



**SPRING
2021
PLAN OF
ACTION**

JANUARY 2021

yale dems

INTRODUCTION

Following Fall 2020, in which Democrats reclaimed the White House and the Senate while protecting control of the House, the Democratic Party finally has the opportunity to create real change for working class people across the country. With that opportunity, however, comes a level of skepticism at the ability of Democrats to be courageous and fight for the progressive causes that will enhance the quality of life for those that they represent.

In New Haven, the Yale College Democrats will address that skepticism head on by following through on our commitment to learn, create community, and take action. While 2021 is not a major election year, the Connecticut General Assembly is in session; New Haveners are still fighting for their fair share; and voting is still not institutionally supported at Yale. Last year, everything was at stake. This year, we have everything to prove. This document outlines our plans to follow through on our commitment to advocacy and progress for our communities in this upcoming virtual semester.

SEMESTER GOALS

GOALS

- To hold our newly-elected officials accountable
- To advance the demands of Yale: Respect New Haven
- To pass progressive legislation in the CGA
- Election Day off for Yale community members
- 100% Voter Registration on Campus
- To make Dems opportunities financially sustainable & accessible
- To bring in speakers and social events that make members feel welcome & included

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

The Legislative Branch of the Yale College Democrats leverages partnerships with legislators and like-minded campus and community organizations to advocate for progressive legislation that represents our generation's commitment to equality, justice, and inclusivity in the state of Connecticut. Because the Connecticut General Assembly convenes in early January and disbands in early June, the spring semester is crucial to our legislative efforts to see progressive bills introduced and passed in 2021. In a virtual environment, we will be able to participate much more effectively in the proceedings in Hartford from our homes in New Haven and beyond by watching broadcasts of committee hearings and floor votes on Youtube and participating in oral testimony in public hearings and townhalls via Zoom.

ISSUE AREAS

In this session of the CGA, Legislative fellows will work on the following issue areas: criminal justice reform, accessible housing, gun control, environmental justice, education, and women's advocacy.

Specific pieces of legislation include:

- Improved Housing Equity and Accessibility
- Reducing Cost Barriers to Communication Behind Bars
- Improved Housing Safety and Security for Survivors of Domestic Violence
- Strengthening CT's Red-Flag Laws and Establishing a State Commission on Gun Violence
- Green Energy Resilience
- Reforming CT's Bail System





FELLOWS PROGRAM

INTERNSHIPS WITH LAWMAKERS

Returning Leg Fellows from the past semester will be paired with CGA lawmakers to advance their legislative agendas with bills that represent our organizational mission.

MEETINGS WITH ADVOCACY GROUPS

To maintain our community focus and our mission to support the work of others, we will partner with advocacy groups like Stop Solitary CT (SSCT), Connecticut Against Gun Violence (CAGV), and ACLU Smart Justice.

PUBLISHING OP-EDS

Throughout the semester, Leg fellows will draft and pitch op-eds to the CT Post, CT Mirror, Hartford Courant, and other news outlets to clue in community members to the importance of their bills.

TESTIMONY TOOLKITS

To ensure our legislative activities are accessible and effective, fellows will create testimony toolkits to be shared with other Dems members that include research, bill timelines, testimony templates, and instructions for submitting public testimony.

CITY ENGAGEMENT

The City Engagement Program aims to increase Yale students' stake in and awareness of the city of New Haven through education and advocacy. This program aims to support officials, organizers, and community members in their work, not in creating our own projects. Through sustainable partnerships throughout the city, we hope to use our resources and leverage our power as Yale students to be better neighbors and to hold institutions accountable that inhibit New Haveners from the health and happiness they deserve.

ISSUE AREAS

Following another season of the COVID-19 pandemic, many New Haveners face the need for rental assistance, safe reopening of public schools, and protections for incarcerated family members.

Specific partnerships include:

- New Haven Public School Advocates
- New Haven Legal Aid Association
- The Office of the Mayor- Leg. Division
- Source Development Hub (accessible housing in CT)
- Cancel Rent CT
- More to come!



FELLOWS PROGRAM

EDUCATION & SPEAKERS

Each weekly meeting will feature an education module about city governance and history either presented by the City Engagement Coordinator or guest speakers.

MEETINGS WITH OFFICIALS & ORGANIZERS

Each project allows fellows to make connections with advocates and officials in New Haven.

FINAL PRESENTATIONS

The fellows program culminates in the production of a presentation, policy memo, op-ed, or other keystone project to be presented to project sponsors and Dems membership.

