloved state would move, not backwards, but forward.

Whether or not you have time to read it all, the takeaway is simple: it took all of us. And for whatever part of this fight you took on, you're appreciated.

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First and foremost, thanks **Governor Tony Evers**. A leader of uncommon decency, calm but relentless optimism, and a deep faith in the people of Wisconsin. Governor Evers, we're so lucky to have the chance to support your leadership.

Thank you to **Mandela Barnes**. Choosing to take on Ron Johnson is an enormous task. Mandela faced down an avalanche of lies and smears—some of the most hideous attacks in Wisconsin history—and never stopped fighting for all of us. Despite national pundits writing off the race, Mandela came closer to defeating Johnson than anyone ever has. It was the closest U.S. Senate race that Wisconsin has seen in a century. Without Mandela's tireless perseverance and uniting leadership, every other victory this year would have been imperiled. We all owe him a debt of gratitude. And it's good for Wisconsin that the story of his career has only just begun.

When Mandela stepped up to run for the U.S. Senate, the Lieutenant Governor role opened up. Massive thanks to **Sara Rodriguez**, our Lieutenant Governor-elect—who, in 2020, flipped a state legislative seat in Waukesha County so effectively that the GOP effectively gerrymandered it out of existence, and then one-upped the Republicans by running statewide. Sara's a dynamo, brilliant, ferocious, hilarious, and riveting on the stump. She'll be a tremendous partner to Governor Evers. Thanks and congratulations!

Attorney General Josh Kaul has been a tremendous advocate for justice, the rule of law, public safety, accountability, freedom, and democracy in the state of Wisconsin—and ran an outstanding campaign. We're all lucky that he'll be our top law enforcement official for four more years.

Rounding out our statewide candidates, thanks to **Aaron Richardson** for running hard for State Treasurer in a race with little public attention. And thanks and congratulations to **Doug La Follette** for defeating a Big Lie Republican for Secretary of State. Four more years!



The statewide elected Democrats who weren't on the ballot did critical work as well. **Senator Baldwin** was absolutely indefatigable in advocating for and supporting Mandela Barnes and Tony Evers, on the stump and in every other way. We're ready to support you for 2024!

Treasurer Sarah Godlewski went from candidate in the Senate primary to [launching a huge initiative to support women candidates in the state legislature](#), working around the clock and around the state to stop Republicans from getting supermajorities. Hats off to you, Sarah!

Thanks, too, the mayors and County Executives who went the extra mile to advance democracy—including **Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley**, Outagamie County's Tom Nelson, Milwaukee **Mayor Cavalier Johnson**, Madison's **Satya Rhodes-Conway**, Green Bay's **Eric Genrich**, Racine's **Cory Mason**, Kenosha's **John Antaramian**, Wausau's **Katie Rosenberg**, Sheboygan's **Ryan Sorenson**, Superior's **Jim Paine**, and so many more. And former **Governor Jim Doyle** never ceased in his efforts to support Governor Evers.

House races this year were intense. **Mark Pocan** and **Gwen Moore**, in safe seats, poured their time and energy into supporting other candidates, from **Brad Pfaff** to Mandela Barnes. In the 3rd, Brad Pfaff fought with heart and soul against an overwhelmingly funded insurrectionist, and came closer to winning than oddsmakers thought possible. In the 1st Congressional District, **Ann Roe** ran hard against Bryan Steil, helping turn out voters with her message that Roe was on the ballot. **Mike Van Someren** worked hard in the 5th, **Dick Ausman** ran a spirited contest in the 7th, and **Julie Hancock** ran a write-in effort in the 8th—thank you to each of them!



Alongside Tim Michels' candidacy for governor, the greatest threat to democracy in the state of Wisconsin in 2022 was the GOP's drive to grab supermajorities in both legislative chambers. The Supreme Court's decision to choose ultra-gerrymandered maps—in concert with Robin Vos and the GOP (which we'll work to address on April 4, 2023!) put dual-chamber supermajorities within reach. Republicans nearly got the state Senate... but GOP Senator [Alberta Darling's retirement announcement this week](#) means the GOP won't quite have two thirds after the new class is sworn in this January. And because so many fought so extraordinarily hard, we stopped the supermajority in the Assembly—by a bare margin of two seats, with a combined margin of 2,499 votes.

