

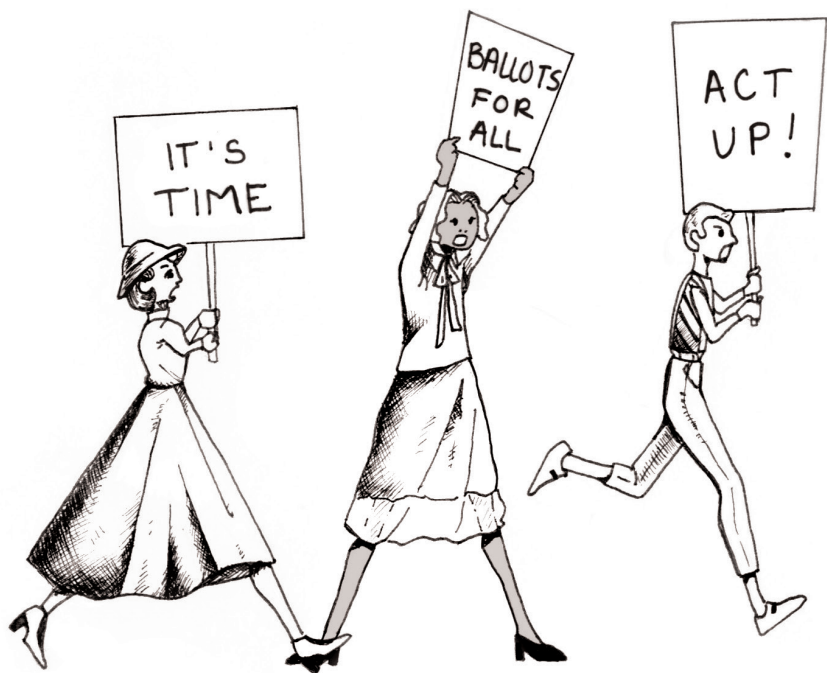
A Youth-Driven Guide to Voting in Ohio



**hear
me
out**

A project by

ArtWorks 2020



**hear
me
out**

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introduction

Hear me out. We are 12 young people—we are black, white, bi-racial, queer, straight, male, female, trans, students, artists, makers, doers, product of immigrants, PEOPLE—and, although our message can be summed up in two words, it is inherently and systematically complex, voting matters.

Each one of us has different social, political and economic outlooks, and we came together to empower ourselves and encourage you to have a direct stake in the policies that govern our everyday lives.

Voting matters because—voter district lines, which determine who we can vote for, are often manipulated to favor one party over the other. Voting matters because criminal justice reform by for-profit-prisons are preventing large populations of people, particularly people of color, from having their voices represented in

the democratic process. Voting matters because immigrant populations in America, both documented and not, are on unstable ground, too concerned with keeping their family together and too afraid to be visible.

We believe for the people, by the people means all the people. We believe that for too long the handful have called the shots.

Every citizen of the United States has the right to a ballot, but the majority of eligible voters have been conditioned to believe their votes don't count. This is due to years of voter suppression, discouragement and misinformation.

When we vote, we represent our values. When we vote, we represent our future. When we vote, we exercise our power, the people's power. **We are the people.**



a call to action

We are Gen Z, the largest, most diverse generation in US history. With so many different cultures, perspectives and identities living in one nation, we have to be heard. A handful can't speak for us all.

Now is the time. Now is the moment. Are you ready to take it?

The voting booths are waiting, and it is up to us to exercise our right, our voice, our vote. For the people, by the people means all the people. The pain, tears and bloodshed from those who came before us lead the way to the voting booth. We have a duty, and we must act. We have a voice, and we must be heard.

Young people make up half the voting population so when sceptics say it doesn't matter, we tell them to show up and see the results.

Now is the time. Now is the moment. Are you willing to do it?

When we show up, we make the change. We have done it before and we can do it again. Sitting on the sidelines is no longer an option. Too much is at stake. When we show up, we create the change. We have nothing to lose and everything to gain. When we show up, we are the change.



know your rights

“

We have to dismantle the systematic disinformation that is out there about voting. We want to vote, but we just don't know how and we are ready to change that.

