

EXHIBIT 2

BVM Capacity Building Institute and the Rural Focus



One of BVM's Five Core Beliefs is "Black voters matter everywhere." With this in mind, we seek to build capacity of community-based organizations with a primary focus on rural communities, NOT only in urban communities. We follow such a strategy for a variety of reasons, including:

- a. We have a deep respect for civil rights history, and we recognize that many of the organizing campaigns that changed this nation took place in rural communities. The examples of Selma and the Alabama Black Belt, or Fannie Lou Hamer and the Mississippi Delta, support this point.
- b. Rural communities often experience the most harsh and blatant manifestations of voter suppression and institutional racism. This pattern exists largely because of the extreme isolation of rural communities and the difficulty of gaining media exposure. Discriminatory practices which start in rural areas eventually expand and are replicated throughout a state.
- c. Rural communities rarely have access to whatever state-level support is available for social justice organizing and capacity development. We believe in bringing the mountain to the people, rather than forcing the people to travel to the mountain.
- d. We believe that the energy from successful rural organizing has a positive impact on urban organizing as well, creating a virtuous cycle where communities in different parts of the state reinforce one another. This is the nature of "movement": stringing together actions and victories in a critical mass of locations.

BVM's Relationship with Network Partners

We seek to deepen our relationships with community-based partners by staying in touch with them and offering resources (funding, tools, training) throughout the year, not only when there are marquee elections taking place. In addition to providing training on outreach strategies, other areas where we will help to expand capacity include communications and fundraising, so that network partners can more effectively tell their stories and seek the resources to continue their work. In addition, we view our role as a connector, helping network partners within a state to stay in touch with one another via regular conference calls and in-person convenings.

Although we provide funding and resources to partner groups, we do not see our role primarily as funders; nor do our partners see us in that role. Instead, they view BVM as fellow organizers and thought partners who share a common love for our communities. We often use the analogy that we are not sponsoring a picnic and inviting our partners; we are the cousins from down the road who are attending a picnic organized by our extended family, and we are bringing a little sauce or a dessert to help out!

Electoral Organizing and Power Building

At BVM, we often explain to friends and stakeholders that we are NOT an electoral organization. We are first and foremost, a power building organization, and while we firmly believe that voting and electoral organizing is *one* way to build power, it is by no means the **only** way.

Within the space of electoral organizing, we do not measure our success on electoral "wins". We take this position not only because of our status as a 501c3 organization, but because philosophically we strongly believe that in order to truly build power, we must begin to redefine what a "win" is. The traditional approach of defining wins based on whether a particular person has won a certain office is far too limited given the obstacles that our communities face. Instead, we believe in centering a community-defined agenda and the process by which a community seeks to implement that agenda. With this in mind, we seek to increase the capacity of community-based organizations working on a wide range of issues: from mass incarceration to gentrification, from health care to education and more.



PURPOSE AND CORE VALUES

Our goal is to increase power in marginalized, predominantly Black communities. Effective voting allows a community to determine its own destiny. We agree with the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he said, “Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”

We seek to achieve our goals with the following 5 core beliefs in mind:

- The key to effective civic engagement and community power is understanding, respecting and supporting local infrastructure.
- Black voters matter not only on election day, but on the 364 days between election days as well. This means we must support individuals and organizations that are striving to obtain social justice throughout the year.
- Black voters matter **everywhere**, including rural counties and smaller cities/towns that are often ignored by candidates, elected officials, political parties and the media.
- In order for Black voters to matter, we must utilize authentic messaging which speaks to our issues, connects with our hopes and affirms our humanity.
- The leadership, talent and commitment demonstrated by Black women in particular must receive recognition and, more importantly, **investment** in order to flourish and multiply.

MOVEMENT BUILDING

Relational Organizing And What's Left After Election Day

An important aspect of BVM’s core beliefs (mentioned above) is an approach that emphasizes relational organizing. We prioritize local infrastructure because we know existing organizations have authentic relationships with community members in general, and voters more specifically. While some experts look at communities critically for lacking infrastructure, our approach is that **relationships are infrastructure**. For these reasons, BVM seeks to intentionally build on existing relationships via our door-to-door canvassing, texting, phone banking, social media and radio messaging.

Similarly, while organizational relationships are important, so are the relationships that each community member has with other friends and family members. We regularly incorporate efforts to have each person contacted to reach five other friends/family, and to then ask those five contacts to each reach five more.