In the state Senate, we're profoundly grateful for **Melissa Agard**—newly elected Minority Leader!—for stepping into such an intense role in such challenging circumstances this year and driving critical work forward. **Jeff Smith**, you won a must-win race in a tough rural district with gale-force headwinds, defeating someone who should never hold public office. We're grateful for your tenacity. To **Kelly Westlund**, **Kristin Alfheim**, and **Jessica Katzenmeyer**—each of you brought a big-hearted fighting spirit and a powerful voice to races in districts that Republicans laser-etched to guarantee Republican victories. We're so glad you did so much to inspire voters this year.

Enormous, enormous kudos to Assembly Democratic leader **Greta Neubauer**, who stepped

into leadership at a critical time and ran a stunningly effective and strategic operation at every step, from the first recruiting calls and strategy meetings to the final digital ad buys. Thanks to the whole caucus leadership team: Assistant Leader **Kalan Haywood**, Caucus Chair **Lisa Subeck**, Vice-Caucus Chair **Jill Billings**, Caucus Secretary **Kristina Shelton**, and Caucus Sergeant at Arms **Lee Snodgrass**, as well as all those who leaned hard into recruiting, such as **Francesca Hong**. And massive, massive thanks to the candidates in the most competitive races. Congratulations to **Steve Doyle**, **Katrina Shankland**, and **Tip McGuire**, on your re-elections, and **Lori Palmeri** and **Clint Anderson** on winning your first Assembly race. **Don Vruwink**—you ran so hard in such a tough district, and came so agonizingly close. Bravo to you for everything. To **LuAnn Bird**, **Laura Gapske**, **Nate Jurowski**, **John Adams**, and **Leah Spicer**—thanks so much, to you and all those behind you, for your inspiring campaigns. You made other victories possible, inspired voters, and opened doors yet unseen for ways you can make a positive contribution.

To the dozens of other state Senate and Assembly incumbents who ran hard even in safe seats, and dozens more challengers in deep-red districts who made sure voters had a choice, and who carried the torch for Democratic values despite the odds—thank you so, so much. Your work has made a difference. Know that you are appreciated. To all of the newly-elected state Senators and state Representatives: congratulations, and we're so excited to work with you. Together, we'll fight to win the special election in SD-08 next year to block the GOP's path to a state Senate supermajority, win the Supreme Court seat that could unlock a path to fair maps, and, ultimately, flip your chambers.

Beyond state legislative campaigns, other races were on the ballot too—[school funding referenda](#), [advisory referenda on abortion rights and marijuana legalization](#), and local offices like Sheriff (thanks and congrats to **Kalvin Barrett**, **David Riewestahl**, **Mike Lukas**, **Curtis Fell**, and others!) in counties and municipalities throughout Wisconsin. And there were many people who ran in primary campaigns for offices large and small, didn't get the nomination—but then went right back to work to support the Democratic nominee, including the many candidates from the vast U.S. Senate primary field. After suspending his campaign, for example, **Alex Lasry** used [\\$600,000 in campaign airtime to go after Ron Johnson](#)—a huge help. Politics is a team sport, and every former candidate who pulled for the success of other candidates has earned our respect.

It takes guts to put your name on the ballot. To everyone who ran, whether you won or lost in the primary or the general election, thank you.

Campaigns are named for the candidate on the ballot—but there are so many other people who are involved who have richly earned our gratitude and appreciation.

First, thanks to the candidates' family members. These races take a punishing toll on spouses and partners, kids, and parents alike. The labor and hardship that family members endure is often invisible to the public, but no less real. You're all heroes.

Second, Wisconsin is extraordinarily lucky to be the home of some of the most talented campaign staffers and political operatives in the country—a group of people who absolutely went to the mat to help elect Democrats up and down the ticket.

