

YOUNG PEOPLE FOR

# **Investing in Progressive Leadership Development: Building a Movement**

**Draft Prepared By:**

**Young People For  
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## Progressive Youth Leadership Development: The Need to Scale Up

In order to secure a lasting victory in the battle for America's future, it is essential for progressives to identify, empower and sustain the active engagement of the next generation of leaders. Young people provide a vital infusion of ideas, energy and passion and their commitment to continued activism and leadership is critical to building a progressive future.

Ultra-conservative foundations have long been aware that they must not only control contemporary public debate, but also foster the next generation of conservative scholars, journalists, government employees, legislators and activists to further their movement's goals -- and they have made that investment. Over the last 20 years, their support has enabled ultra-conservative organizations, including the Leadership Institute, Federalist Society, Cato Institute and Heritage Foundation, implement long-term programs and sustain the infrastructure in order to build the conservative leadership pipeline, with concentrated efforts towards initiating young conservatives through campus activism. Last year alone, the Right invested \$48 million in 11 primary initiatives working to increase the number of conservative campus papers, foster a growing network of conservatives on campus, shift students' ideological identification and encourage support for conservative values.

The conservative network teaches students how to advance a right-wing agenda. They campaign against college courses that conflict with their agenda; they have accused more than one hundred college professors of making "anti-American" statements. They attend courses with titles like, "How to Stop Liberals in Their Tracks." They have internships, fellowships and jobs waiting for them when they graduate. They learn how to run campaigns and how to run for office.

The investment has paid off. A powerful network of young ultra-conservatives fill the state houses, the halls of Congress, the executive branch and the courts; they are supported by community leaders, skilled organizers, academics and media personalities that help dominate the debate. The leaders in whom they have invested in are familiar names in the public dialogue. In 1970, a man named Karl Rove was head of the National College Republicans. In 1981, Grover Norquist took the reins. And in 1983, it was Ralph Reed.

Progressive forces have not matched the growing presence of the Right on campuses—and it is critical that we do so. It's not a matter of starting from scratch, but of catalyzing and supporting the untapped potential of young progressive leaders and sustaining their connection to and increasing their roles within the progressive movement. In the process of developing Young People For, we found that students are eager for an alternative to the alarming rightward shift on their campuses and for the opportunity to join and help lead a movement that works for the protection and advancement of our nation's democratic values.

Progressive Leadership Development is an emerging priority area given the growing impact of ultra conservative training and leadership cultivation over the past 25 years. It has become imperative to focus our attention on leadership development as a critical issue in the larger effort of strengthening the progressive movement. Scaling up nascent programs is key to addressing the changing ideological shifts of young people, the lack of effective programs to reach young people and the need to build a sustainable, long-term progressive leadership pipeline within a current climate of shrinking resources.

Financial trends over the past four years clearly show that progressive leadership development organizations are:

1. On average, experiencing a collective decline in revenue over the past four years
2. Funded with a “buying,” not “building” mentality, by exchanging revenue for services or programs, such as election year voter registration or GOTV, rather than in investing strategically to build a sustainable organization through growth capital<sup>1</sup>
3. Unable to plan for increased growth – with most showing little to no reserve funds to help build for the future or to continue operating at current scale if funding sources decline

## Getting to Scale

Getting to scale is the process of institutionalizing effective programs to achieve greater impact in terms of increasing the numbers of young people served by these programs; broadening geographic coverage; building multi-issue and multi-dimensional programs; and increasing short-term outcomes and long-term impacts.

Simply put, getting to scale means that our programs will be able to extend services to more people in more places. Scale is not just more of the same or an increase in quantity but a catalytic effect that leads to fundamental change.

Typically, this involves the process of institutionalizing effective programs to achieve greater impact in terms of increasing the numbers of young people served, broadening the geographic coverage, and, sometimes, expanding priorities. It is critical to plan early for getting to scale. With leadership, staff, funding sources and advocates, programs can move beyond local origins to operate at scale.

## The Process of Scaling Up

To get to scale, we need to:

1. Build widespread knowledge about progressive leadership development needs and opportunities
  - We need to increase awareness about the gaps in conservative and progressive leadership programs and support progressive programs over the long term
2. Develop a “building” mentality, as well as a “buying from” mentality
  - We need to make strategic investments into organizations to ensure long-term sustainability, not simply exchange revenue for services.
3. Identify gaps in progressive leadership development programs and start to support programs that fill those gaps
  - We need to clearly the ways in which progressive programs are falling short and develop new initiatives to meet critical leadership development needs
4. Work to connect programs that are focused on breadth and depth in services over the long term

<sup>1</sup>See Overholser, George M., Nonprofit Capital Growth, Defining, Measuring and Managing Growth Capital in Nonprofit Enterprises, Part One: Building is not Buying.