—K. Kroencke, 21

”

You have the power to decide on what our democracy will look like. You have the chance to stand up for the issues you care about.

We have laid out your rights as a voter, including the information on how to vote and important contact numbers if you run into any problems. Misinformation of the voting process is one of the key reasons folx like us are not turning up to the polls. It's not that we don't want to vote. We just haven't been taught how.

Use this section to record the information that is important to you, and take it with you to the polls. Knowledge is power!

Eligibility to Vote in Ohio



To be eligible to vote you must be: a US citizen; 18 years old or older; an Ohio resident for at least 30 days before the election; not currently incarcerated for a felony; not been declared incompetent for voting; not been permanently excluded for violating election law. But, if you are 17, you can sometimes vote! The law in Ohio says that if you are 18 on or before the general election, you may vote in the primary election to nominate candidates running in November.

Ballots



Ballots are what you'll use to vote in each election. Ballots are available to you at the polling location or can be sent to you by mail, at your request. Your ballot will record the candidates and issues you support. You may have to fill out a provisional ballot, if your voter eligibility is in question (like you've recently moved or you show up to your polling place because your mail-in ballot didn't come in time.) Once your eligibility is confirmed, your provisional ballot will be counted. This is why results are not official until 10 days after an election. Never leave the polling place without completing a ballot—even if you have to vote provisionally.



Accessibility

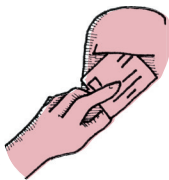
Any voter can request help for voting if they want or need it. You can receive help from two poll workers of different parties or from a person you choose, although that person cannot be your employer, a labor union officer or a candidate on the ballot.

Voter Intimidation is a Crime



Voter intimidation is when a voter feels negatively pressured or discriminated against based on any reason such as citizenship, race, sexual orientation and criminal record. This can include persons impersonating poll workers, giving false information (like you have to speak a certain language) or displaying misleading signs and pamphlets. Voter Intimidation is a crime and if you feel your vote has been suppressed or that you were not able to cast your vote due to fear, contact one of the Election Protection hotlines listed below.

Absentee Ballot / Vote by Mail



Any person whose voter registration information is up-to-date can request an absentee ballot to vote from their own home and mailed or returned to the county board of elections before the close of the polls. These votes are the first to be counted on the day of election.

Knowing Your Rights

Lawyers from Election Protection are ready to help you if you are made to leave the polling place or are told you cannot vote. For information or help, call:

866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683) (English)

888-Ve-Y-VOTE (Spanish)

888-PI-VOTE (Asian Languages)

844-Yalla-US (Arabic)

Or text "Our Vote" to 97779

voter checklist

☐ **I watched the debates and/or candidate forums**

☐ **I'm informed about the candidates/issues:**

Issues on my ballot that matter to me:

Candidates I'm interested in:

Their views on important issues:

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☐ **I've looked at a sample ballot.**

votehamiltoncounty.org or Vote411.org

☐ **I've registered to vote or checked/updated my voter registration information.**

Register or check registration at olvr.sos.state.oh.us. Required Ohio info:

- A driver's license or a state issued ID card #
- Name
- Date of Birth
- Address

12 ○ Last four digits of your Social Security number

☐ **I am voting by mail** _____

Send in your absentee ballot request form from ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/absentee-voting

☐ **My polling location is:**

sos.state.oh.us/elections/voters/toolkit/polling-location/

☐ **I'm bringing with me to vote in person:**

Photo ID

- ☐ Ohio driver's license card
- ☐ State photo ID
- ☐ Government photo ID
- ☐ A military identification that shows the voter's name