YALE RESPECT NEW HAVEN

COLLABORATION IN NEW HAVEN

Besides our partnerships with formal project sponsors, the Yale College Democrats have been longstanding proponents of the Yale: Respect New Haven campaign and demands, calling on Yale to increase its voluntary contribution to the city to be a better partner. In 2021, the city of New Haven faces a budget deficit of \$66 million dollars that will force more budget cuts or higher taxes for New Haveners that will exacerbate financial hardships exposed and worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic; this year, we will continue to amplify the voices of those calling on Yale to do more for New Haven and its people.

COLLABORATION ON CAMPUS

To the ends outlined above, we will also echo and support the calls from on-campus organizations calling on Yale to do better by New Haveners, Yale staff members, and students receiving financial aid from the university.



Thomas Breen | Nov 10, 2020

Yale Posts \$203M Surplus; City Projects \$13M Deficit

www.newhavenindependent.org/index.php/archives/entry/yale_surplus_city_deficit/

IF YALE PAID ITS FAIR SHARE, NEW HAVEN COULD:

- Provide Universal Childcare
- Build 900 Units of Affordable Housing
- Hire 2,000+ Teachers
- Patch 1,250,000+ Potholes!
- Lower Taxes by Over 35%

"Racism constantly creates barriers that prevent minorities from prospering in America. What we are experiencing right now is the direct effect of structural racism and poverty on top of a deadly virus." - Hon. Tyisha Walker-Myers, President of Board of Alders, Ward 23

ELECTIONS

The Yale College Democrats Elections program aims to give students meaningful campaign experiences. In 2021, we will be adapting this program to include opportunities on both campaigns and with grassroots organizations. Because it is an off-cycle election year, we will shift our focus to local races in the Virginia House of Delegates, the governorship in New Jersey, and with grassroots organizers across the country. We will be scaling our elections work down from 2020, but still gearing up to see more Democrats elected into office in these local races.

CAMPAIGNS & GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS



Florida Rising



Alex Askew, VA
House of Delegates



Wendy Gooditis, VA
House of Delegates



Nancy Guy, VA
House of Delegates



Schuyler Van Valkenburg,
VA House of Delegates

***WITH MORE ORGANIZATIONS
TO COME!***



FELLOWS PROGRAM

ELECTIONS EDUCATION

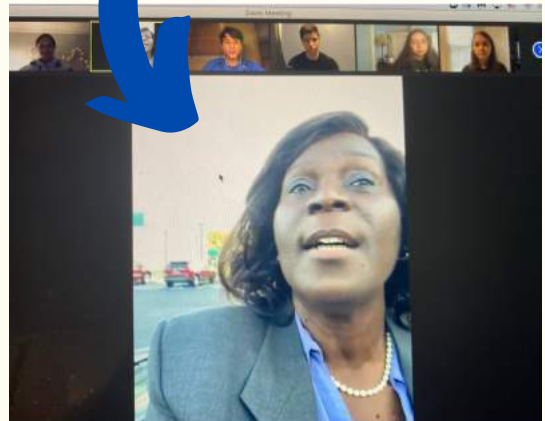
Fellows will learn about the ins and outs of campaign work including:

- Basic Campaign Structure
- Campaign Finance
- Polling Data & Statistics in Elections
- Mobilizing Communities who typically don't vote
- & a 3-part series on "What Happened: 2020 Edition"

FELLOWS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Fellows will primarily work on campaign research & finance work. For fellows placed on grassroots organizations, fellows will be working to help engage those who historically do not turn out to vote with the electoral process.

**CONTACT W/ THE CANDIDATE
(PICTURED HERE: PAT TIMMONS
GOODSON)**



VOTER ENGAGEMENT

The Voter Engagement branch used to come around only every four years and has now received a permanent place in our organization. Yale community members face significant barriers when voting; Election Day is not a holiday, students are not registered during orientation, and misinformation about polling locations and voting procedures are spread every year. 2021 is the year that all of voting becomes institutionally supported and accessible for students, faculty, and staff.



FELLOWS PROGRAM



Fellows work either in the New Haven community or on Yale's campus to make voting more accessible for all community members. Specific tasks include:

- On-campus Voting Projects with Yale Votes Election Day Off
- First-Year Voter Registration
 - Polling Locations
 - Information Compilation
- Pre-registration of New Haven High School Students

DEMS COMMUNITY



DEMS FAMILIES

Hang out with Dems from all class years to meet new people & make new friendships through zoom games and informal mentorship!