Cassi Fenili managed Tony Evers' campaign. She's one of the most brilliant operatives and

strategists I've ever met, in any context. Her values shined through in the culture she built on the Governor's campaign, which reflects Tony Evers's integrity, kindness, and generosity of spirit, and has been a constant partner and friend to me and to the Democratic Party of Wisconsin. Cassi started planning this re-election campaign—in her dual capacity as a senior advisor to WisDems and Tony For Wisconsin—in 2019. Leading the campaign for the first Democrat to win a Wisconsin governor's race during a Democratic presidency since 1962 should earn her a clear spot in Wisconsin's unofficial political hall of fame. Team Tony—including Senior Advisers **Sam Roecker**, **Garren Randolph**, and **Lara Henderson**—had an all-star roster, and executed a stellar plan immaculately. It took resources. The Wisconsin governor's race was the most expensive in the country. Evers' finance team, led by **Haley Barbour**, set records. (Thanks to all who chipped in for Gov. Evers, and the other candidates' campaigns!) Ad guru and strategist **Ben Nuckels** of Strother Nuckels Strategies made more than 2000 different ads, many hyper-locally targeted. If the Michels team had met these folks, they might have given up long before Election Day. The dozens of other skilled hands at Tony For Wisconsin all deserve a round of applause.

Mandela Barnes had a dynamite team as well, led by campaign manager **Kory Kozloski**, who saw the path to victory with calmness and clarity even when Democrats in Wisconsin and nationally were running around with their hair on fire. With more money in the dark days of September or another week or two in November, Team Mandela would've pulled off an upset. **Tiernan Donohue** worked with the party and the Barnes campaign to make a million things happen in no time flat, and the team at **Left Hook Strategy** ensured that Wisconsinites learned about the best of Mandela Barnes and the truth about Ron Johnson. Team Mandela, at every level, moved mountains and always kept the faith—and, win or lose, Wisconsin is better for it.

Sondra Milkie, leading the charge for Josh Kaul, absolutely nailed it. **Justin Koestler**, Sara Rodriguez's campaign manager, was pivotal in launching Sara as a powerhouse statewide candidate. The Assembly Democratic Campaign Committee's Executive Director, **Morgan Hess**, drove a caucus operation that was breathtaking in its sophistication and strategic acumen. For the state Senate Dems, **Eric LaGesse** kept a steady hand on the wheel through treacherous terrain—thank goodness. And so many other staffers worked on campaigns at every level—often pulling off minor miracles and averting disasters that few will ever learn about. To all those who staffed a race this cycle, thank you beyond measure.

Political victories are built on a three-legged stool: candidate campaigns, a strong party, and effective independent groups. Wisconsin's success this year rested on all three legs of the stool—and wow, did we have a strong party.

The team at WisDems is astonishingly good. Some folks on our team worked on presidential campaigns in 2020; all of them are certainly ready to do so in 2024. Throughout these last two years, they've made things happen that no state party has any right to even imagine being possible. While different jobs at our party ([and we're hiring now! Apply here!](#)) have different requirements, all of them have three must-haves in common: a growth mindset—the ability to take and implement feedback; being relentlessly goal-oriented, often with ambitious goals in stressful situations; and cultural competency, with an ability to work and build relationships across lines of difference. I could not be more proud of how our team has embodied these three qualities this election cycle.

This starts with **Devin Remiker**, who has served as the WisDems Executive Director since the legendary **Nellie Sires** departed in August of 2021. Devin's ability to simultaneously manage our hugely complex organization to higher and higher levels of performance and unknot seemingly irresolvable political and operational challenges is simply incomparable. It's rare in any context to find, in one person, a thoughtful planner who anticipates challenges before they arise—and a meticulous, driven executor... and an empathic listener skilled at de-escalating conflicts and finding win-win solutions. Devin does all of that and more. His leadership has been essential to our success, at the ballot box and as an organization.

Anna Surrey led our Coordinated Campaign, overseeing a world-class senior team: **Gabbie Stasson** and the organizing department, **David Kronig** and voter protection, **Alex Abrahams** and data, **Karina Provost** on coordinated operations, and **Katie Iliff** and GOTV. Anna, in her fourth consecutive cycle, took on a massive challenge and ensured that the many Coordinated stakeholders worked in partnership, aligned with the grassroots organizing model that she's helped grow and run. I'm so thankful for Anna's values-driven leadership.

