CTC for PROGRESS

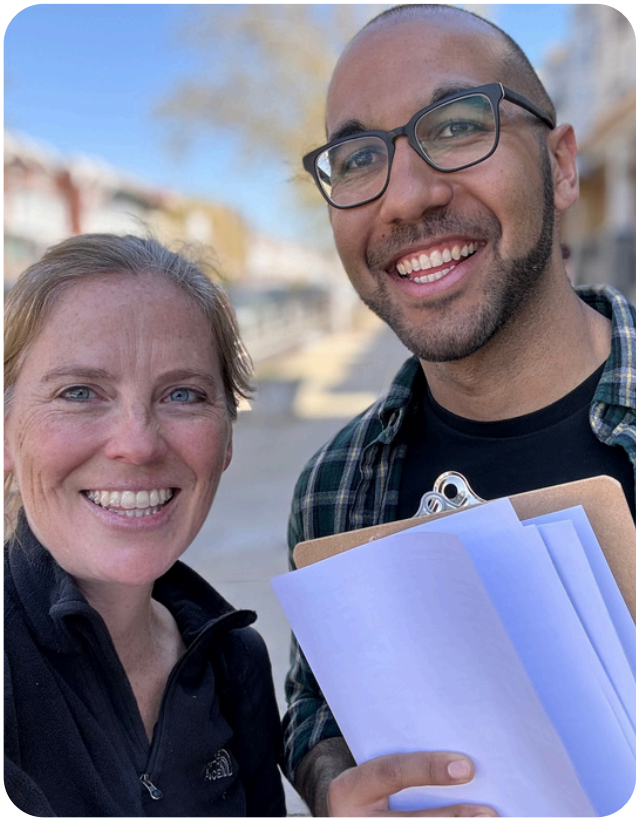
2024 IMPACT REPORT

Every Conversation Counts

www.ctc4progress.org

Changing the Conversation for Progress (CTC) is an organization of concerned citizens engaging voters in authentic conversations in order to strengthen democracy and promote justice.

We do this through Deep Canvassing.



"You're the first person to come here and actually listen. Not just talk to me."

"No one ever helped me like this before. Thank you for coming back. Thank you for not giving up."

Letter from our Leadership

In 2024, our democracy faced yet another test. The political landscape remained volatile, shaped by fearmongering, scapegoating, misinformation, voter fatigue, and deepening disillusionment. While some celebrated America's growing diversity, others stoked the flames of resentment. While some preached a vision of America where all people are created equal, others trash-talked the most vulnerable. While some invoked the value of treating others as you would want to be treated, others encouraged political violence. Despite billions of dollars spent by those defending democracy and social welfare, cruelty and chaos prevailed.

Behind the headlines, however, a quieter story unfolded – CTC made a meaningful impact. Against a backdrop of declining voter turnout across Philadelphia, **CTC recruited over 1,000 volunteers who had 16,435 encounters with 13,018 unique voters. The good news is that 79% of those we spoke to voted, compared to 58% of those we did not encounter–a turnout rate 21 points higher. This confirms that once again we helped people find reasons to vote.** Once again, we demonstrated a model for rebuilding our democracy and a growing base of support for a more just and caring world. Once again, we see that we have more work to do.

In 2024, we raised **over $1 million** across our three entities: CTC Inc., CTC for Progress, and CTC Action. This funding powered our deep canvassing and voter engagement work, allowing us to hire five full-time organizers and support a number of full-time volunteers. It also enabled us to bring in professional expertise across communications, staffing, operations, finance, legal, and organizational development. In addition, these funds covered essential canvassing costs such as office space, hall rentals, food, tents, transportation, and materials. This investment helped us deepen our impact and build stronger, more sustained connections with voters.

This 2024 Impact Report reflects not just what we did, but how we did it—and why, despite the near-term outcome, it mattered and will continue to matter as we look ahead.

Adam Barbanel-Fried

Director

Anim Steel

Chair, Board of Directors

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Canvassing, Training, Coaching

In early 2024, CTC launched our deep canvassing campaign rooted in West Philadelphia. As we grew our team in these early days, we hired two new organizers. We built on past relationships, faith communities, activist networks, and past volunteers. We organized information sessions in people's homes, community centers, and elsewhere. We brought hundreds of people into our orbit, and planned for our first canvass in March.