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Community Conversations are member-led events that allow for in-depth discussions. Past topics: Dems in Red States, Positionality of Yale Students in NHV ptx, Democratic Socialism.



SOCIAL EVENTS

Without Woads this year, we will have both socially-distant in-person gatherings for those enrolled on-campus and virtual events (i.e. game nights & speed dating).

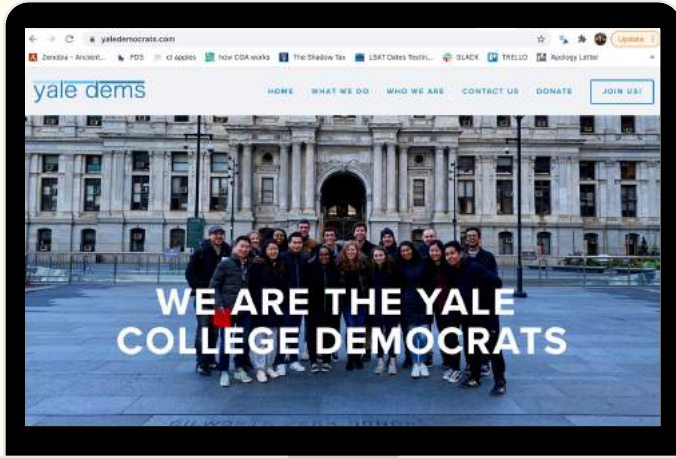


SPEAKER EVENTS

We will feature a diverse array of speakers from backgrounds in politics, media, government, and research through virtual events.

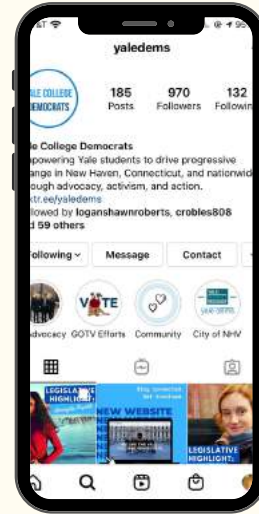
& MAKE SURE TO STOP BY OUR TUESDAY MEETINGS AT 7PM (EST) TO HANG OUT WITH ALL YOUR DEMS FRIENDS!

COMMUNICATIONS



WEBSITE

Check out our revamped website at yaledemocrats.com



SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow us @YaleDems on Instagram, Twitter, & Facebook



GOOD DAY WITH DEMS VOL. II

Our podcast is back! Tune in once a month to hear from leadership, guest speakers, and our political round table on soundcloud and spotify.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

We communicate via groupme in a membership chat to plug opportunities and send quick messages and a more casual format in Dems Discourse. Scan the QR code to join our group chats, email panlist, and google calendar



ALUMNI RELATIONS

2020-2022 ADVISORY BOARD

We would like to thank the members of Yale Dems Advisory Board for their support and advice this past year, as they helped us navigate the 2020 election and strategies for making our organization more effective and inclusive. We are excited to continue to work with them and welcome other Dems alumni onto the board throughout the month of February!



Abrar Omeish '17



Jacob Wasserman '16



Nicole Hobbs '14



Azeezat Adeleke '17



Sergio Lopez



Tyler Blackmon '16

CONTACT
KENNEDY.BENNETT
@YALE.EDU FOR
MORE ON ALUMNI
RELATIONS



Josh Hochman '18



Maxwell Ulin '17

JOIN US!

yale dems



Let's get started!

HOW TO SUBMIT TESTIMONY

- We've prepared a comprehensive testimony writing toolkit that you can access here: bit.ly/dems5679
- Use the provided "Blank Template" to draft your testimony; make a copy of the file
- Copy-and-paste language from the "Testimony and Public Hearing Guide"
- Download your testimony as a PDF document and submit to zts@yale.edu with the subject line "In support of HB 5429"
- CC your state legislators and safestteach_nhw@googlegroups.com (all included in the "Blank Template" document)
 - Juan.Candelaria@ct.gov; Patricia.Dillon@ga.tn.gov; Michael.D.Mason@ct.gov; Edmund.Lemay@ga.tn.gov; lori@senate.mn.gov; Johnnie.Paulino@ct.gov; Shelby.Porter@ga.tn.gov; Tari.Walker@ga.tn.gov; Wrefek@senate.tn.gov