Iris Riis served as our communications director before stepping up to become Deputy Executive Director, expertly ensuring that senior staff had more managerial support and helping steer our organization, in close concert with our partners, through political straits of unimaginable complexity. We're all grateful that she stepped up into this new role. The whole WisDems senior team killed it: **Bhavik Lathia**, running the biggest and strongest state party digital operation in the history of the country; **McKinley Kant**, overseeing the most successful state party finance operation anywhere; **Nick Truog**, whose political department—coalitions, candidate services, and party affairs—was critical to success at every level of the ballot and to our vision of a strong, inclusive party that lives our values and shows up for everyone; **Chris Curry**, who stepped into an operations leadership role and met every fiendishly complex budget and logistical challenge with aplomb; **Katie Portis**, who carried forward the HR operation built by **Elisha Barudin** and ensured that the party would show up for the full human beings doing the work; and **Hannah Menchhoff**, who took on the communications leadership role at a critical and complex time, with great success. **Shirley Ellis** provided critical insight as a senior advisor. **Danielle Melfi** made hard things look easy. And **Andrea Berkeland** made sure that the executive team, including me, had the support we needed so that all of our time and attention could be focused on the most high-impact and urgent work.

Each of the folks named above managed whole teams—often consisting of multiple teams themselves. All told, WisDems maxed out at 240 staff this year, about twice the size of the Republican Party of Wisconsin's operation. Books could (and should!) be written about the pathbreaking work done by so many people at so many levels in our organization. To everyone who worked on the WisDems team at any point in this election cycle, it's hard to express the immensity of my gratitude to you, or how impressed I've been by your work. This is a group of people that will do amazing things in the years and decades to come—and, in fact, already has.



The Democratic Party of Wisconsin has a paid professional staff—and thousands of unpaid volunteers.

Eight of them (in addition to me, the full-time party chair) are elected statewide, by delegates to our state party convention. Four are statewide party officers: First Vice Chair and Milwaukee Board Supervisor **Felesia Martin**; Second Vice Chair and State Representative **Lee Snodgrass**; Secretary and Racine County Dems Chair **Meg Andrietsch**; and Treasurer and Fitchburg Common Council President (and Mayoral candidate!) **Randy Udell**. I'm stupendously lucky to work closely with each of them.

The other four are our elected Democratic National Committee members: **Martha Love**, **Andrew Werthmann**, **Janet Bewley**, and **Khary Penebaker**. Those nine, plus **Marcia Steele** and **Michael Childers**, constitute our Executive Committee—a wise and thoughtful leadership group. And at DNC meetings, Wisconsin is also represented by Wisconsinites **Mahlon Mitchell** of the Firefighters, an at-large appointee, and **Jason Rae**, the elected National Secretary of the DNC. I'm grateful to all.

Dozens of other leaders serve on our statewide Administrative Committee, Budget Committee, Constitution & Bylaws Committee, and other standing and ad hoc committees; as officers of Congressional District party units; as Caucus officers and leaders of our youth

wings—the Young Democrats, College Democrats, and High School Democrats. All are critical. County parties are the foundation of our state party, and to all county party chairs and other officers, who volunteer countless hours to hold this party together and keep it moving forward, I can't thank you enough.

The thousands of dues-paying, card-carrying official members of the Democratic Party are what makes this party work. I'm grateful for the chance to serve as your elected chair, and I hope you know how much your efforts—from gathering signatures for candidates for the smallest local office up to contacting voters for statewide elections that determine the balance of power in the whole country—make the world better. If you know someone who might want to join you (or if you're reading this without a party membership yourself), [please send folks to wisdems.org/join](https://www.wisdems.org/join).



Our 275 neighborhood action teams, along with our county parties, are the heart of our neighbor-to-neighbor organizing model—now in its sixth year. To team leaders and members (many of whom are also county party leaders): thank you. And thank you in particular for so gracefully transitioning back to knocking on doors while also building on the innovations in virtual organizing that we all learned together during the pandemic. Thanks as well to all the distributed and out of state volunteers (some in groups with names, from Common Power to Indivisible Evanston to so many more; others organized less officially) who earned their stripes as unofficial Badgers once again this cycle. You are critical to our success.