That month, and every month afterwards, every one of our canvassers first attended a Story Workshop and a pre-canvass training, and every canvass was followed by an opportunity to debrief and reflect on challenges and lessons learned. Each canvass was a major event. Each field experience provided our volunteers and organizers the opportunity to learn and ensure the highest quality, most effective canvass work possible.

The year started with monthly canvasses. The numbers of canvassers grew each month, first slowly, and then with 100+ volunteers at every canvass by mid-September. By September, we were canvassing every Saturday and Sunday.

What was unconventional about and essential to our growth, however, was the way we prepared volunteers to do an outstanding job connecting with voters. We provided great training, great coaching, and continual evaluation after each canvass. This included small group and one-on-one coaching as well as group debriefs immediately after every canvass, inviting all canvassers to participate and learn together.

CTC provided a continued space for action. No matter what happened, there was no better way to respond to rage, fear, anxiety, and grief than by joining others in collective action. Even during the most difficult moments in the election cycle, volunteers and staff were grateful to be engaged in the work of encouraging participatory democracy.

Our Partnership with the LGBTQ Connection PAC

The collaboration between CTC and the LGBTQ Connection PAC, led by Dave Fleischer, has grown increasingly effective since we first started working together in 2017. The improvement is evident in our 2024 results, which were even greater than our results in 2020, also in Philadelphia. Both groups brought expertise in deep canvassing and unique strengths to the collaboration.

The LGBTQ Connection PAC led the development, execution, and quality control of the training and coaching, so that canvassers not only learned how to deep canvass but also continually improved. Dave was not only one of the lead trainers at most canvasses, he also planned and led training rehearsals to help develop trainers and coaches. This work developed leaders, grew our scale, and allowed us to operate at the highest levels from the get-go. He tapped into his own network of relationships from years of experience to recruit volunteers (including nearly half of our coaches) and organizers. He and his PAC raised and spent $143,915 to support this partnership. Dave dedicated much of his own time, pro bono, supporting staff and CTC leadership, sharing in small details as well as high-level strategic considerations. We could not have accomplished all that we did without this partnership.

Volunteers Showing Up

Our 2024 canvassing work was possible only because of the people who stepped up, week after week, sometimes day after day. CTC's model is built on the idea that volunteers are not just there to be managed as an afterthought. Everyone can play a role, and with training, support, and guidance, they can lead.

CTC recruited 1,103 canvassers, training them to tell and elicit personal stories—to connect, initiate dialogue, then truly listen to every voter they meet. We trained and supported 106 volunteer coaches to guide new canvassers, lead breakout groups, and stay in conversation with the leadership team to make our training stronger. Our team of experienced organizers, canvassers, staff, and leaders kept evaluating, iterating, and rehearsing the training sessions, ensuring that our best people kept coming back to canvass and kept improving. Ultimately, our highly trained canvassers completed 2,589 volunteer canvass shifts from March through late October.

Behind the scenes, our data team worked across time zones, from California to France. Every canvass record was scanned, entered, and double-checked by more than 50 dedicated volunteers. When voters weren't on the original walk list, our team tracked them down and added them to the system so they wouldn't fall through the cracks.

Logistics volunteers made sure every site was accessible, close to canvass targets, and well stocked. They built relationships with local houses of worship, secured food and supplies, and kept the flow of canvass days running smoothly. A dozen people joined every week just to assemble clipboards and walk packets.

Once the campaign was officially underway, super volunteers became the heartbeat of our canvass effort. Some gave 20 to 40 hours a week, helping with follow-up calls, new voter outreach, and event support–and still canvassed with us on the weekends. They were retirees, students, remote workers, and neighbors. They came from all over the country and made our work possible.