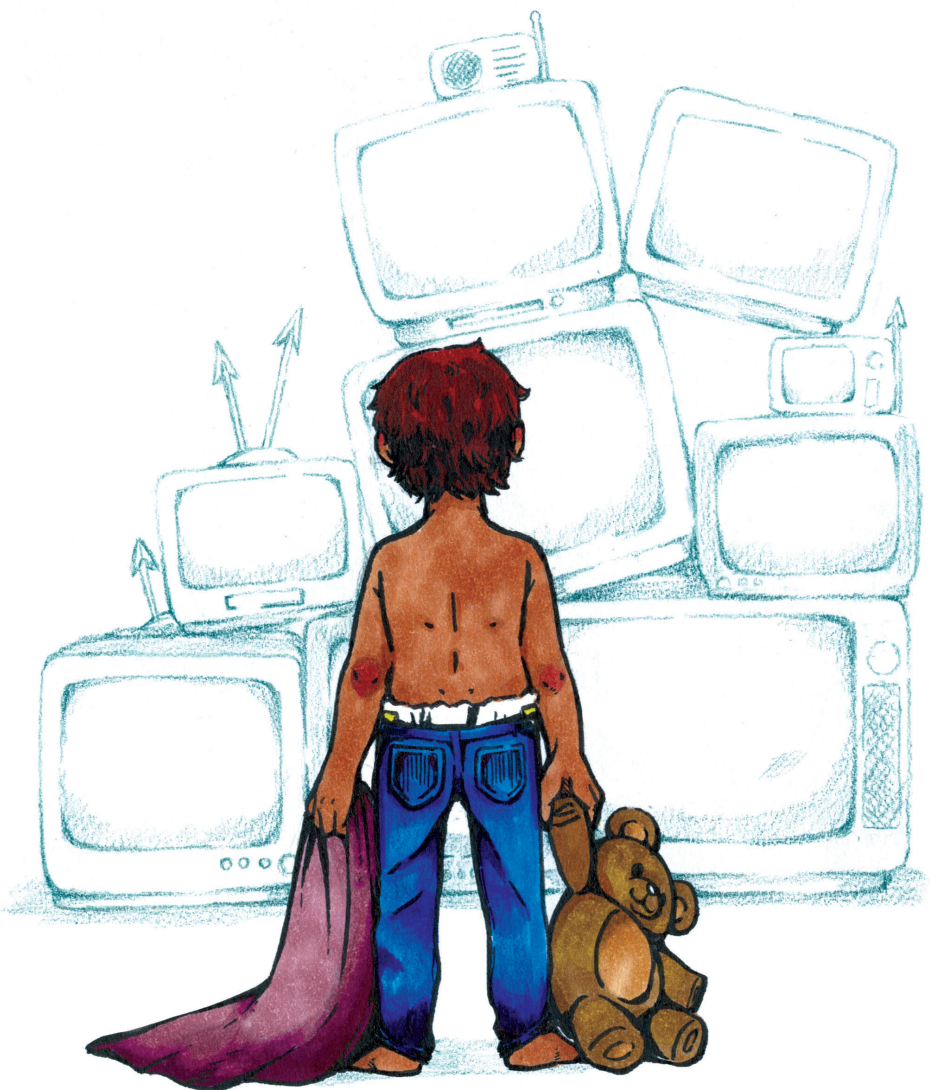
Proof of Address

- ☐ A copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government documents that shows the voter's name and current address

☐ **I cast my ballot!**

On Election Day, if voting in person, cast your ballot at your polling place between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

notes



why voting matters

We vote to elect people who will create policies that account for the wellbeing of all who live in the United States. Here we highlight two issues that create problems and one that seeks to remedy problems with our democracy.

Gerrymandering is when politicians manipulate voter boundaries to favor one party over the other.

Mass Incarceration extracts people from neighborhoods nationwide, which means those people can't vote. This weakens communities economically, culturally and civically.

#MeToo is a powerful, woman-driven movement. It has inspired more women to run for and win political office than in any time in our nation's history.

“

*If I don't show up
to vote, then I'm
guaranteeing that
people who don't look
like me are making
decisions on behalf
of people who look
like me.*

—Tamia Saunders, 21

”

The Problem of Gerrymandering

Citizens vote for representatives in Congress and the Statehouse every two years. Who we can vote for is determined by voting districts, which are the boundaries within which an official who is elected to represent a given population. The district lines are redrawn every 10 years based on the national census, which is the way we know where and how many people live in our country. In theory, this should allow us to decide how best to represent the diversity of people throughout the nation.