Nate Timm, Chair of the Rural Caucus, the Wisconsin Grassroots Network, and architect of our signage distribution hub network, suffered a health emergency just before the election; Nate, we're rooting for you and grateful to you. And all of those in the network who distributed and put up signs in every county in our state—we can see the product of your work on every road trip, and we're grateful for it.

Across county parties, neighborhood teams, and other volunteers, we've recorded a mind-blowing 37,172 completed volunteer shifts this election cycle. (The true number is higher—but

I'm especially appreciative of everyone who logged their work in VAN so that we could track and allocate your invaluable work to the tactics and places it would have the biggest impact.) To all the thousands of people who put other things aside to volunteer their time and make victory possible: your commitment, driven by a love for our state and our country and a belief that better is possible, inspires me every day.

And to the more than 60,000 people who donated in amounts small and large to support WisDems and our work this year—holy mackerel. You dug deep and made it possible for us to run a bigger midterm operation than our state has ever seen. I know some of our donors, at all levels, went wildly beyond what they'd intended to give this year—so I hope you know what a difference it made. Based on campaign finance filings we've seen so far, WisDems had the largest budget this cycle of any state party in the country, and a vastly greater share of that budget came from direct contributions than in any other state. We strive to stretch every dollar, and we're grateful for every donation.

Our state Democratic Party is part of a larger national party, chaired by **Jaime Harrison**—who has been unflinching in his support for our work in Wisconsin, up to and including committing millions of dollars in resources and coming to Wisconsin in the final stretch before Election Day to kick off canvasses and fire up volunteers. Thank you so much, Chair Harrison! Thanks also to DNC Executive Director and proud Wisconsinite **Sam Cornale**; to **Chelsie Ouellette**, our day to day point person; and to the whole DNC team for always having our backs. Thanks to the Association of Democratic State Committees, including Chair **Ken Martin** of the DFL and **Karyn Coleman** for your steadfast support; to the whole team at the Democratic Governors Association, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, the Democratic Attorney Generals Association, the Democratic Lieutenant Governors Association, the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee, the National Democratic Redistricting Committee, the Democratic Association of Secretaries of State, and the Democratic Municipal Officials—as well as to the staff at the many national sub-bodies and other committees who assisted our work.

Thanks also to former WisDems Chair **Martha Laning** for her leadership at WisDems and her work now at the State Party Advancement Network, helping us and other states; to **Norm Eisen** and the State Democracy Defenders—and to my comrades-in-chairship **Lavora Barnes** of the Michigan Democratic Party and **Raquel Teran** of the Arizona Democratic Party—and the many other chairs and party leaders with whom I've been lucky to swap tips and kinship this cycle. Thanks also to former Chair **Mike Tate**, for invaluable advice and efforts this cycle, and to so many other WisDems and DNC alumni—including former DNC Chairs **Howard Dean** and, especially, **Tom Perez**, who is an unflagging champion of Wisconsin and the WisDems. Thanks for your mentorship, and for campaigning here!

There's nothing that focuses attention, dominates headlines, and supercharges our folks like a visit from a national champion of the Democratic Party and our values—and this cycle, Wisconsin has been so lucky to welcome leaders at the very highest levels. **President Biden**, thanks for making Wisconsin the destination for your [first official trip](#) as president, [your Labor Day destination](#), and for so many other visits besides. Enthusiastic thanks as well to **Vice President Harris** for your multiple visits, and to **First Lady Biden** and **Second Gentleman Emhoff**. Your presence here energized us, and your policies delivered for us. **President Obama**, your visit in late October was absolutely electrifying. To all the White House and presidential advance staff, Secret Service agents, and others who worked to make

those visits smooth and safe, we're grateful.

A slew of other national leaders bolstered our work as well. **Deb Haaland, Marty Walsh, and Pete Buttigieg**; Senators including **Elizabeth Warren, Cory Booker, Bernie Sanders, Chris Murphy, Tim Kaine**, and former senator **Doug Jones**; and Congressional leaders including **Ro Khanna, Jamie Raskin, Danny Davis, Mondaire Jones, Debbie Mucarsel-Powell** all visited our beautiful state, to great effect. And we benefited from prodigious support from **Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi**, DSCC Chair **Gary Peters, Progressive Caucus Chair Pramila Jayapal, Senator Schatz**, and many others, in front of and behind the scenes. And thanks, too, to former Attorney General **Eric Holder**, for your work here both virtual and in person.