Volunteer Power

1,103 canvassers

106 trained deep canvassing coaches

50+ remote data team members

20 staffed polling places across 5 wards

Dozens of logistics volunteers

Organizer Bree Doldron speaks with a voter, October 2024
(Photo courtesy of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*)

Supporting Voters Beyond the Doorstep

By the fall, CTC was running canvasses every weekend and many weekdays. Tuesday volunteer nights kept us organized and energized. Our headquarters buzzed with activity as volunteers assembled clipboards, printed voter lists, mapped ride logistics, and entered data in real time. Every conversation, every spreadsheet, every walk list mattered.

Our efforts expanded beyond the doorstep into the hands-on work of voter assistance, ultimately growing to encompass 135 volunteers. When mail ballots were rejected due to missing signatures, secrecy envelope errors, or voter ID issues, we mobilized a team to call and knock. Ultimately, CTC volunteers helped more than 300 voters successfully cast mail ballots, including voters who were hospitalized, disabled, or otherwise unable to navigate the process alone. With our assistance, one woman was able to vote from her living room hospital bed, while another was grateful to have voted from a cardiac ICU.

Bernadette was determined to vote for the first African-American female nominee. Her brother shared this photo of her in the ICU with her mail ballot (reprinted with permission) with volunteer Ashley Hulsey out of appreciation for Ashley's support.

Our voter hotline helped over 400 people cast early votes by coordinating rides to satellite election offices, and helping to cure ballots.

On Election Day, we deployed teams at our top 20 polling sites in West Philadelphia, where more than 70% of our voters vote. Our coverage spanned wards with approximately 60,000 residents, some 45,000 of whom we expected to vote and 15,000 of whom our teams would be greeting.

CTC team members were stationed at the polls at 6:00 a.m., ready for the earliest voters on Election Day.

From the moment our volunteers arrived (at 6:00 a.m.!), they helped voters and protected areas outside polling places from disruption and chaos. They greeted voters, solved registration issues, looked up precinct information, and connected with election officials. Prior to this, we'd trained our leaders in de-escalation and had rapid response protocols in place. When a group of agitators tried to interfere with voting, our team stayed calm, documented the situation, and ensured that the right to vote, an essential element of our democracy, was protected.

Evaluating Our Impact

Our goal was to get more people in West Philadelphia to vote. Sadly, despite long lines at the polls, Philadelphia's decades-long slump in voter turnout continued, as only 65% of registered voters showed up—1.35 points lower than 2020. And yet, despite this backdrop, CTC's work actually increased voting rates!

Why We Analyze Data

Power in America is decided by thin margins.

Every vote counts! Therefore, it isn't enough to simply work hard. We must evaluate what actually works in elections, rather than rely on a series of hunches. We have to make sure the work is working! Deep canvassing has consistently been shown in randomized control studies to be one of *the most effective* forms of voter persuasion. Our past results show just as much. In 2020, and in 2022, the voters we spoke with voted at rates that were 10 points and 15 points higher than their neighbors.

How We Analyzed the Data

Working with publicly available voter records released by the State of Pennsylvania, we compared the voting rates of those we had canvassed with the voting rates of "comparable neighbors" (voters in the same targeted divisions with whom we did not engage directly). This report includes several terms used to describe our work, including:

- **Encounters:** An exchange with a potential voter who we spoke to, but with whom we may not have had a complete conversation.
- **CTC Deep Canvass:** A complete deep canvassing conversation, where the trained canvasser and potential voter connected through exchanging personal stories and then connected it to voting.
- **CTC GOTV (Get Out The Vote) Canvass:** During the last five days leading up to election day (Nov. 1 - Nov. 5) CTC canvassers received an abbreviated training and used an abbreviated deep canvassing script focusing heavily on helping voters make sure they voted.
- **Comparable Neighbors:** Voters living in the same targeted divisions as those we canvassed but who we did not speak to at all.

