

2020-2022 Impact Report



Jewish culture for a just world

Letter from Ann

Dear Friends,

Today our Workers Circle community is growing and making meaningful positive change in our world. Our social justice and cultural activism is bringing forward our founding values and connection to our Yiddish culture, heritage and activist traditions.

We are a leading Jewish organization on the frontlines demanding a democracy by and for the people. Our community is actively fighting the onslaught of voter suppression laws that have overtaken state legislatures by mobilizing voters who are targeted by these laws and by advocating for federal and state voter protection. All of our achievements come from our 360-degree approach to organizing and growing our activist member base and by forging critical partnerships with people of color-led democracy groups, historic civil rights organizations, and Jewish social justice organizations.



Our Youth Stand Up for Justice teen and College Network programs have built inclusive activist communities inspired by our Eastern European traditions of lifelong activism, resistance and resilience. Our youngest members are learning the leadership skills to help carry forward our mission and values for years to come.

We are proud to be training new generations around Yiddish cultural activism, to connect with our heritage and its accompanying progressive values. We are thrilled to continue as the largest provider of Yiddish language education in the world. Each semester brings new course options from award-winning instructors to hundreds of students in the United States and more than thirty-six countries. Since 2022 our youth-focused Jewish cultural schools are once again building community and Jewish identity with safe in-person learning.

Our Jewish cultural programming, which was moved online in 2020, has continued to grow and expand with over 100 programs offered in 2022 alone! From 2020 to today, we have reached more than 500,000 participants worldwide!

I am delighted to update you on our community of changemakers and the work we've done to promote and celebrate Yiddish language and Jewish culture while fighting on the frontlines against injustice. I hope that as you read this impact report, you will be excited by our successes and our growth, and that you will consider making a donation today to support our work.

In solidarity,

Ann Toback
CEO, The Workers Circle


BY THE NUMBERS

2020-2022

223,764  → attendees at Georgia Voting Rights Phone Bank with Mark Hamill


7,500  → attendees at other Voting Rights Phone Banks

16  → Workers Circle Jewish Cultural School Educators

122  → years since we were founded

688  → online teen program participants

223  → events since 2020

40  → members of the 2022 Workers Circle Delegation at 57th Anniversary of the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery March

327  → Yiddish classes since January 2020

OVER 1,200,000  → views on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter



MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH US

You can connect with social justice by coming to First Fridays, our monthly, online social justice briefing and community gathering and by reading the bi-weekly Activist Update e-newsletter.

Social Justice

The Workers Circle is on the frontlines of the fight for American democracy. Virulent fascist politics coupled with regressive state lawmaking and court decisions are undermining human rights and equality. Yet with the support of our community, we are building our grassroots power and achieving important victories.

We worked in coalition with civil rights and democracy groups to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act of NY. We joined with immigrant rights groups to win a \$2.1 Billion New York State fund for workers excluded from coronavirus relief and to convince the Biden Administration to rollback the public charge rule to pre-Trump era. Through waves of civil disobedience at the White House, we shifted President Biden's position on the filibuster.

We are multigenerational. We take the streets with activists aged 5-85. We visit lawmakers with college students and retirees. We hold phonebanks with high schoolers and senior citizens. We are strategic. Voters of color have been particularly targeted by new restrictive state voting laws so we have partnered with organizations led by people of color to respond together. We've called voters of color with essential voting information weekly. We "got out the vote" together in Pennsylvania and marched together for federal voting rights legislation in Alabama, New York, and Washington, DC. With each passing year, we are growing in numbers, power, and impact.



Yiddish

In 2020, the number of students taking Yiddish classes grew by 30 percent—and we are still experiencing unprecedented growth.

Each semester, we offer over 50 new course options focusing on conversation, literature, history, music, translation, poetry, cooking and theater to over 400 learners in more than thirty-six countries. These classes are enhanced by popular concerts and interactive online schmoozes that give our community the opportunity to step into the homes and studios of contemporary Yiddish artists, musicians, and authors and to learn about the past with leading scholars.

Our 2020 Trip to Yiddishland virtual program was so successful that we hosted our first Online Winter in Yiddishland program in 2021. Both events are unique in their capacity to provide an immersive Yiddish experience for students of all levels. Highlights include children's programs, art, cooking and large scale concert celebrations honoring cherished members of our community.



Jewish Cultural Schools

At Workers Circle schools, the traditions and culture of our Eastern European Jewish ancestors inspire students to identify and respond to issues that fundamentally affect their lives and surroundings. The Workers Circle schools engage children between the ages of 3 and 13 in activism and Yiddish language learning through storytelling, poetry, painting, sculpture, and site visits to social service organizations. Subjects highlighted throughout the academic year included the struggles of refugee children, public housing, voting rights, climate change, immigration, civil liberties, and labor practices.

