



Arizona Advocacy Network and Foundation

2016 Annual Report

Who We Are



Arizona Advocacy Network and Foundation (“Arizona Advocacy”) is the premiere defender of democracy and democratic institutions in Arizona. We fight to protect and expand access to the ballot, and to ensure fair and open elections and courts by supporting Arizona’s Clean Elections and Merit Selection systems. We believe that a truly fair democracy, in which every Arizonan has a genuine ability to

participate and outcomes are driven by people, not money, is essential to making Arizona a great place to live, to do business, and to raise children.

Successes and Challenges

Election Protection



With the 2016 election featuring close races from the presidential level to key state and local offices, protecting the vote on Election Day was as important as ever. Arizona Advocacy rose to the challenge, organizing one of the largest Election Protection programs ever conducted in the state.

We recruited and trained 200 volunteers to observe voting in Maricopa and Pima Counties. Those observers helped to identify and correct systemic issues with voting machines and the improper use of provisional ballots. Our voter hotline team of 20+ attorneys advised hundreds of voters on how to protect their right to vote.

Our Election Day efforts were featured in media outlets ranging from [The Washington Post](#), [The Guardian](#), and [Think Progress](#), to [91.5 KJZZ](#).

Voting Rights

In advance of the 2016 election, legislators sought to undermine self-government in several ways, most notably:

- **HCR 2023** and **HCR 2043** would each have empowered the legislature to override the will of the people when they pass an initiative or referendum measure. They both passed out of the House over bipartisan opposition, but failed to reach the floor of the Senate due to opposition from Arizona Advocacy and a broad coalition of organizations and individuals.
- **HCR 2009** would have stripped the Independent Redistricting Commission of its independence by making its members elected in partisan races, reverting to a system where politicians once again draw district lines, rather than the bipartisan and independent commission that is the envy of states across the country. Arizona Advocacy and other groups opposed the measure, and it failed to reach the Senate floor after passing out of the House.
- **HB 2023** made it a felony to help another voter to vote by submitting their ballot for them. Like many voter suppression measures, the bill was sold as necessary for “election integrity,” but the reality could not have been more obvious. HB 2023 was directly aimed at groups that had used ballot collection to help Latino and rural voters to participate in democracy. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit enjoined enforcement for about a 24-hour period, but the law is now in effect. We await future decisions and will continue to follow the litigation.

Clean Elections

Once again, opponents of Clean Elections sought to overturn the will of the voters by undermining the system:

- **HCR 2013** would have repealed Clean Elections entirely, but defenders of Clean Elections kept the measure from even getting a hearing.
- **HCR 2035** would have stripped the Citizens Clean Elections Commission (“CCEC”) of its independent rulemaking authority, a crucial element of the system the

voters adopted. Different versions of the resolution passed by party-line votes in each chamber, and Arizona Advocacy defeated a last-minute (3am on the last night of session) attempt to send it to the Governor.

- **SB 1516** enacted sweeping changes to Arizona's campaign finance laws, including effectively repealing regulation of dark money groups and removing the CCEC's ability to enforce the law. We expect litigation to challenge some or all of this law, and will keep a close eye on developments in the courts.

Fair Courts

2016 saw more serious attacks on judicial independence than we had witnessed in years:

- **HCR 2028** would have repealed the Merit Selection system that has served Arizona so well, turning Arizona Supreme Court justices and Superior Court judges in Arizona's more populous counties into elected officials. At a time when academics, advocates, and even the U.S. Supreme Court are finding more and more to fear from judicial elections, this would have been a grave step backwards. Arizona Advocacy successfully opposed the effort, which never made it to the floor of the House.
- **HB 2537** added two justices to the Arizona Supreme Court for no reason beyond maximizing Governor Ducey's influence over the Court. This court-packing move rightly outraged defenders of judicial independence like Arizona Advocacy.
- **Wellstone and Piper Fund Fair Courts Convening:** Arizona Advocacy attended this convening, which brought together national and state leaders in the field of Fair Courts and provided a unique opportunity to meet with funders and potential partners.

Coalition Building

Arizona Commission for Election Accountability (ModernizeAZ.com)



In response to a series of incredible failures on the part of elections officials in 2016, Arizona Advocacy formed and led the [Commission for Election Accountability](#) to advocate for reform. One notable success was obtaining a first-ever Election Day [polling location at Arizona State University](#). This effort brought Arizona Advocacy into contact with campus political groups and student governments, as well as Tempe and Maricopa County elected officials; relationships that will continue to be helpful going forward.