Volunteer Spotlight: Susan Labandibar

Susan, a founding leader of the Swing Blue Alliance, partners with organizations in swing states using evidence-based programs to influence competitive national elections. She and her team brought dozens of people to deep canvass with CTC in Philadelphia after the first presidential debate. After canvassing with CTC, she remarked, **"I went from the depths of despair to feeling ready to do the work."**

What the Data Showed

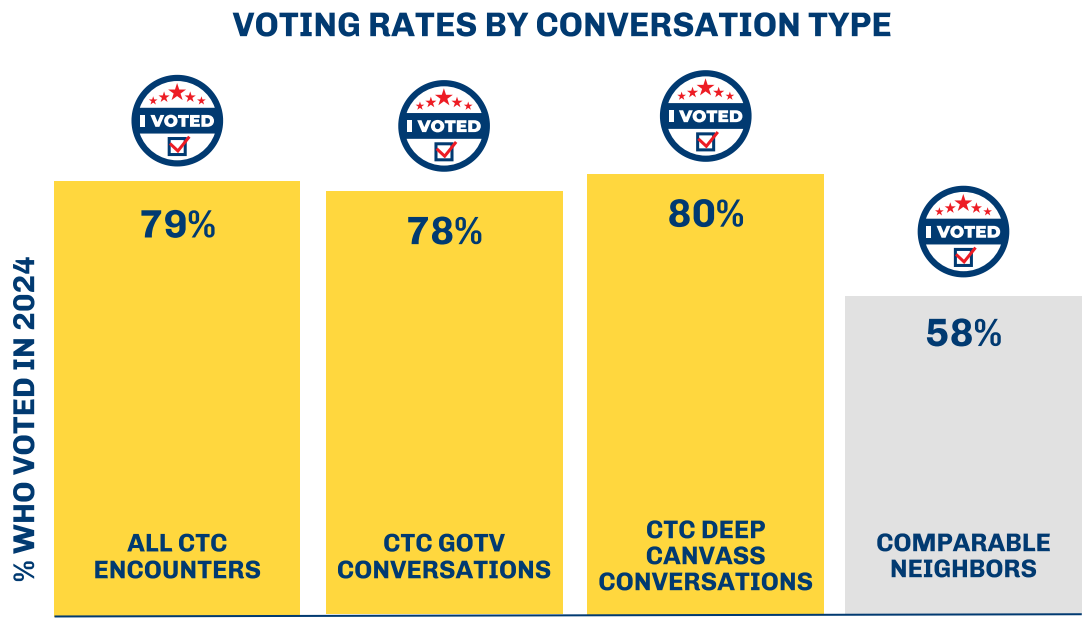
Our analysis confirmed that our work did, indeed, have a significant impact. A detailed analysis may be found here. Below, we provide some highlights.

We had 16,435 encounters with 13,018 unique voters. **79% of them voted.**

We had 5,120 GOTV conversations with 5,001 voters. **78% of them voted.**

We had 5,815 deep canvass conversations with 5,643 voters. **80% of them voted.**

On the other hand, **just 58% of comparable neighbors voted in 2024.**



In other words, the voting rate of those we spoke with was **21 percentage points higher than the voting rate of their comparable neighbors.**

Reaching Those at Risk of Not Voting

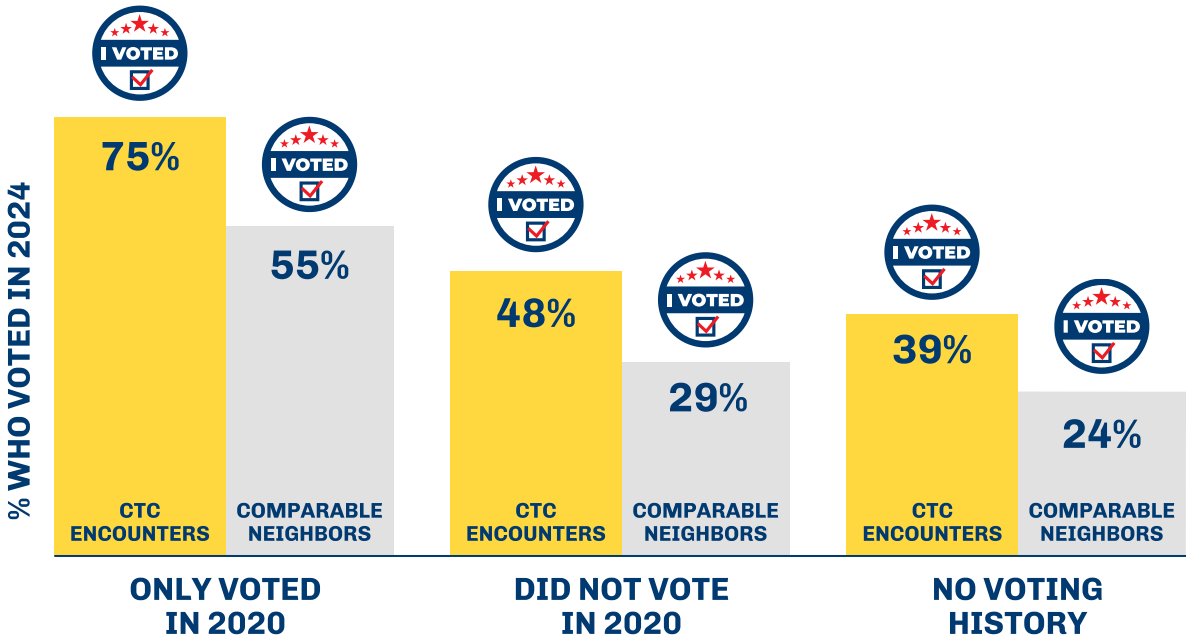
The best predictor of someone's likelihood to vote is looking at their (publicly available) voting history. Those who vote in every single election are the most likely to vote again. Those who miss some elections are less likely to vote, and those with no history of voting are the least likely to vote.