We're also so lucky, as a party, to have such wise and dedicated mentors and builders of infrastructure—like **Teresa Vilmain, John Stocks, Bill Dempsey, Tanya Bjork, Greg Lewis, Lew Friedland, Gary Goyke, Anat Shenker-Osorio, Michael Podhorzer, Meagan Mahaffey, John Grabel, John Miller, and Juan Jose Lopez**, among many others. To every seasoned Democrat who took the time to invest in someone finding their way in this work, please know that your impact will echo for decades to come.

The mission of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin is to elect Democrats, up and down the

ballot. This is a means to an end. As it says in the first sentence of our state party Constitution, “Freedom, equity, security, peace and prosperity throughout the world; these are our high aims.” Our party is one strand in the broader fabric of the progressive movement in Wisconsin and nationally—which in turn is part of a broader worldwide community of people working in solidarity to seek a better world. In Wisconsin, the trio of candidate campaigns, party, and independent groups requires all three legs of the stool—and we’re so lucky to work alongside an ecosystem of values-aligned organizations that work to elect those who share Wisconsin’s values and to ensure those values are put into action by those in public office. In this election cycle, the work of independent groups was essential.

The labor movement is the indispensable partner and ally of the Democratic Party. As the book [When Movements Anchor Parties](#)—on my bed stand!—documents, this partnership makes the party not just more likely to win, but also more true to its values: it ensures that the Party will never lose sight of its core mission of delivering for working people and standing up to those who would seek to divide and exploit them.

The Democratic Party of Wisconsin is a proud union shop, with field organizers represented by the Campaign Workers Guild and many other colleagues represented by the IBEW Local 494. So many unions made this fight their own: WEAC, affiliates like MTI, MTEA, and the whole NEA; the SEIU, SEIU Wisconsin State Council and SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin; AFSCME and AFSCME Local 32; the AFL CIO and AFL-CIO Wisconsin; AFT and AFT Wisconsin; the CWA, UAW, LiUNA, the Teamsters; the United Steelworkers, UFCW, Operating Engineers including Local 139, the Pipe Trades, the Firefighters, the Carpenters, ATU, MASH, the whole Wisconsin Building Trades council, and the Painters including locals 7, 82, and 30—and so, so many others. In-state union presidents were unstinting in their efforts to fight for leaders who listen to workers. And we were lucky to be visited in Wisconsin by national labor leaders including **Liz Shuler, Sara Nelson, Becky Pringle, Randi Weingarten, Lonnie Stephenson, Kim Anderson, Mary Kay Henry, and Sean O’Brien**—among many others. The union makes us strong.