ONE Arizona



Arizona Advocacy is one of 14 organizational members of ONE Arizona, which conducted the largest voter registration drive in Arizona history, resulting in 150,000 new voters, mostly from minority communities. Arizona Advocacy played a key role in the effort by working with elections officials to smooth the process of submitting thousands of voter registration forms.

Expanding Capacity

Internship Program

Arizona Advocacy employed six tremendous interns in 2016. These interns researched grant opportunities, assisted with content creation and social media posting, and performed various administrative tasks.



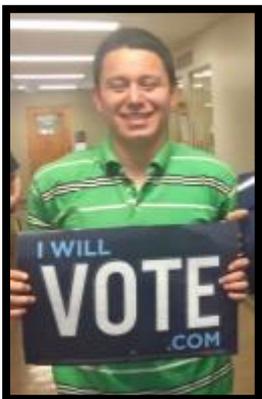
Joseph Guzman – Spring Media Relations Intern

Joseph assisted with the development of social media messaging and the writing of press releases during the Spring 2016 session. He also assisted with the tracking of legislation during the 2016 legislative session.



Kelly Rice – Spring Student Engagement Intern

Kelly Rice assisted with the formation of several ASU events that focused on the various issues of Arizona Advocacy. She also assisted with the tracking of legislation during the 2016 legislative session and assisted with the social media messaging of Arizona Advocacy.



Jesse Avalos – Fall Research and Fundraising Intern

“During my time working with Arizona Advocacy Network I researched grants, Arizona court systems, and compiled voter data from previous years. All of this helped me develop more concrete research skills that will be valuable in future experiences. Working with an organization such as this has been exciting, giving me a perspective into policy and how it can be implemented on the local level.”



Jason Singer – Fall Student Engagement Intern

“I learned how to create strategic plans for the organization, and how to implement. Within the strategic planning I created an entirely new intern program that would expand Arizona Advocacy. I also learned all about our voting rights within Arizona and it gave me a better understanding of the law. I hope to stay involved with them to make a better tomorrow within the political world and a better democracy for America.”



Destinee Sior – Social Media Intern

“My job was to expand our social media presence through Twitter and Facebook. To do this I was required to research current events within Arizona and the government and post about them multiple times a day. I was also encouraged to push people to follow/like our social media pages. Working for Arizona Advocacy was one of the highlights of my college career thus far.”



Jennifer Wendell –Election Protection Intern

Jennifer is a law student at the James E. Rogers College of Law at the University of Arizona where she is involved in environmental and criminal law societies on campus. She helped organize the Tucson election protection efforts.

Community Engagement

Arizona Young Advocates (“AZ YAYAs”)



Sam Pstross and Tanner Swanson at a panel on the role of independents in the 2016 election, hosted at ASU by the Arizona Young Advocates.

This ASU student club was a critical resource for engaging ASU students in the fight for democracy, and presents a wonderful opportunity going forward for Arizona Advocacy and students alike.

Monthly Happy Hours



Evan Wyloge of the AZ Center for Investigative Reporting addressing the crowd at a happy hour event.

Arizona Advocacy revived a tradition of holding free monthly happy hours for members and the community to interact with key players on the issues Arizona Advocacy works on.

Roast of Congressman Ruben Gallego



Over 300 guests, including legislators, community members, and long-time supporters, joined Arizona Advocacy at Club Dwntrwn for a roast of Congressman Ruben Gallego. We had a lot of fun, and raised crucial funds to keep our work going.

Media Exposure



Arizona Advocacy concentrated on regaining its stature as a go-to non-partisan source for media outlets covering election issues, resulting in coverage from local outlets like KJZZ and the Arizona Republic, as well as national outlets like the Washington Post. See below for a full list of Arizona Advocacy's media coverage.