The turnout rate in the 2020 presidential election was greater than any other US election since 1900. Therefore 2020 is a useful year to measure against. Those who had voted only in 2020, but not since, were less likely to vote than those who'd voted every year since. All the more so, those who didn't vote in 2020 were even less likely to vote in 2024.

In 2025, we followed up with many people we'd canvassed in 2024, by phone and in person to ask if our conversation helped them decide to vote. Most said it did! One consistent voter thanked us for canvassing her in 2024 which she said was very helpful. It's not that we persuaded her to vote, she told us, which she always does. Our conversation helped her figure out how to persuade her children to vote.

We are pleased to report that not only were most of the people we spoke to at risk of not voting, our impact was even greater when comparing turnout to neighbors with similar voting history. The turnout rates of those who had not voted since 2020 were 20 points greater after a conversation. The turnout rates of those who had not voted in the 2020 election were 19 points greater. Turnout rates for those who had never voted were 15 points greater after a conversation.

VOTING RATE BY VOTE HISTORY



Volunteer Spotlight: Shai Gluskin

Shai learned about CTC from a fellow Philadelphia activist friend. While Shai wasn't new to canvassing, CTC was his first deep canvassing experience. Here's what he learned:

"It was hard at first, but it was so gratifying to see how people responded to the story. Their body language would shift, and they'd open up. Someone who started with an 'I'm busy' kind of attitude, totally shifted with an openness to talking. The technique is both surprising and disarming."

Shai became one of CTC's most active canvassers, canvassing 17 times, and becoming a deep canvassing coach.

Looking Ahead

While candidates matter, we believe that what voters think an election is "about" matters more. We walked into 2024 believing that if West Philadelphians saw this election as a referendum on Trumpism, MAGA and Project 2025, they would turn out to stop that from happening. If they thought it was about something else, "the economy" for example, they would not. We believe that when most people understand the threat of Trumpism and believe that threat to be real, they are more likely to turn out to vote against it. We cannot think of a better way to deliver this news, than in a non-judgmental, face-to-face deep canvassing conversation. We believe the results of our work help prove the point.

Our work is far from over. This moment calls, not for retreat, but for sustained organizing, and a long-term commitment to reenergizing our democracy. In 2025, we've continued helping the less engaged participate in politics. We deep canvassed as part of our organizing effort to fight cuts to Medicaid (and Medicare and SNAP) as part of the terrible federal budget that was pushed through Congress. People have responded with appreciation to our canvassing, many not knowing how easy it is to call your senators. As a community leader working with us said, "Most people don't know this is happening. And if they do, they don't know how serious this is." Staff and leaders worked in the community, organizing meetings with elected officials, including staff of both of Pennsylvania's senators. We shared stories illustrating who this cruel and heartless bill will impact. We called on senators to stand up for their constituents.