But there's a problem. Districts are not decided based on the census. The political party—Democrat or Republican—that is in control of Statehouses around the country often decides how to create districts. This leads parties to draw district lines in order to increase their own power, also known as redistricting, instead of how best to support everyday people. This is known as gerrymandering.

Ohio, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Maryland are four of the most heavily gerrymandered states. In these states, districts were drawn to limit the representation of the minority party. Various federal courts have found the boundaries in these states to be unconstitutional. And while the Supreme Court finally decided that this is a political problem—to be decided by legislators—the conversation is still going. Here in Ohio, voters decided to create a bi-partisan commission to decide district lines. This takes some, but not all, of the redistricting decisions out of the hands of partisan politicians.

Mass Incarceration and Criminal Justice Reform

The American prison system currently confines nearly 2.3 million people across approximately 6,500 types of lock up facilities. Our country only makes up 5% of the world's population and yet we hold nearly 25% of all of the prisoners on the planet.

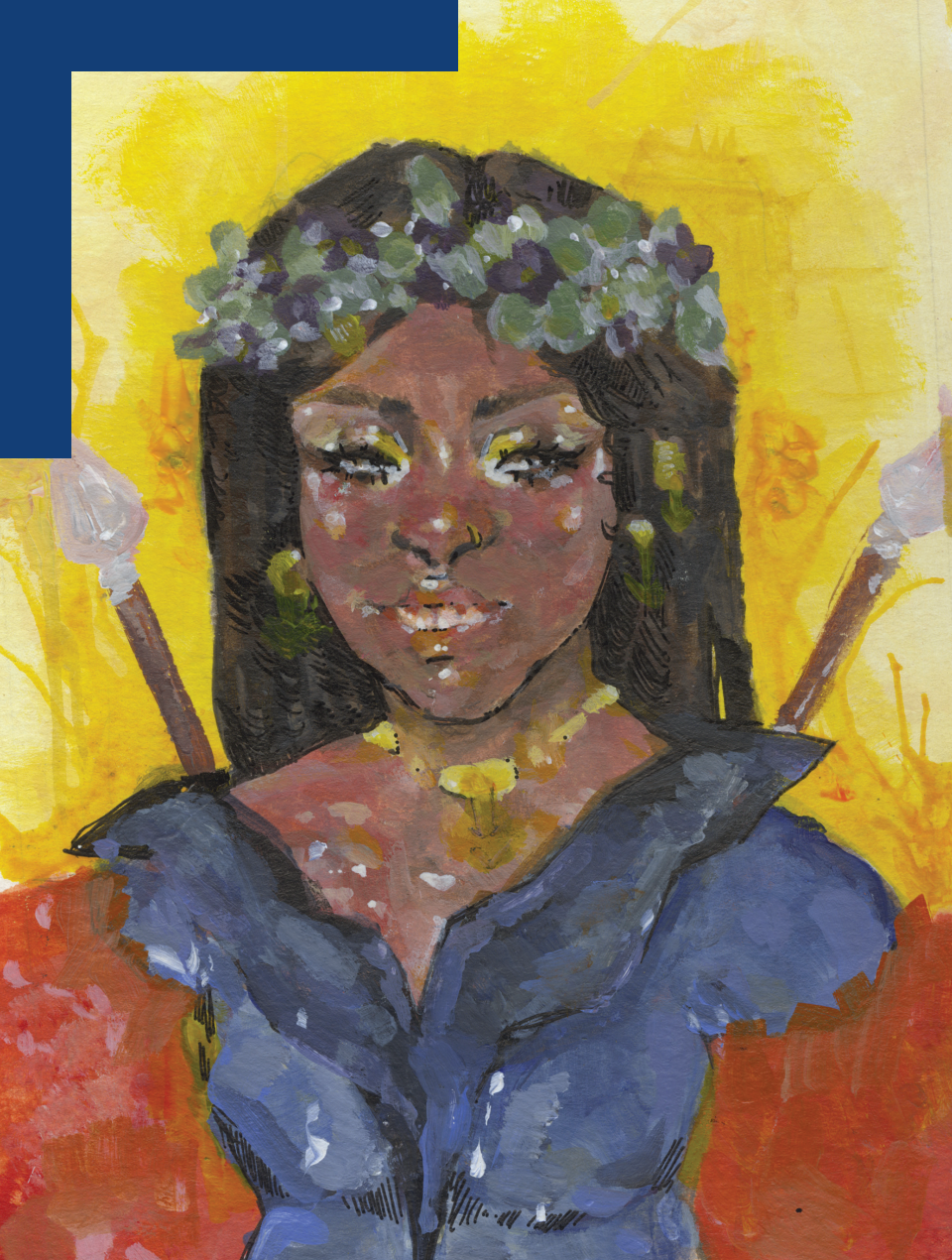
When we lock people up, we don't only throw away the key. We throw away their right to vote. In nearly every state in the country, prison inmates are not allowed to vote. In over half the states, people on parole are not allowed to vote. Some states bar former inmates from voting for the remainder of their lives.