- We need to build programs that will reach many people through trainings and institutes as well as programs that will make long-term investments in future leaders through fellowships and internships

Scaling up youth progressive leadership development programs would generate several important advancements:

1. Economies of scale may be achieved by reaching more young people
2. Scaled-up programs can reach beyond the usual suspects and traditional campuses to nontraditional campuses and marginalized youth
3. Documentation and evaluation of efforts to scale up can contribute to the field's understanding of how to design and implement at-scale programs

Before scaling up individual programs, we need to consider:

1. Whether the program has been effective
2. How scaling up will affect the program's impact
3. Whether the increased scale will be sustainable
4. How programs identify their objective of scale

In order to get to scale, we can consider several approaches:

1. Planned expansion: a steady process of expanding the number of sites and the number of people served by a particular program model once it has been pilot tested
2. Association: expanding program reach through alliances across a network of organizations – concept replication. An idea or approach is replicated but adapted to meet local needs (as opposed to franchising which involves replicating an identical product).
3. Explosion: sudden implementation at a large scale – mandated expansion through a large grant<sup>2</sup>

Some general principles to consider:

1. The better developed a program is, the greater the chance that the program will be able to function at scale.
2. Given the urgent need for programs to reach more people, some programs may decide to scale up even when the costs of doing so will not bring about economies of scale.

Some examples of other important benefits to consider include: reaching beyond urban areas to provide services for marginalized youth in community colleges or nontraditional campuses where the marginal cost per youth may be expensive, but the gains of reaching more young people in community colleges outweigh the costs, especially when larger social benefits are factored in.

It is difficult to define what at scale means operationally for youth progressive leadership development programs, as it can mean different outcomes and processes for various organizations.

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<sup>2</sup> See "Getting to Scale in Young Adult Reproductive Health Programs", pp. 9-13.

At Young People For, we are working to get to scale to have the long-term capacity (staff, resources, skills and networks) to reach a large proportion of disenfranchised progressive youth and prepare them for leadership positions in the nonprofit, political and private sectors.

We believe that in the progressive youth leadership development field to “get to scale” there need to be:

1. **Multiple programs** offering various types of leadership development to various audiences
2. **Strong relationships** between leadership development programs that create opportunities to ensure that future leaders have access to these various leadership development opportunities throughout their youth
3. **A leadership pipeline** that connects young people with opportunities to grow in the progressive movement from high school experiential leadership programs, to college-based activism and leadership trainings, to career development and professional development, to internship and job placement, to mid-level career development, training and networking.

## Leadership Development Gaps

Nowhere in the progressive movement is the infrastructure gap larger than in the area of leadership development. With investments of over \$40 million a year in 501(c)(3) training institutes, conservatives spend more than 10 times the resources on long-term political leadership development as progressives. This gap is obvious at every level of political leadership in our country from school boards to Congress to the White House.

With a three-pronged 501(c)(3) investment in a) grassroots leadership development; b) national, academically rigorous fellowship programs; and c) building a DC training institute, the progressive movement can establish a comprehensive progressive pipeline that develops promising leaders from the grassroots up. Below is a list of needs to get our leadership development work to scale around the country.<sup>3</sup>

1. **Long-Term Financial Investments:** The ability to take tax deductible contributions has enabled conservative 501(c)(3) institutes to receive significant long-term funding from conservative charitable foundations. We need large foundations to provide multi-year, anchor support to account for 50 percent of the total budget for leadership development organizations in any given year. We also need a diverse funding stream to ensure sustainability, including a strong small donor base to account for at least 30 percent of our work, as well as individual donor and small family foundation support.
2. **Comprehensive 501(c)(3) Leadership Development Institutes** that provide a wide range of support for emerging political leaders including training, mentorship, networking, job placement, leadership coaching, and resource links. With an exclusive mission of developing political leaders, these institutes should not be distracted by short-term issue or electoral campaigns, but provide training every year, not just during election years.
3. **Leadership Development Programs that have a Long-term Perspective:** Institutes should have a long-term perspective and recruit and develop candidates years before they are ready to run; train

<sup>3</sup> Excerpted from Center for Progressive Leadership, “Leadership Landscape” © Center for Progressive Leadership, 2005

activists and political operatives early in their careers, and identify and engage youth leaders as they are forming their political and social views.

4. **Connective Tissue:** 501(c)(3) leadership institutions that connect progressive political organizations, issue advocacy groups, think tanks, and media organizations by creating training and networking forums for leaders from these organizations. Through conferences, trainings, speaker series, and retreats, bring progressive leaders together to build relationships, gain skills, and forge a common vision. In addition, provide job placement services for trainees further integrating the conservative political organizations.
5. **Stronger Recruitment Strategies:** Effective investments in leadership start with strategic recruitment. Too often training programs use a first-come, first-serve model and recruit from the usual pools of activism. High-impact leadership development programs strategically target their recruitment efforts and develop deep, local partnerships for identifying new leaders.
6. **Clear Targeting of Future Leaders:** Successful leadership development programs will help give the progressive movement the capacity to identify and recruit a diverse pool of leaders. One of the key opportunities is to look within existing progressive organizations for individuals with the capacity to assume greater leadership roles. A key challenge is to identify individuals who have demonstrated leadership ability in other sectors and have skills that would be transferable to the political arena.
7. **Embedded Leadership Development:** On the whole, progressive political, issue, and membership organizations lack internal leadership development support structures. Fiscal insecurity and the short-term perspective of most progressive organizations greatly limit progressive organizations' investments in internal leadership development. Progressive organizations tend to work staff extremely hard, for little pay, with poor benefits, limited training and leadership development opportunities, and the specter of unemployment at the end of every campaign or funding cycle.
  - There is a need to help existing progressive political, advocacy, media, and policy organizations to develop leadership development programs that are embedded within their operations year after year. This may include funding internships, fellowship programs, team building training, retreats, and executive coaching programs for existing progressive organizations.
8. **Nurturing Leadership for Local Elected Positions.** There is no infrastructure set up specifically to support school board candidates. While 501 (c)(3) organizations like Camp Wellstone train candidates running for all sorts of races, including school board, progressives haven't been strategic in placing resources in school boards. Additionally, since most school boards are nonpartisan, progressives can't count on the Democratic Party to support school board members the way they do other local office-holders. The school board level is critical in the political leadership pipeline; and, public education is a vital and central issue to the progressive cause.