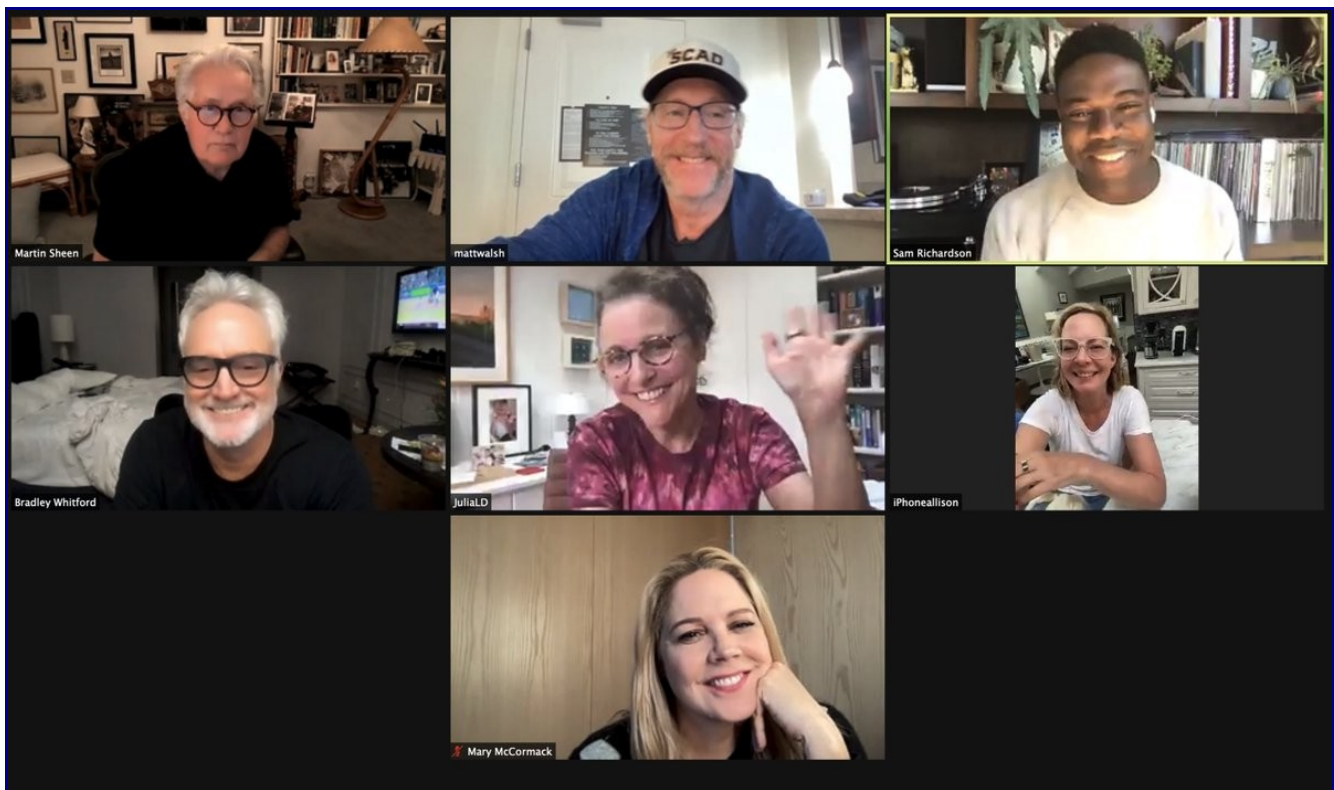


An awe-inspiring array of in-state and national progressive partners put their shoulders to the wheel and moved us forward. There's no substitute for talking to voters directly—and wow, did groups step up. All of Wisconsin is indebted to those who worked so hard at Wisconsin Conservation Voters and the League of Conservation voters, Native Vote, For Our Future Wisconsin, the Wisconsin (and national) Working Families Party, Voces De La Frontera Action, BlackPAC, the Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy, Power to the Polls Wisconsin, the Planned Parenthood Action Fund and Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin, Leaders Igniting Transformation, WISDOM, the Workers Center for Racial Justice and the Center for Racial and Gender Equity, Black Leaders Organizing for Communities, ProgressNorth, Citizen Action Wisconsin, the Progressive Turnout PAC, and Freedom Action Now. The whole America Votes table, led by **Jasmine Nears**, was essential to Wisconsin's success this year. Huge kudos.

So many groups did pathbreaking work here this cycle. MoveOn, NextGen, Rise, the Human Rights Campaign, Action for the Climate Emergency, the Black Voters Matter Fund, the Wisconsin Muslim Civic Alliance, Blue Sky Waukesha, All In Wisconsin, the NAACP, Collective PAC, Color of Change, Working America, 9 to 5 Wisconsin, the ACLU and ACLU of Wisconsin, the Committee to Protect Health Care, Community Change Action, Field Team 6, Main Street Action, Indivisible, Somos Votantes, the Organizing Empowerment Project, NARAL, the Wisconsin Association for Justice, the Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans

—they all went to bat. EMERGE and Wisconsin Progress helped recruit, train, and support candidates. The Wisconsin Donor Table mapped the space and ensured all had the resources they needed. So, too, did the Strategic Victory Fund, the Movement Voter Project, Solidaire, Way to Win AF, and the Pro Democracy Campaign—and many others.