According to the US Department of Justice, black communities are targeted and incarcerated at a rate of five times more than white communities. This directly and disproportionately increases the number of people in prison, wastes taxpayer dollars, and weakens our economy as well as our democracy. Over the past thirty years, spending on prisons and jails has increased to be triple the spending on K-12 public education programs. An important way to change criminal justice policy is to elect people to office who are willing pass policies that end practices that target low income communities and communities of color.

#MeToo

The #MeToo movement has raised awareness against sexual assault, encouraging victims to speak out and show the magnitude of a nationwide problem to the public, policymakers, friends and family. This has led to meaningful action to hold men in positions of power to account for their behavior in ways that have never before happened. The movement has also successfully inspired women from all backgrounds to run for and win political offices around the nation.

In 2018, at least 575 women—both Republican and Democrat—declared their candidacies for the House, Senate or Governor. A record 102 women won their elections to the US House of Representatives. Even more than this, over than 3,300 women won nominations to their state legislatures across the country. There are more women running and winning than ever in the history of our nation.



history

When it comes to full voting rights—also called enfranchisement—many groups of Americans have been historically denied this civil liberty. When the US Constitution was written, women were denied because they were excluded, and African Americans were denied because of the legacy of slavery and racism in the Three-Fifth Clause, defining them as less than people. While there have been vast improvements to extending voting rights to all Americans, there are still major obstacles that prevent many of us from exercising our vote.

The fight for equal voting rights, or suffrage, covers an expansive history which cannot be summarized in the small space of this field guide. We've included a few important milestones, individuals and moments in time, setting the stage for where we are today and where we are going tomorrow.

“

*If the first woman
God ever made was
strong enough to
turn the world upside
down all alone, these
women together
ought to be able to
turn it back, and
get it right side up
again! And now they
is asking to do it, the
men better let them.”*

-Sojourner Truth, 1851

”

1848

National Women's Convention in Seneca Falls, New York is routinely cited as the beginning of the U.S. Women's Suffrage Movement beginning with the Declaration of Sentiments.

1851

Sojourner Truth delivers her famous 'Ain't I a Woman' speech at the National Woman's Convention in Akron, Ohio.

1855

Lucy Stone addresses the 5th National Women's Rights Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio where she delivers her Disappointed Woman speech.

1861-1865

American Civil War

1863-1877

American Reconstruction Era

1865

Lincoln approves the Joint Resolution of Congress and submits the 13th amendment abolishing slavery.

1865-1866

Black Code Laws are passed by Southern states after the Civil War in order to restrict African American freedom.

1870

15th Amendment is ratified giving African American men the right to vote.

1870

Civil Rights Enforcement Act provides enforcement of the first section of the 15th Amendment.