Conservatives have strategically taken over school boards in recent years, and that has accomplished several things for them: 1. weakening public education through cutting curriculum and funding; 2. weakening civics and civic engagement curriculum that might naturally lead students to think progressively (i.e. 75% of high schoolers don't know how they feel about the First Amendment; one-third of students believe the First Amendment goes too far; 87% of students believe flag burning is

illegal, according to a prominent 2005 survey); 3. put extremist right-wing ideology into our schools (i.e. Creationism; abstinence-only sexual education; prayer in schools); 4. built a farm-team of conservative political candidates for higher office.

9. **Election Training:** Each election year, progressive political organizations (PACs, 527s, 501(c)(4)s, and party committees) spend millions on training staff, volunteers, and candidates for the current cycle (progressives actually currently outspend conservatives on election training). There are three primary needs in the election training realm:
  - Better coordination of election training – too often there are 3 trainings in a single city immediately before the election. Training calendars should be shared and coordinated.
  - Earlier funding for election training – training funds should be provided to political organizations a year or more in advance of the election to begin recruitment efforts.
  - Down-ballot candidate training – funding for developing a farm team of local and state candidates: Progressive Majority, Emily’s List, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Democrats are working on this issue.
  
10. **Diversity and Leadership Gaps:** One of the critical challenges for progressive leadership programs is to expand the pool of leaders engaged in progressive political action. There are a number of key gaps in new leaders development:
  - *Youth* – engaging high school students, college students, and out-of-school youth
  - *People of Color* – African-American, Latino, Asian-American, Native American, and immigrants
  - *Women* – recruiting & supporting female candidates, political operatives, pundits, and policy leaders
  - *Community Leaders* – bridging to politics from business, military, legal, religious, & nonprofit sectors

In addition to promoting diversity, leadership programs must develop the existing progressive talent pool by training, mentoring and networking mid-career leaders working in progressive politics.

**Addressing the Leadership Development Gaps**

**Progressive On-Campus Organizations: An Overview**

<b>Progressive Orgs: Campus- Based/Leadership Development</b>	<b>Short Description</b>	<b>Amount Spent</b>	<b>Reporting Year</b>	<b>Programmatic Area</b>
<b>Rock The Vote</b>	“Rock the Vote mobilizes young people to create positive social and political change in their lives and communities. The goal of Rock the Vote’s media campaigns and street team activities is to increase youth voter turnout.”	\$4,385,994	2004	Organizing, Issue Advocacy, Voter Mobilization
<b>American Constitution Society for Law and Politics</b>	“One of the nation’s leading progressive legal organizations. Founded in 2001, ACS is comprised of law students, lawyers, scholars, judges, policymakers, activists and other concerned individuals who are working to ensure that the fundamental principles of human dignity, individual rights and liberties, genuine equality, and access to justice are in their rightful, central place in American law.	\$2,307,224	2003	Legal/Law Studies
<b>Campus Progress</b>	“a brand-new effort to strengthen progressive voices on college and university campuses nationwide; counter the growing influence of right-wing groups on campus; and empower new generations of progressive leaders”	\$ 800,000	2004	Publications, Speakers Bureau, Trainings
<b>Young People For</b>	“An intergenerational and diverse network of student leaders, activists and young elected officials dedicated to building youth progressive power in America.”	\$ 750,000	2004	Training, Organizing, Education, Technical Support, Leadership Development
<b>Center for Progressive Leadership</b>	“A national political training institute dedicated to developing the next generation of progressive political leaders. Through intensive training programs for youth, activists, and candidates, CPL provides individuals with the skills and resources needed to become effective political leaders.”	\$650,000	2004	Leadership Development, Training
<b>Co/Motion</b>	“national program that helps organizations build their capacity to foster youth leadership in the design, implementation, and evaluation of action strategies addressing community problems.”	\$ 598,466	2004	Organizing, Research, Publications, Issue Advocacy, Training
<b>United States Student Association</b>	“works at the grassroots level on building student power and to make education a right, not a privilege.”	\$ 593,997	2004	GOTV/VR, Lobbying, Training
<b>Democracy Matters</b>	“informs and engages college students and communities in efforts to strengthen our democracy.”	\$ 435,674	2003	Education, Outreach, Organizing
<b>Choice USA</b>	“provides ongoing support to the diverse, upcoming generation of leaders who promote and protect reproductive choice both now and in the future.”	\$1,614,165	2004	Education, Outreach, Training, Mentorship
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$10,865,520</b>		