Our emphasis on relational organizing and local organizations has several long-term effects. First, by investing in local organizations instead of working around them, we build capacity, introduce tools and connect them with partners (national, state and other counties) in ways that benefit their ongoing work throughout the year. Second, by enabling local organization to hire local canvassers themselves (rather than simply extracting their local knowledge to hire through outside organizations), we strengthen their relationships with community members rather than undermining those relationships. And third, using a relational organizing approach inherently poses greater potential for **accountability**, compared with the results of a transactional process.

POWER

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Intersection of Political and Economic Power

We believe that independent political power requires independent economic power, and we are sensitive to the many forms of economic coercion which often discourage community members from fully participating in civic life. We also believe that political victories that lack a strong economic base are simply not sustainable. As we explore the intersection of political and economic power, we strive to uplift economic models and policies which support the equitable distribution of wealth rather than deepening economic disparities.

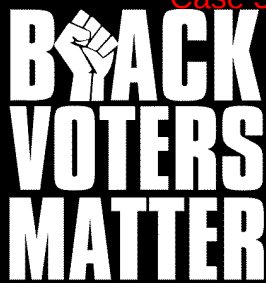
ACCOUNTABILITY

Internally, our primary level of accountability is to our board of directors, which includes social justice leaders with deep experiences in the fields of racial, gender, political and economic justice. In addition to subject matter expertise, we prioritize recruiting board members with the governance and functional organizational development knowledge necessary to lead a growing organization such as BVM. In addition to board accountability, our internal accountability includes accountability to each other at the staff level.

Externally, we are accountable to our partners, including local community-based partners, regional and national partners, as well as funding partners. We seek to track accountability with local partners via periodic partner surveys, which we are in the process of refining.

JUSTICE

Much of the vision discussed above has outlined the ways we address racial and economic justice. One of our five core beliefs addresses our emphasis on investing in female leadership as one aspect of gender justice, but our vision extends beyond that. We believe our efforts must also elevate *issues* in addition to leadership, and we have been proud to support groups who organize around issues such as reproductive justice, Black maternal health and ending sexual violence. Regarding environmental justice, we believe that pollution, wasteful and inequitable utility policies and crumbling infrastructure have disproportionately impacted Black communities. Just as a healthy environment is not possible without healthy civic engagement, healthy civic engagement is limited without a healthy environment. One of the first local campaigns in which BVM engaged was in a county which had been devastated by a coal ash landfill.



SPREADING LOVE, BUILDING POWER, TRANSFORMING DEMOCRACY

<https://www.blackvotersmatterfund.org>

www.bvmcapacitybuilding.org

BLACK VOTERS MATTER is dedicated to expanding Black voter engagement and increasing our political power. Together with partners on the ground and people of good faith everywhere, we are transforming our nation. We are changing the narrative that often marginalizes our communities by instead centering Black love, Black culture and Black-led organizing.

BLACK VOTERS MATTER EVERYWHERE

We believe that Black voters matter not just in urban areas, but everywhere, including the South, rural areas, and small towns that candidates, elected officials, and political parties often ignore.

Black Voters Matter was born in late 2017 when funders overlooked Alabama's rural Black Belt during the U.S. Senate race between Doug Jones and Roy Moore. We invested in 32 community-based organizations, brought Black voter turnout to Obama election levels, and helped surprise the nation.

VOTING RIGHTS

In 2018, about 40 Black senior citizens in Georgia got on the Black Voters Matter bus to go vote when government officials ordered them off the bus. This incident drew nationwide attention to voter suppression and intimidation.

We stand with our partners in fighting voter suppression and advocating for policies that expand voting rights, including increasing early voting, resisting voter ID laws, and restoring voting rights to people who were formerly incarcerated.

BLACK VOTERS MATTER 365

Increasing voter turnout is critical, but it is just the beginning of building power in our communities. We also support policies that promote economic justice, better health care, a more fair criminal justice system, and greater equity in all aspects of American life.

BVM SUPPORTS LOCAL PARTNERS

BLACK VOTERS MATTER supports our partners at election time and all year round. We develop and help strengthen state and local infrastructure.

Our support for local partners includes:

- Mini-grant funding for GOTV efforts as well as general capacity building
- Tools for base-building and voter mobilization efforts include: Texting, Phonebanking Canvassing Apps, Bus Tours and other communications support
- Connectivity and relationship building with local, state and national networks
- Strategic planning

Co-founded by nationally recognized political strategists Cliff Albright and LaTosha Brown