1876

The *United States v. Reese*: concluded that states can continue literacy tests, polling taxes, white primaries, and other inequitable practices as a prerequisite to voting.

1877-1950s

This marks the period of Jim Crow which was a social structure implemented all over the South to enforce the segregation of African Americans.

1909

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is formed.

1913

More than 5,000 women descend on Washington D.C. for the right to full suffrage and is cited as the first Women's March on Washington.

1920

19th Amendment is fully ratified into the United State's Constitution giving some women the right to vote.

1920

Formation of the League of Women Voters

1960

The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) is formed by Ella Baker.

1960

Civil Rights Act of 1960 establishes federal inspections of local voter registration polls.

1964

Freedom Summer Project: A defining Civil Rights project that encourages black Mississippians to vote despite constant threats, violence, and repercussions of whites. Ohio's Miami University in Oxford, Ohio becomes a coordinating point for volunteers.

1964

Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party formed. Among the founding members is Civil Rights Activist Fannie Lou Hammer



1964

Democratic National Convention: held in Atlantic City, Fannie Lou Hammer gives her iconic address to the nation highlighting Jim Crow and voter suppression in the South.

1964

Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlaws discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

1965

Voting Rights Acts prohibits racial discrimination in voting.

1983

Marian Spencer is elected as the first African American woman on the Cincinnati City Council.



2013

Shelby County v. Holder. Passages of the 1965 Voting Rights Act struck down on the basis that forms of voter suppression in 1965 are no longer relevant.

resources

Voting in Ohio

sos.state.oh.us/elections/voters

Check your Voter Registration

Get info about your state, where you can easily get registered or check your registration: vote411.org

IDs, Educational Tools & Election Guides

A source which can obtain IDs for eligible voters, guide you with the voting process & can give you education tools: spreadthevote.org

Sample Ballot & Local Elections

Sample ballot based on location with information on local elections, election dates, FAQ and more: ballotpedia.org/Ohio_elections,_2020

Dates of Debates, Primaries, Caucuses

List of debates, primaries, conventions & the election day for the 2020 presidential election: nytimes.com/interactive/2019/us/elections/2020-presidential-election-calendar.html

Register to Vote and Get Involved

Information about voting, your rights and volunteering to help get people to vote: rockthevote.org

Voting for Candidates by Issue

Fill out the form with your opinions on social, economic and policy issues to find candidates you align with: isidewith.com

Voting With A Disability

Information about accessibility of polling locations and availability of accessible voting technology for people with disabilities: aapd.com/advocacy/voting

Trans Voting Rights

Checklist for Voting While Trans with advice on what you should do for different situations, checklist is available in Spanish & English: transformthevote.org/voting

Multilingual Guide to Voting

Voters guide in 11 different languages can help you handle the federal election process: eac.gov/voters/voters-guide-to-federal-elections

Voting & Houselessness

A campaign with information regarding the right to vote if you are houseless. nationalhomeless.org/campaign/voting

glossary

Activism: The act of using spirited campaigning to bring about political or social change.

Ballot Initiative: A proposed law drafted by citizens & placed on the ballot. Citizens can vote to approve or reject it.

Bi-Partisan: Agreeing with two political parties that usually oppose each other's policies.

Civil Rights: The rights of citizens to political, social freedom & equality.

District/Ward: A geographical area that an elected official serves or represents

Election Fraud: Criminal act that affects the integrity of an election, such as: bribery & tampering with ballot.

Electoral College/Electoral Vote: Steps Americans use to elect a president & vice president. How many electors a state has is equal to the amount of U.S. senators & representatives.

Midterm Election: An election that occurs two years into a president's term where voters elect their U.S. House representatives and other offices. Gives voters their biggest chance in between presidential elections to weigh in on the president's acts & shift the power.

Non-Partisan: Not biased toward any particular political group.

Partisan: A follower to a party, faction, cause, or person.

Polling Place/Polling Station: The location where you cast your vote based on your legal address.

Political Party: A group whose intent is to govern & legislate in a specific way based on a chosen platform.