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 \*Estimated revenue; no 990 data available



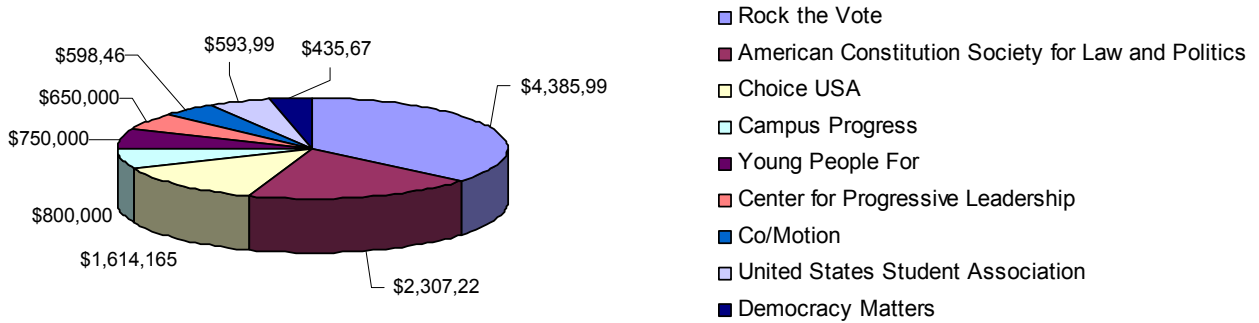
Conservative Youth-Focused Organizations: An Overview

Conservative Campus-Based Organization	Short Description	Amount Spent	Reporting Year	Programmatic Area
<b>Young America's Foundation</b>	"The principal outreach organization of the conservative movement; committed to ensuring that thousands of young Americans understand and are inspired by the ideas of personal freedom, free enterprise, and traditional values"	\$12,038,328	2003	Leadership Development
<b>Intercollegiate Studies Institute</b>	"To assist college students and professors to attain an understanding of the values and institutions that sustain a free society"	\$11,562,682	2003	Media/Journalism
<b>The Leadership Institute</b>	"Premier training ground for tomorrow's conservative leaders"	\$ 9,104,766	2003	Leadership Development
<b>The Federalist Society</b>	"Promotes intellectual diversity in the legal professional and throughout the legal community"	\$5,450,536	2003	Legal/Law studies
<b>Center for the Study of Popular Culture</b>	"Founded in 1988 by Peter Collier and David Horowitz to strengthen the cultural foundations of a free society"	\$ 3,625,468	2003	Media/Journalism
<b>Independent Women's Forum</b>	"Established to combat the women-as-victim, pro-big-government ideology of radical feminism; seeks to restore, strengthen, and extend that which promotes women's well being by advancing the principles of self reliance, political freedom, economic liberty, and personal responsibility"	\$ 2,582,437	2003	Legal/Law Studies
<b>American Civil Rights Institute</b>	"To support educational efforts to eliminate racial and gender preferences in government programs and policies at the state and federal level through publications, media, brochures, broadcasts and public relations"	\$ 1,614,100	2003	Legal/Law Studies
<b>Center for Individual Rights</b>	"Litigates a small number of precedent-setting cases intended to defend individual liberties, with special emphasis on cases involving free speech and civil rights"	\$ 1,259,427	2003	Legal/Law Studies
<b>Collegiate Network</b>	"To enhance the educational opportunities of students by providing materials, advice, and assistance to teachers and students involved with the production and writing of student newspapers and journals"	\$ 1,249,163	2003	Media/Journalism
<b>Accuracy in Academia</b>	"Publish and distribute literature promoting accuracy and fairness in academic institutions"	\$ 325,905	2003	Media/Journalism
<b>Students for America Foundation</b>	"Conducts educational and research activities, awards students with campus enterprise grants, distributes books and other educational materials on college campuses to promote leadership, the principles of free enterprise and Christian values"	\$ 149,401	2003	On Campus
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$48,962,213</b>		