Ensuring that Wisconsinites heard the truth about the Republican and Democratic candidates required colossal communications efforts. A Better Wisconsin Together, Opportunity Wisconsin, the Alliance for Common Sense, the Wisconsin Initiative, Senate Majority PAC, American Bridge, Priorities USA, Building Back Together, End Citizens United, Everytown for Gun Safety, Future Forward USA Action, Evergreen Action, the Republican Accountability PAC, 3.14 Action, Galvanize Action, the Center for Voter Information, the Wisconsin Business Leaders for Democracy Coalition, and VoteVets—and others!—punctured the GOP’s noise machine and ensured Wisconsinites knew the stakes in this election, and who was on their side. Some media initiatives have made it their mission to ensure that right-wing propaganda wouldn’t go unchallenged. We’re deeply appreciative of Crooked Media and their Vote Save America effort, including leaders **Shaniqua McClendon, Jon Favreau, Tommy Vietor, Jon Lovett, and Dan Pfeiffer**. No Lie with **Brian Tyler Cohen** has been tremendous. The emerging in-state progressive media infrastructure has been game-changing as well. Thanks also to cultural leaders like **Bradley Whitford, Pete Souza, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Dave Mandel, Mark Ruffalo, Don Cheadle, Clark Gregg, Rosario Dawson, Greg Proops, Drew Carey, Levar Burton, and Mike Holmgren**—among many others!—for using your talents to support us and reach folks who might otherwise never have connected with our work.



This is, by necessity, an extremely partial list—so please know that, no matter what form your contribution took, it did not go unseen. Thank you so much.

And—a personal note.

My wife, **Beth Wikler**, is a force of nature in her work—and has carried an enormous amount on the home front as well. At times this election cycle, I went away for day after day on work trips, or was utterly consumed by a political hurricane. Beth, you held us together, you held me up, and you made all this possible. I'm here again. I know there's work to be done, and I'm ready for it. And I love you with everything I've got.

To our three kids—**Mac**, 11 (as of last Thursday!), **Suzy**, 7, and **Jack** 4—I'm so glad I'm back with you as well. I'm so proud of you, and I've missed you so much when I've been on the road. This next year is going to be great. And to our dog, **Pumpkin**, I promise to play with you more during the day, and ask only that you promise to stop jumping onto the bed after I fall asleep.

To my mom, **Lynn McDonald**, and my stepdad Mike Edwards—you're a lifelong inspiration and support. To my godmother **Ada Deer**, I'll never stop learning from and appreciating you. To my dad, Dan, stepmom **Sarah**, sister **Ruth**, half-brother **Sam**, niece **Nadine** and nephew **Julian**—I'm so glad it's safe to travel and see each other again, and I'm so excited about more time together this next year.

And to the loved ones of everyone who carried the ball when a family member or friend needed support as they labored in democracy's cause this year, know that you are seen, and appreciated.

Politics is like pickleball: it's a life sport. November 8 is past. But this work doesn't end. Our next fight is among the most important our state has faced: the opportunity to end the domination by the far right of Wisconsin's state Supreme Court. The consequences of victory would be almost immeasurable. The April 4, 2023 elections will also include thousands of other races, from mayors to school board members. If you know someone who should run for office, or are thinking about running for office yourself, [nominate them or fill out the form here](#). And then it will be on to 2024—to fight for President Biden and Tammy Baldwin, defeat House Republicans to win back the federal trifecta, and to work downballot to make the most of every opportunity.

We're still a long way from realizing the vision of Fighting Bob La Follette, inscribed in our gleaming Capitol, that "The will of the people shall be the law of the land." But every time we dedicate our time, our talent, and our treasure to the work of advancing freedom and justice in our land, we get one step closer. It's how we create history. And when we act with our values—showing up for everyone, across lines of race and gender, geography and generation, faith and family structure, ethnicity and tribal affiliation and sexual orientation and every other dimension of identity—then we build a history that lifts us all up.



And know that you, and the thousands of others who worked so hard, and the millions of voters who chose hope over fear, are among those worth being thankful for.

In solidarity,

Ben Wikler

Our party is committed to advancing progressive values and ensuring Democratic victories up and down the ballot. [Will you help us organize with voters year-round? We can't take anything for granted.](#)

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