



## DEMOCRATIC PARTY of WISCONSIN

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# The 72 County Strategy

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## Overview

There is no doubt that 2012 was a highly successful cycle for Democrats at the top-of-the-ticket in Wisconsin. With a clear and compelling message and an immense infrastructure we achieved record turnout in our base areas and regained the upper hand in the swing areas of the state, resulting in decisive victories for President Obama and Senator Baldwin.

**The work that Democrats do in 2013 to build off of this success is the best way to win in 2014 as we prepare for the Governor's race and to retake the legislature.**

Down- ballot, however, Democrats suffered badly as a result of the Republican-controlled redistricting process. While Democratic Assembly candidates won approximately 200,000 more votes statewide than Republican Assembly candidates, Republicans hold majorities in the State Assembly and Senate.

In order to make great strides towards beating Scott Walker and winning back the state legislature in 2014, one of the changes we need to implement is maintaining the infrastructure built throughout 2011-2012, rather than allowing it to hibernate throughout the off year.

**That's why the Democratic Party of Wisconsin is investing \$500,000 in a rural organizing program -- something we've never before been able to do -- and working to place regional field and communications staff covering all 72 counties.**

These first boots on the ground will engage in critical efforts that build our bench, grow our infrastructure and keep the members of our grassroots organizing team fired up and engaged.

The first round of Regional Political Directors and their teams will be based in the following regions and covering the following legislative targets:

- Eau Claire - responsible for the Eau Claire area and the Minneapolis media market
- Green Bay - responsible for the Green Bay-Fox Valley region
- La Crosse - responsible for the La Crosse area and southwest Wisconsin

**Placing these initial resources in swing regions with large rural communities shows our seriousness in competing in all areas of the state, not just in Milwaukee and Dane Counties.**

## Goals

### *Ward Captain Program*

Grassroots activists statewide have expressed interest in building a ward captain program where an identified individual or group cultivates relationships with the voters in their ward and serves as the point of contact for local volunteers and voters during GOTV. Swing wards in legislative targets will be chosen as priority areas for the ward captain program.



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### *Budget Canvasses*

Regional staff will organize direct voter contact activities in order to mobilize public opinion around Governor Walker's 2013 budget. In Republican districts, the goal is to bring political pressure to bear on legislative Republicans to reject the budget's more reactionary provisions. Staff will execute canvasses in Democratic districts to inform residents about Democratic legislative priorities.

Additionally, these canvasses will serve as a way to keep growing our base of active volunteers and will provide an outlet for our grassroots volunteers to have an impact on issues and legislation.

### *Regional Media Teams*

Regional staff will facilitate the creation of Regional Media Teams that can speak to certain issues, or against certain officials, to gather research, coordinate letter to the editor drives and generate earned media actions in the district.

### *Inroads at Universities and Two-Year Colleges*

Voters at two-year colleges throughout Wisconsin represent a block of voters left out of traditional campus organizing in election years. Regional staff will be responsible for building relationships with student organizations and faculty to create inroads on these campuses.

### *Candidate Recruitment*

Recruitment for 2014 legislative candidates must be an immediate and ever-present priority for each and every Democratic leader in Wisconsin. Regional organizers will assist the efforts of activists, DPW staff, legislative campaign committee staff and progressive partner organizations as we seek to recruit high caliber candidates for 2014.

### *Out-State Internship Program*

In an effort to grow the pool of Democratic staff outside of Madison and Milwaukee, each regional organizer will be asked to recruit local interns to participate in a statewide internship training.

### *Monitoring Local Press*

A key goal for Democrats in 2013 will be ensuring the presence of a regular Democratic voice in local media across the state. In order to support this work, staff will be responsible for submitting weekly reports of political content in their local media for analysis and follow-up. Regional staff will also be responsible for recruiting local voices for letters to the editor and rapid response press events.

### *New Media*

Organizers will engage in base building through the active use of Facebook and Twitter for messaging purposes and to build for and notify people about events and days of action.

### *Retirement Home Outreach*

Regional organizers will be able to work with retirement home staff to create a vote plan for their residents for election days.