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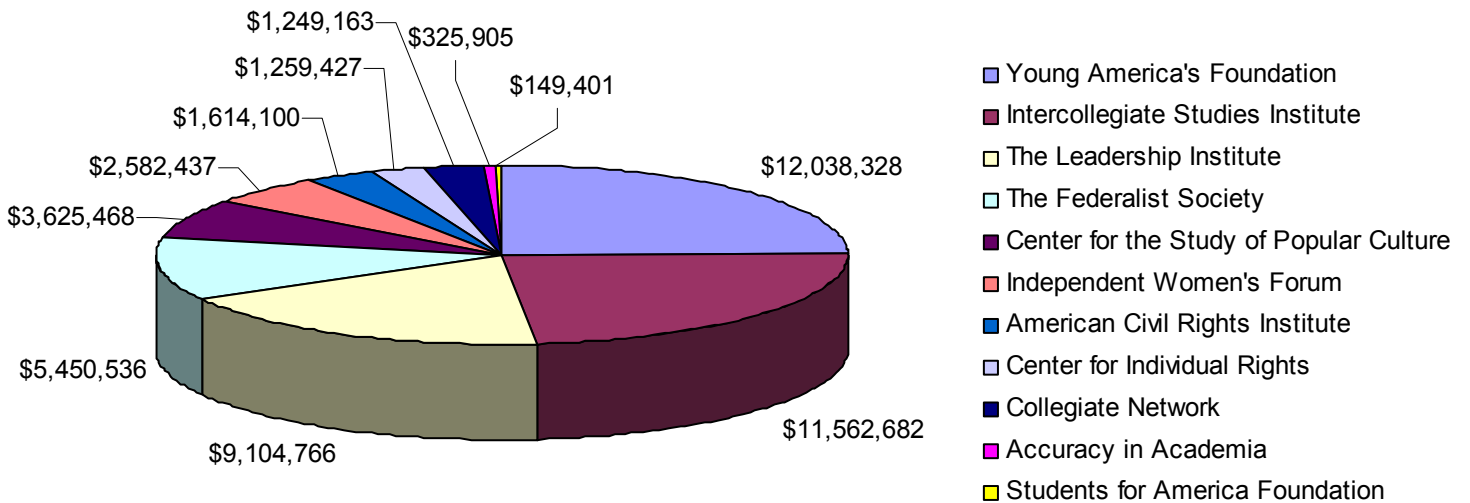
**Progressive Campus and Youth Leadership Development Funding Totals 2004**

**\$10,865,520**



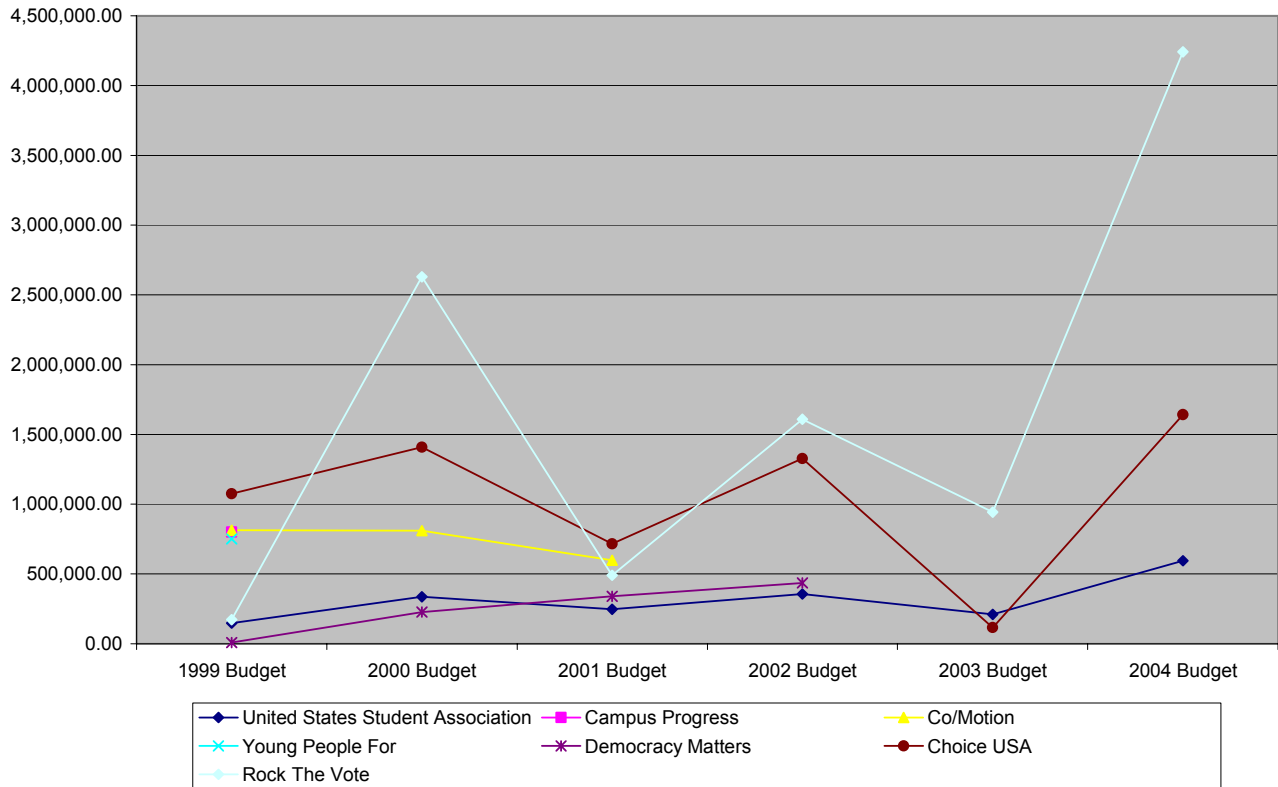
**Conservative Campus and Youth Leadership Development Funding Totals 2003**