For most of 2020 and Fall 2021, lessons were taught online via Zoom. In-person teaching resumed in accordance with COVID-19 health protocol and families returned enthusiastically to their Worker Circle schools.



My family joined the Workers Circle School four years ago because it is the only secular Jewish program that teaches children Yiddish language and culture rooted in social justice.

Evan Kleinman

Workers Circle Manhattan School Parent

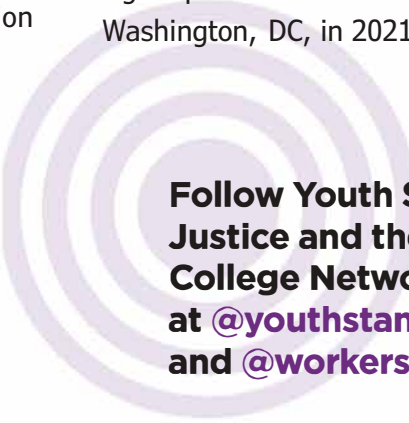




Student Activism

Graduates of our Workers Circle Schools are encouraged to continue growing with us as members of our Youth Stand Up For Justice (YSUFJ) community. Youth Stand Up for Justice students are mentored by members of our staff and College Network at educational workshops that covered the history of Jewish Eastern-European immigration and culture, traditional Jewish culture, social justice traditions, and community organizing. Over 300 Youth Stand Up for Justice high school students across the country learned about the racism endemic to mass incarceration with our Break the System program. In 2022 YSUFJ relaunched as a youth activist training program, providing youth with organizing skills to become lifelong leaders of social change. This fall teens registered and pre-registered student voters, sent postcards with voting information to voters of color, and studied the role of music and culture in social change.

When our College Network, with students all over the country, isn't meeting with renowned Yiddish musicians or taking Lower East Side Jewish labor walking tours, they are participating in direct action for democracy, worker and immigrant rights, LGBTQI+ rights, and more. Their Young Jews for a Green Deal initiative attended and spoke from the podium at several climate change rallies. Twenty students from college campuses across the northeast visited Selma, Alabama to trace the steps of civil rights icons and demand federal action in response to new state laws that restrict the vote for voters of color. College Network members also demanded federal voting rights protections at civil disobedience actions in Washington, DC, in 2021 and 2022.



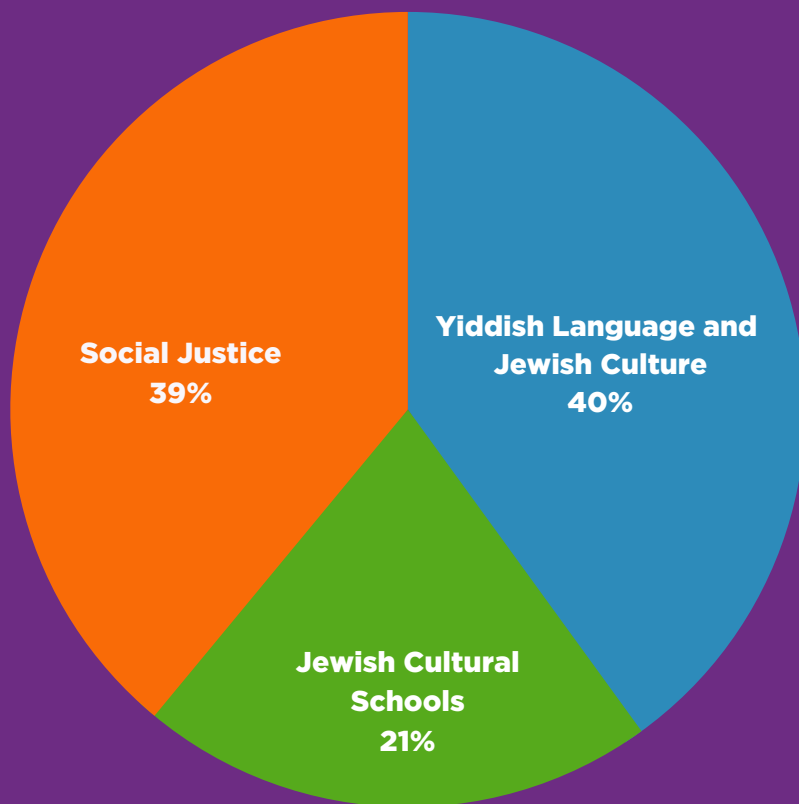
Follow Youth Stand Up for Justice and the Workers Circle College Network on Instagram at [@youthstandupforjustice](#) and [@workerscirclecollege](#).



Help us grow our Social Justice, Yiddish Language, Jewish Culture, and Education programs.

Visit www.circle.org/give to make a donation or increase your impact with our monthly giving, planned giving, and event sponsoring programs.

Workers Circle Program Areas





**THE
WORKERS
CIRCLE**

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