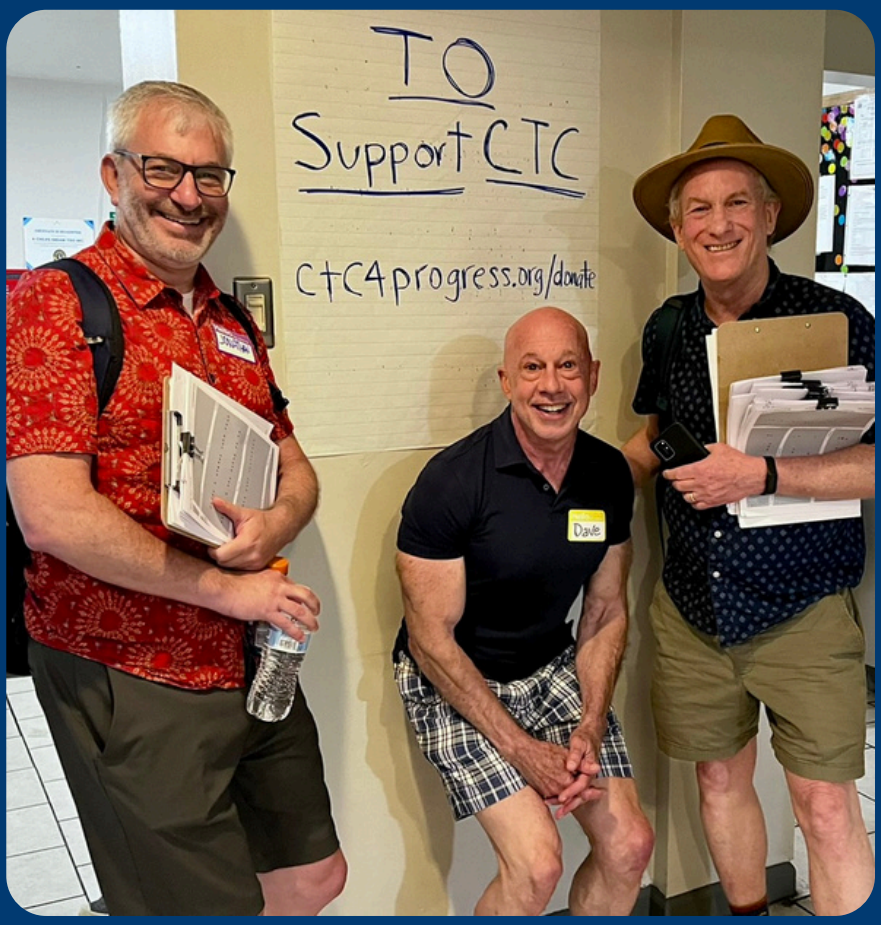
The federal government has now ripped away health care and emergency food support from tens of millions of low income people to fund unneeded giveaways to the ultra wealthy and their cruel policies most people don't support. We don't need to accept this. We can fight back. Democracy is not a spectator sport and it's not something you can cram for a few weeks at the last minute every four years. Those of us who want to defend and strengthen our democracy, must embrace this as a year-round endeavor. That's why CTC is always working – all year every year. This report shows that even amidst difficult headwinds, our work can have an impact.

We launched CTC to build a corps of deep canvassers to grow an electorate that embraces compassion and inclusion. Amidst the moment we live in, we found ourselves compelled to fight to stop Trumpism. For us, this means we are looking at the closest races coming in 2026, three of which are driving distance from Philadelphia, New York, and DC. And it means looking for opportunities to impact 2028. These races can determine if our country stands up for visions of compassion and a positive future, or continues its march towards a vision of a dog-eat-dog world, and a fascist nation depriving its residents of their rights. Do we throw up our hands hopelessly, or do we find ways to fight back? These are the questions we face, whether we want to or not. We're going to do what we can to put our best answer forward. We hope you'll stick with us.

THANK YOU

This report is a thank you to everyone who made our work in 2024 possible. To the volunteers who kept showing up. To the voters who opened their doors. And to our supporters who believed in our vision. We know that real change doesn't happen overnight. But it happens. One story at a time. One conversation at a time.

Thank you for being part of it.



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Learn more and support the work at www.ctc4progress.org