**\$48,962,213**



**Progressive On-Campus Organizations: Financial Trends**

**Progressive Funding Trends**



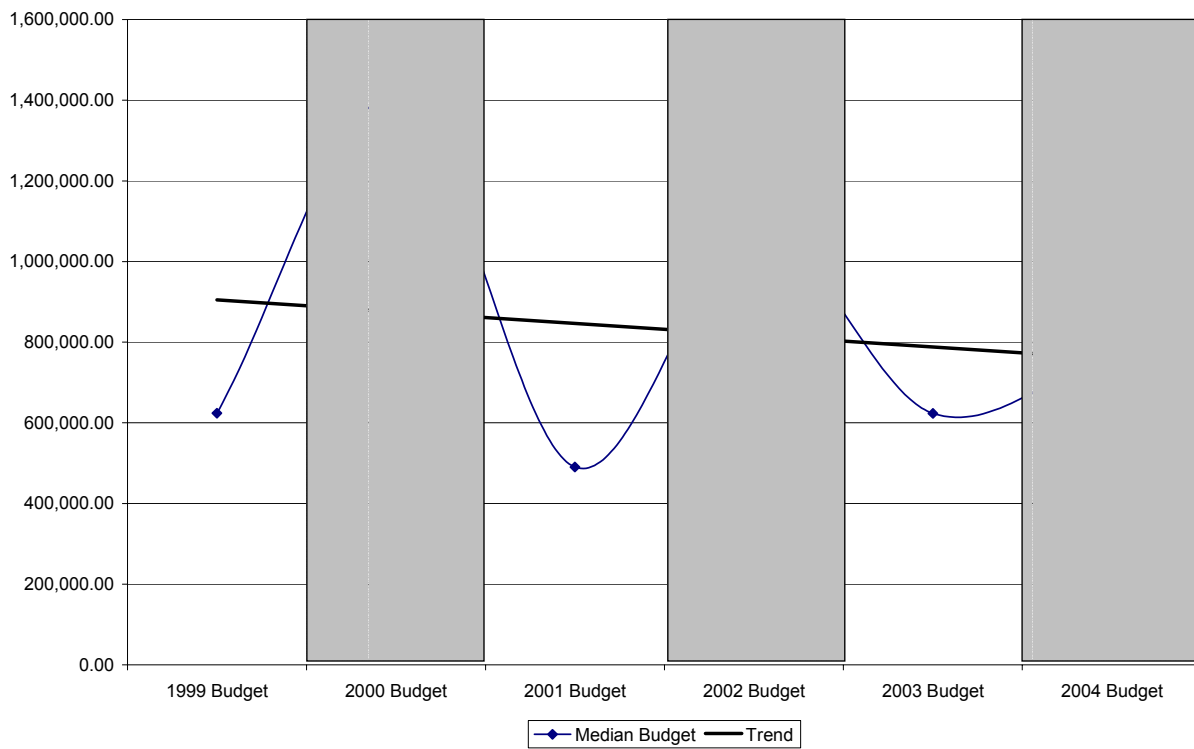
**This graph charts the funding levels of progressive on-campus groups from year-to-year.**

**This graph clearly shows two trends:**

- First, progressive On-Campus groups have wildly fluctuating funding levels. Some vary from year to year, and most are considerably low revenues every year.
- Second, progressive On-Campus groups' funding levels are directly tied to election years. During off-years, budgets are low, during election years, budgets are comparatively high.

We believe further analysis will show that the spikes in funding during election years are designated for short term, election related projects, which do not allow organizations to work toward long-term infrastructure development and program sustainability. As a result, organizations are not able to plan for future program goals or needs, but increase and decrease capacity from year to year.