Outlet	Date	Link
The Daily Californian	November 10 th	Whose democracy?
The Washington Post	November 8 th	Phoenix rising after early glitches
Think Progress	November 8 th	Arizona student partly disenfranchised by proof-of-citizenship law
KJZZ	November 8 th	What Kind Of Calls Are Election Hotlines Getting?
Arizona Capitol Times	November 7 th	Study: Number of Arizona polling places has fallen sharply since 2012
The Guardian	November 6 th	Sheriff Joe Arpaio fuels voter intimidation fears with Arizona plans
Think Progress	November 5 th	‘We are not ready’: Arizona voters warn Election Day could be worse than primary fiasco
KJZZ	November 4 th	Voting Rights Advocates Address Potential Voter Intimidation On Election Day
KJZZ	November 3 rd	With High Numbers Of Newly Registered Voters, Are Polls Ready For Election Day?
The Nation	November 3 rd	It’s Never Been More Important to Protect the Right to Vote
Think Progress	November 3 rd	The four legal battles that could decide the Arizona election
Queen Creek Independent	November 1 st	Opinion: Agency supports healthy working family initiative
Mesa Independent	October 30 th	Samantha Pstross: Agency supports healthy working family initiative
94.1 KPFA	October 28 th	Immigrants & Elections #2 – Barriers to the Ballot
ABC 15 Arizona	October 19 th	Maricopa County election officials: Voter intimidation won't be tolerated on Election Day
Arizona Republic	October 19 th	Vote early in Arizona, or bring a folding chair
Associated Press	October 17 th	Local leaders: Volunteers will monitor Arizona polling sites
The State Press	October 16 th	Inaccurate ballot guides frustrate Tempe voters
KJZZ	October 7 th	Tempe Polling Place Plan Draws Criticism
Arizona Republic	October 4 th	Fitness complex approved as ASU's first Tempe on-campus polling place
ABC 15 Arizona	September 30 th	Maricopa County: Materials mailed in two Tempe precincts list wrong polling place
Arizona Capitol Times	September 29 th	HB2023 throws a monkey wrench into the election system
KJZZ	September 2 nd	Voters Advocacy Group Concerned About Less-Than-Smooth Arizona Primary
Arizona Republic	September 1 st	Fitness complex approved as ASU's first Tempe on-campus polling place
Cronkite News	August 30 th	Who let the dogs out: Crew faces feral canines, other foibles on primary election day
KJZZ	August 29 th	August 30 Primary Will Be First With New 'Ballot Harvesting' Law
KJZZ	August 26 th	‘Neighbors Helping Neighbors:’ Maricopa County Needs Almost 400 Poll Workers Days Before Election
Tucson Sentinel	August 18 th	Latino activists aim to register 75k new voters in Arizona

KJZZ	June 28 th	'We Cannot Keep People From Voting:' New Commission Works To Improve Arizona Elections
KTAR News	June 23 rd	Groups to form commission on accountability in Arizona elections
Fox 10 News	June 8 th	Donald Trump to make return trip to Arizona
Cronkite News	June 8 th	Phoenix Latino leaders respond to Trump's Curiel comments
Arizona Republic	May 13 th	A new elections watchdog in town?"
New Times	May 10 th	New Commission Aims to Reform Election Procedures in Light of March 22 Mess
Breitbart News	April 22 nd	KS and AZ File SCOTUS Petition in Effort to Stop Non-Citizens from Registering and Voting
Tucson Weekly	April 15 th	AZ House Speaker Gowan's Disastrous Plan To Require Background Checks for Reporters; Recreational Weed Initiative; Cruz's Plan To Snatch Trump's AZ Delegates and Much More
3 TV AZ Family	April 15 th	AZ officials line up to welcome federal lawsuit challenging voter access
Arizona Republic	April 13 th	Montini: Initiative would wash dirty politics from 'Clean Elections'
Phoenix New Times	April 1 st	Thousands of Arizona Voting Ballots Going Uncounted Every Election, Report Says
CBS 5	March 23 rd	Supervisors directed elections officials to be 'frugal' with presidential preference
Cronkite	March 14 th	Opponents slam "dark money" bill
Latin Post	March 11 th	Rep. Ruben Gallego Calls Out Sen. John McCain for Ignoring Supreme Court Nomination
Fox 10 Phoenix	February 1 st	Phoenix mayor opposes bill outlawing early ballot collection
Phoenix New Times	January 26 th	People Who Turn In Ballots for Others Would Be Felons Under Arizona Legislation
Arizona Republic	January 21 st	Proposals seek to upend Arizona election system

Looking Forward

2016 was a year of growth for Arizona Advocacy. We took on leadership roles in coalitions like the Arizona Commission for Election Accountability, trained a great team of interns, and built our brand as a respected and tireless defender of democracy. We must maintain these gains going forward, and we are prepared to do so.

Despite this progress, 2016 also saw the passage of laws designed to suppress the vote, undermine the Clean Elections system, and politicize the courts. Arizona Advocacy – with the help of our friends and supporters and our organizational allies – goes into 2017 as vigilant as ever, and ready to win on these crucial issues for our democracy.

Defending democracy is tireless work, and we're ready for it.