

FY 2021

Strategic Communications Plan

Democracy for America (DFA)

Communications Team

DFA Staff

Yvette Simpson, CEO
Kelley Jackson, Director of Communications
Madison White, Press Secretary
Miles Kurland, Web Development Director

Consultant

Ann Szalkowski

Value Proposition

DFA is the first one there to get things done.

DFA is a pace-setting political action committee that powers the progressive movement -- its causes and candidates -- on behalf of its members with a 50-state strategy that includes grassroots organizing; recruiting and training potential candidates; and supporting endorsed candidates through national fundraising and media outreach.

Brand Statement

DFA exists to provide financial and public support to progressive candidates, causes and issues to advance movement values and reform in all 50 states to achieve real democracy for America.

Communications Objectives

- **Establish DFA as the most influential PAC in American politics.**

- **Establish DFA as the leading PAC in the progressive movement.**
- **Amplify DFA as a pacesetter in the progressive movement.**
- **Amplify DFA's CEO as a leading voice in American politics and the progressive movement.**
- **Amplify the work of DFA**
- **Inspire our audiences to support DFA financially, socially and digitally.**
- Influence American voters to support progressive candidates and causes.
- Inform the public of the value of progressive policies, causes and candidates.
- Develop more curated content
 - Engage with volunteers and teams
 - Engage with other organizations to lift our efforts
- Build platforms for who we want to speak to in two years.

Target Audiences

Stakeholders, voters, members, allies, officials

- American voters
 - Registered voters across the United States
- Progressives voters
 - Members of a "social or political movement that aim to represent the interests of ordinary people through political change and the support of government actions".
[Wikipedia](#)
 - People who typically support progressives causes: BIPOC, white college graduates, white working class, professionals, women, Millennials, religious diversity, union households.
- Democratic voters
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- Black women
 - Age, status, employment, household, gender identity, education
- Black men
 - Age, status, employment, household, gender identity, education
- White male progressives
 - Age, status, employment, household, gender identity, education
- White female progressives
 - Age, status, employment, household, gender identity, education
- Elected officials and lawmakers
 - Officials all levels of government across the United States who can advance and implement policy
- Democrats
 - Organizations
 - Influencers
- Progressive organizers
 - Influencers
 - Activists
- Grassroots

- Organizations
- Organizationers
- DFA Members
 - Legacy
 - Contemporary
 - New American Majority

Build a profile for our brand.

Build a profile for each department/tool. (This is how the persona would talk about whatever it is.)

Identify Legacy identity and New Generation Identity. (Goals for next two years)

Messaging

Who we are. What we stand for. What we are fighting for.

Legacy members + Contemporary members + Gen Z

DFA's story > history > shift > legacy (eg. from Charlie to Yvette)

Personas and Profiles

(TBD: Key messages and value propositions for each audience)*

Create the persona of who they will be talking to.

Legacy profile

Channels + Audiences Messaging Matrix

Update [Megaphone Strategies](#) DFA Top Line Messaging Document for 2021

Messaging [worksheet](#)

What is our through line? Ethos?

We are bold. We tell the truth. We are not afraid. We go hard. We have a vision for where we need to go. We go first. We take risks. We don't stop. We go first and early.

We're a bottom-up organization.

Trustworthy broker.

We deliver on the movement.

We stand up and fight for what we believe in, for what is right, for the people.

We've always stood up and taken the lead.

We take risks. We do what needs to be done.

Key Terms

Progressive

Movement

Democracy

Justice

Equity
You
People
Family

Specific

Progressives can win anywhere if we fight everywhere.

We need robust action on climate change, medicare for all, criminal justice reform, and voting rights reform.

We endorse candidates up and down the ticket, all over the country.

We fight everywhere, so we can win everywhere.

The progressive movement is actively driving the platform of the democratic party, and rejecting progressive policies or candidates is a mistake.

You move the movement
50-state strategy
People-powered
Put people first
Defend democracy
New American majority
Representation matters
Black Lives Matter
We are move first
We make bold moves
We do not compromise
We can't wait

Issues

Stop Climate Change
Combat Income Inequality
Fight Corporate Power
Get Money Out of Politics
Hold Wall Street Accountable
Stand for Justice
Prevent Reckless Wars

Black Lives Matter
Progressive Candidates
Social Justice
Criminal Justice Reform
Police Brutality
Equity
Hold Biden Administration Accountable
Minimum Wage
Black Women
Women
Medicare for All

SWOT Analysis

Strength

Venerated organization in the progressive movement. People know us.
CEO is a political contributor on a major, nationally televised broadcast news network.
Talented, dedicated staff.

Weaknesses

Capacity.
Lack of capacity belies our value proposition of being first.