**Budget Trends**



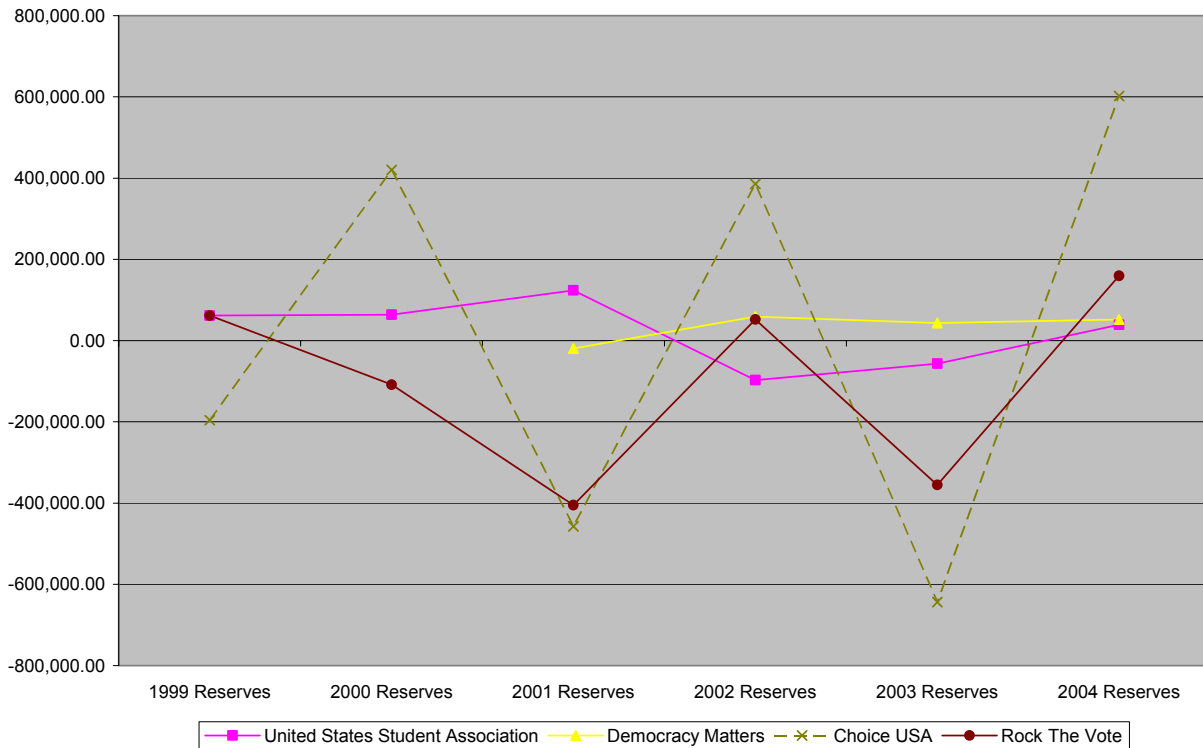
**This graph charts the median funding levels from year-to-year of all the groups listed in the previous graph.**

**This graph clearly shows two trends:**

- First, it is even clearer from this chart that the surge and decline of progressive funding on-campus is directly tied to election years (in gray).
- Second, that funding levels are declining over time, as indicated by the trend line.

While conservative campus and leadership development organizational funding steadily increases over time, progressive leadership development organizations are experiencing a collective decline in their revenue. Not only are progressive groups unable to plan for the long-term due to sporadic funding, they are not able to scale up their programs due to an overall decrease in revenue streams.