Primary Election/Open & Closed: Held to choose which of a party's applicants will be in the general election. In an open primary, you can vote for any candidate despite political party. In a closed primary, you can only vote for a candidate from the party you belong to. Ohio uses an open primary system where voters select their preferred party primary ballots at their polling places on the Primary Election Day.

Recall Election: An election for voters to choose whether to remove an official from office before their end of term.

Ratify: To sign or give formal consent to a treaty, contract, or agreement, making it officially valid.

Suffrage: The right to vote in elections & for issues.



*Harriet Taylor Upton
Ohio Women's Suffrage Leader*

A note to the reader—

The Women's Suffrage movement used art and symbolism to engage and motivate people to action. Common symbols in the movement were arrows, flowers and armor as they represented strength in the feminine and the power of women.



Color was also a prominent tool of the suffrage movement.

In the U.K., common colors used were Green (a symbol for growth), White (quality and purpose) and Violet (dedication to the cause). Further, those colors represented the initials of Get Women the Vote.

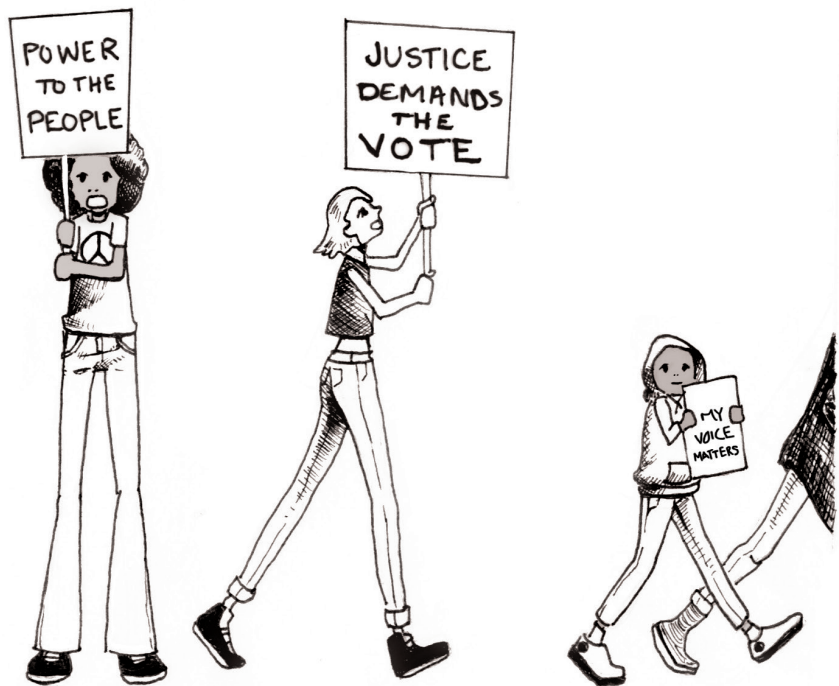
In 1890, the U.S. Women's Suffrage Movement adapted these colors but replaced green with gold (the color of light and sunflowers). These tri-colors ultimately represented dedication, quality and life.

We've added pink in recognition of contemporary movements.

The portraits throughout this guide incorporate these colors and themes while contemporizing historic images. Each portrait depicts a young person with a strong pose, representing the power and strength we embody when we exercise our voice.

Our cover image, created by Miles Brueggemeyer, was conceived in tribute to this original Suffrage artwork by Cincinnati artist, Cornelia Cassady-Davis, in 1915.





Artists: K Kroencke, 21, and Tamia Saunders, 21

hear me out

When we vote we represent our values. When we vote, we represent our future. When we vote, we exercise our power, the people's power. We are the people.

In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the U.S. 19th Amendment, and all forms of equal suffrage, Hear Me Out is a call to action by the young artists of ArtWorks.

Hear Me Out is a guide for young people, ages 16-27, in Ohio. Our hope is this guide empowers young people to get involved in the future of our country and our community.

Learn more at ArtWorksCincinnati.org

Are you ready to be heard?

A project by

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