Opportunities

Leverage the CEO more on social media.
Tell more stories.
Be more proactive.
Room for growth on Instagram, LinkedIn
Power map with celebrities (comms, strategy, fundraising)
Become a venerated org with the new american majority

Threats

Lack of bandwidth can preclude us from communicating our first mover status.
Lack of capacity can preclude our standing as a digital, netroots, first mover.
Lack of targeted press/media opportunities means loss of potential story coverage.

SWOT [worksheet](#)

Communications Plan

Objectives and Goals

- Maintain DFA's position in the movement as the leading progressive PAC in American politics.
- Deliver clear, consistent messages in one clear voice that are sticky, impactful and meaningful.

- Empower our members to take meaningful political action on local and national levels.
- Drive the conversation on social and political issues, causes, officials, candidates, and policy that matter to the progressive movement to affect change.
- Exploit the CEO Yvette Simpson's talent and leadership position in the movement and role as an ABC political contributor to increase online and traditional media coverage and mentions for DFA; increase donations to the organization and sign-ons to our petitions; attract new audiences, members and followers; and increase our influence.
- Become a content production studio for all things video and visual.
- Engage communities we want to bring into the fold.
- Make our language and our voice more authentic, organic

Tactics

- Routine Communications
- Endorsements
- Petitions
- Rapid Response Communications
- Media Relations
 - Print
 - Radio
 - Television
 - Podcast
 - Pitching
 - Editorial Meetings
 - Reporter Relationships
 - (NYT, WaPo, Reuters, WSJ, Politico)*
 - News Conferences
 - Media List Management
 - Media Partnerships
 - Earned media
 - Op-Eds
 - Story Placements
 - (Marie Claire, Essence, Glamour, Time, 19th)*
 - Coverage and mentions
 - Paid media
 - Sponsored Social Media Posts
 - Boosted Posts
-
- Special Projects
- In-person
- Merchandise

Brand Assets

- Logos
- Photos

- Website
- Email
- Social Media
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - YouTube
 - Medium
 -
 - TikTok*
 - SnapChat*
 - Quora*
 - Reddit*
- **Yvette Simpson, CEO - Get YS verified on social media.**

Improve and Augment Brand Assets

- DFA's name
 - As a part of key messaging, make use of the organization's full name externally and in conversation and speaking. As a perennial tactic and ongoing strategy to solidly establish our brand identity and introduce our brand to new audiences and communities, it is important to use our whole name in communications, verbal and written.
 - Our name, Democracy for America, is a key message in itself and alone communicates what we stand for in our work.
 - The acronym DFA means nothing to new or unfamiliar ears and should only be used internally.
 - The acronym is not a household name.
 - DFA used externally, consistently and prolifically, teaches the outside how to speak of us, refer to us, and use as our organizational name.
 - *What's in a name? Everything. It is who we are and what we do.*
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- Create Brand Identity
 - Work with Miles to develop look and feel
 - Draft creative brief for staff to use when requesting graphic design
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- Invest More in Social Media
 - Develop More Original Content
 - Improve Curation of Content on Instagram (room for growth)
 -
- Instagram
 - Create a "brand" look and feel for IG (highly visual content)
 - Use a template for photos, pull quotes (compelling, shareable, snackable)
 - Increase use of viral memes, videos
 - Create memes (political statements)

WORKING DRAFT as of 02/09/21

- Pull quotes from candidates (endorsed, winners)
-
- Twitter
 - Increase engagement and reach by:
 - QTING and RTING trending topics, viral Tweets, hot topics and Tweets of Endorsed Candidates and Electeds.
 - Engaging with ordinary followers, movement partners, org and candidates, Blue Checks and Media
 - Ensure we are following partner organizations, candidates, relevant accounts on social and they are following us back.
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- Clubhouse
 - Add the Clubhouse App to our social media suite
-
- Website
 - Reorganize the website to improve focus, navigation, and user experience.
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- Social Media Toolkit
 - Develop DFA graphics for distributing and sharing on social media. (General)
 - Focus on Democracy
 -
- Headshots
 - Update Yvette Simpson's headshot
 - Kelley Jackson needs a photo
-
- CEO Yvette Simpson as ABC Political Contributor
 - Clip videos of YS on This Week, ABC News Live and Nightline for sharing and distribution.
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- Google Alerts (review and update, automate)
- Spotify Playlist (create a subject matter playlist as needed, evergreen content)
- Podcast
 - Interview Format
 - Interviews with Legacy Members, Powerhouse Progressives, Superstar endorsed and elected candidates.)
 - Narrative Format
 - Movement Stories about Movement Issues {Past and Present}, Their Outcomes and Challenges
 - All about progressivism and why it matters.