Progressive Funding Trends - Reserves

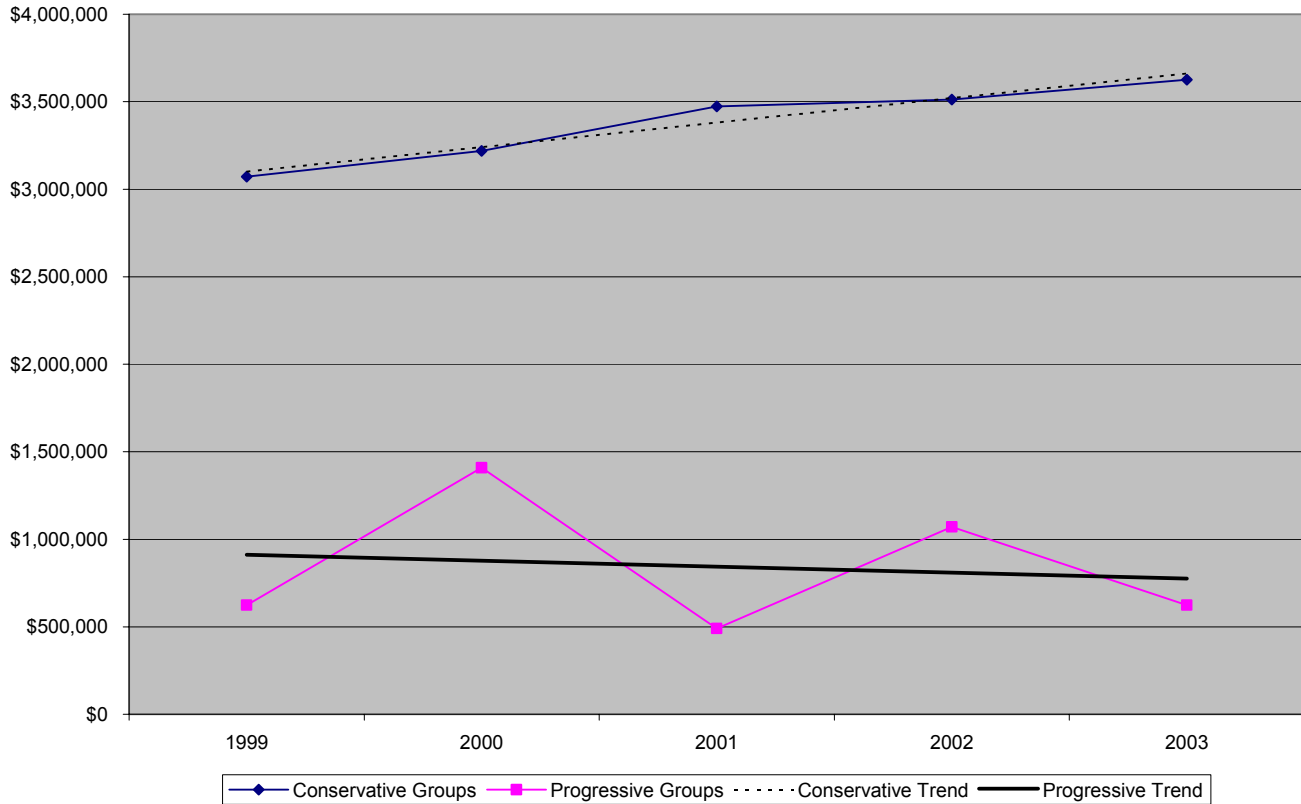


**This graph charts the level of reserves among progressive on-campus groups from year-to-year.**

**This graph shows the following three trends:**

- There are **no** on-campus progressive groups with consistently increasing reserves.
- Reserve levels, like income levels, are directly tied to election years.
- Reserve levels, for at least two of these groups, hover at or around zero from year-to-year, which would indicate that these groups spend out almost the entirety of their budgets every fiscal year – giving them little room to plan for increased growth or to operate at their current scale should funding sources decide not to re-invest in their programs.

Median Annual Budgets: Trend Comparison



**This graph shows the following three points:**

- There is a severe disparity, over \$2 million in revenue between progressive and conservative organizational funding levels
- Conservative groups do not endure the same election year surge and off-year decline that affects progressive groups. Conservative funding is more steady and sustainable over time
- Conservative groups are collectively *increasing their revenues*, while progressive groups are concurrently *declining* in collective revenues.

**Conservative Campus and Youth Leadership Development Funding Since 1999**

	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	Total Revenue 4 Years	% Growth 5 yes	Last Rep. Year Reserves
Young Americas Foundation	\$ 12,038,328	\$ 8,970,700	\$ 8,350,291	\$ 9,117,378	\$ 7,424,158	\$ 45,900,855	62%	\$2,732,885
Intercollegiate Studies Institute	\$ 11,562,682	\$ 4,856,177	\$ 5,860,637	\$ 5,839,234	\$ 4,933,014	\$ 33,051,744	134%	\$3,173,502
The Leadership Institute	\$ 9,104,766	\$ 5,510,414	\$ 5,995,227	\$ 7,757,942	\$ 8,425,644	\$ 36,793,993	8%	\$1,677,440
The Federalist Society	\$ 5,450,536	\$ 4,225,118	\$ 3,519,410	\$ 3,247,644	\$ 3,057,675	\$ 19,500,383	78%	\$1,000,343
Center for the Study of Popular Culture	\$ 3,625,468	\$ 2,800,014	\$ 3,428,234	\$ 3,190,198	\$ 3,087,120	\$ 16,131,034	17%	\$646,561
Independent Women's Forum	\$ 2,582,437	\$ 1,371,284	\$911,421	\$ 1,250,330	\$ 1,369,461	\$7,484,933	89%	\$525,010
Center for Individual Rights	\$ 1,259,427	\$ 1,578,416	\$ 2,108,634	\$ 1,173,497	\$ 1,368,501	\$7,488,475	-8%	\$(92,712)
American Civil Rights Institute	\$ 1,614,100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$1,614,100		
Collegiate Network	\$ 1,249,161	\$758,793	\$816,259	\$ 712,851	\$730,403	\$4,267,467	71%	\$147,002
<b>Total Last Year</b>	<b>\$ 48,486,905</b>	<b>\$ 30,070,916</b>	<b>\$30,990,113</b>	<b>\$ 32,289,074</b>	<b>\$ 30,395,976</b>	<b>\$ 172,232,984</b>		
<b>Total Reserves Last Year</b>								<b>\$9,810,031</b>
<b>Ave. Reserves Last Yr</b>								<b>\$1,226,254</b>
<b>Ave. % financial growth 5 years</b>							<b>56%</b>	

**1. Conservative foundations have funded conservative leadership with large grants over multiple years. Progressive Foundations need to self-identify as the four or five “anchors” for the organizations working on young progressive leadership development.**

- Bradley, Scaife still lead the way, but Kirby, Murdock, Lilly and Hume are now also big givers to the movement
- 40 percent are giving to at least two organizations working in this conservative leadership movement
- 37 percent are multi-year givers
- 30 percent gave \$100K or more
- 7 percent are giving \$500K+ to the movement

2. **The number of conservative foundations funding in this movement has increased considerably over the years. Progressive Foundations need to help identify “successors” in the funding community to help share the financial responsibilities of sustaining and growing critical leadership development organizations.**
  - Before we looked to Olin, Bradley, Koch, Coors and Scaife as primary conservative foundations; now there are at least 70 powerful foundations working together to strategically fund this social and political conservative movement
3. **The leading 10 conservative organizations in this movement have grown their budgets and organizations by 56% collectively. Progressive Foundations should help organizations find financial support from other donors – to help build more constructive collaborative environment, instead of a competitive one.**
  - Only 1 organization had negative growth over 5 years
  - Growth ranged from 0 to 134%, but averaged at 56% collectively
  - The budgets range from \$150K to \$12M; the median budget is \$2.5M; the average budget is \$4.5M
4. **The 10 conservative organizations in this movement have a healthy reserve fund totaling \$9.8 million. The average reserve fund is \$1.2 million.**