Internal Alignment and Integration

- Petitions
- Organizing
- Training

- Fundraising
- Political

Internal Alignment and Integration

- Coalitions
 - Fight Back Table
 - Just Democracy
- Partners
 - Color of Change
 - Higher Heights
 - The Collective
 - Our Revolution
 - She the People
 - More*

SMART Goals

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound

Comms Programs*

Watch Party for ABC News Special: “Conversations with Black Women”

- Hosted by host ABC’s Deborah Roberts.
- Featuring Yvette Simpson, Leah Wright Rigueur and ...
- Friday, February 19th at 8:00 p.m.
- In partnership with The 19th (pending)
- Live tweet (Tweet Up using a special hashtag)

DFA Book Club

- DFA will promote and feature published books by progressive authors or progressivism and the movement
- Books will be offered with a donation.
- Authors will participate in a live Zoom to discuss with registrants

Zoom Where it Happens

- Anniversary of the 1921 Tulsa, Oklahoma Black Wall Street Massacre
- Reading of an episode from HBO’s “Watchmen”

- Featuring celebrities and high profile electeds and organizers

JAM Sessions

- The intersection of Justice, Art and the Movement.
- Art has a role in movements.
- From the Harlem Renaissance to Si Se Puede to the Women's March to the Black Lives Matter movement, art as story, symbolism and song has been integral to campaigns and movements for change in communicating the heart and emotion of the people. From fine artists, to graphic artists, to musical artists, to writers, to photographers and spoken word artists, all forms of art have been woven into the fabric of movements that demand justice, equality, reform and investment in minority, disenfranchised, disadvantaged and marginalized communities.
- Movement art is a cry for Democracy.
- The resurgence of street art during progressive movements:
- Politics [here](#), [resistance](#) and [BLM](#).
- Partner with artists for merch

Original Content*

21 to Watch in 21

- Series of profiles on 21 candidates or causes DFA is endorsing or supporting in 2021.

Civics in 60 Seconds

- Lessons in basic civics using video vignettes
Program + Content for funding partnership or sponsorship
- Original Content for DFA
- Convey history as an opportunity to energize people

Behind The Scenes with (name): Life on the Campaign

- BTS videos from endorsed candidates and/organizers campaigning.
- First person narration
- Best for Instagram Reels
- Original content for DFA

I Am Democracy campaign

- Visual campaign for social media inspired by the iconic visual of the historic [I Am A MAN](#) Campaign out of Memphis, TN in 1968 to bring attention to the sanitation workers strike. The sentiment grew out of economic disparity in the workplace and other subjugation wrought on Black people.
- DFA's I Am Democracy campaign is designed to bring attention to the inequities of the New American Majority: young people, BIPOC communities and women, while highlighting their value, power, voice and vote in:
 - Saving Democracy in the 2020 general election and the 2021 GA Senate runoff.

- Defending, upholding and fighting for a government that works for the people.
 - determining Democracy election outcomes.
- The campaign will serve as key messaging that highlights the word Democracy as being a part of our name; define Democracy as a visual (the people), and reinforce the noun Democracy as to describe the republic that is the United States of America.

Progressive Newsletter Opt-In [Example](#)

- Curated content, article of interest
- Elevate other people's causes
- Creating content to continue our narrative
- Articles of interest

FIN

Our through line is what we're fighting for.

Democracy

Definitions

From Oxford:

Democracy is a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.

From [ACE](#): The Electoral Knowledge Network

Democracy is the form of government in which political control is exercised by all the people, either directly or through their elected representatives The word democracy itself means rule by the people.

Democracy provides a very special challenge because it incorporates aspects of behaviour, skills, knowledge and attitudes as well as questions of politics and power. **The manner in which educators act and teach will influence people's understanding of democracy. As a result there is considerable discussion in the literature of a democratic educational methodology - valuing interaction, participation and individual contributions to debate and discovery of meaning.**

From Yvette Simpson:

Democracy at its best, if we ever see it, is every single person has a vote, has a voice in leadership, which means they have a voice in their own self-determination. Democracy is in trouble now. And I think it always has been. Wielded by the wrong power, democracy can be used as a weapon, to limit the voices of people who are already marginalized. When it should be the opposite. Democracy should be the one thing that is equal. It should be the one power that is standardized, no matter who you are or where you go, it should be the one thing that everybody has a right to and an equal voice in. At the end of the day, we should have the right to determine what our leadership looks like.

Is a foundational principle of our country: the idea of one person one vote, every vote counts, which we've never actually lived up to, the idea of true democracy. What we've seen is quite the opposite; attempts from our very foundation to limit the voices of Black people and natives in the governing process.