

UPDATE FROM THE FIELD

Black Voters Matter



#BVMBUSTOUR2020

In February we continued our Bus Tour and headed back to South Carolina! In North Charleston at the Charity Baptist Church, our State Coordinator, Mika Gadsden, discussed climate and environmental justice with a focus on the Gadsden Green community.



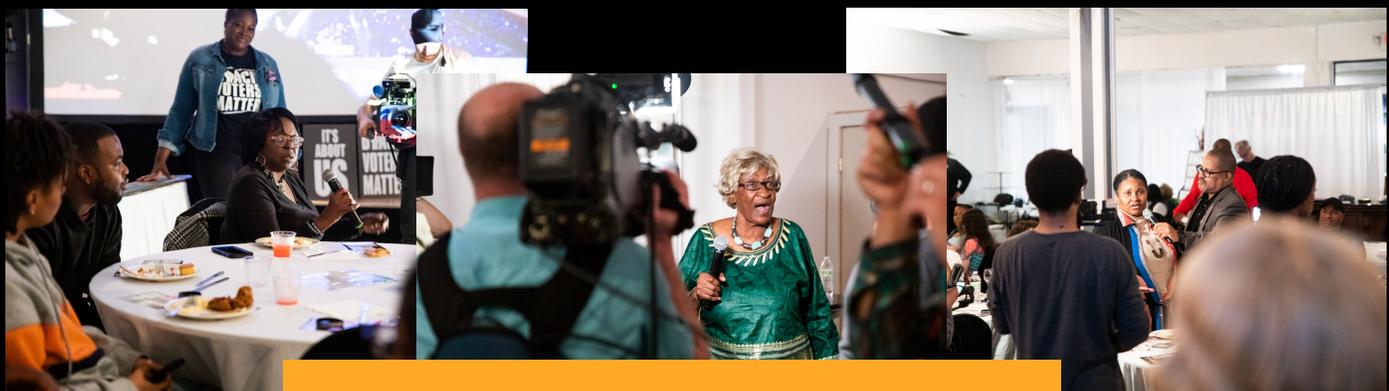
GADSDEN CREEK

We visited Gadsden Green, home to Gadsden Creek, a natural waterway that is being destroyed, used as a landfill, and leading to the disenfranchisement of Black people. Joined by the Friends of Gadsden Creek, we toured Gadsden Creek with Harvard Students to educate them on the history of the community followed by a community gathering to get to know the residents and issues that are important to them.



FIGHT FOR 15

After standing in solidarity with Medicare For All, we joined Fight For 15 and other organizations to stand in solidarity with workers fighting for better wages, benefits, and ending sexual harassment in the workplace. We also supported the efforts of BYP100, as they held Pete Buttigieg, who joined the protest accountable for his actions; as he has failed to raise wages to \$15 in his own city of South Bend where he had the power to do so.



COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

On Tuesday, February 25, we held a Presidential Debate Watch Party and Community Discussion. Members of the community expressed their opinions on candidates and the issues that are most important to them such as: healthcare, gun violence, activities for youth, gentrification, criminal justice reform, racial justice, and better education systems. Our watch party was also featured on Showtime's "The Circus".

GREENVILLE, SC

In Greenville, South Carolina, BVM and the Greenville Chapter of the Democratic Black Caucus of South Carolina held a Town Hall on criminal justice reform, to listen to members of the community



In Columbia, South Carolina, We made a stop at Benedict College to bring awareness to environmental and displacement issues at Allen Benedict Court (ABC) housing. Last year at ABC, two men died due to carbon monoxide poisoning. Over 20% of the units had toxic poisonous levels which led to the displacement of over 400 people.

COLUMBIA, SC

We then stopped at Fresh Start a food clothing & service pantry in Columbia where hair cuts, books, clothes, food, medical exams, and other services are provided.

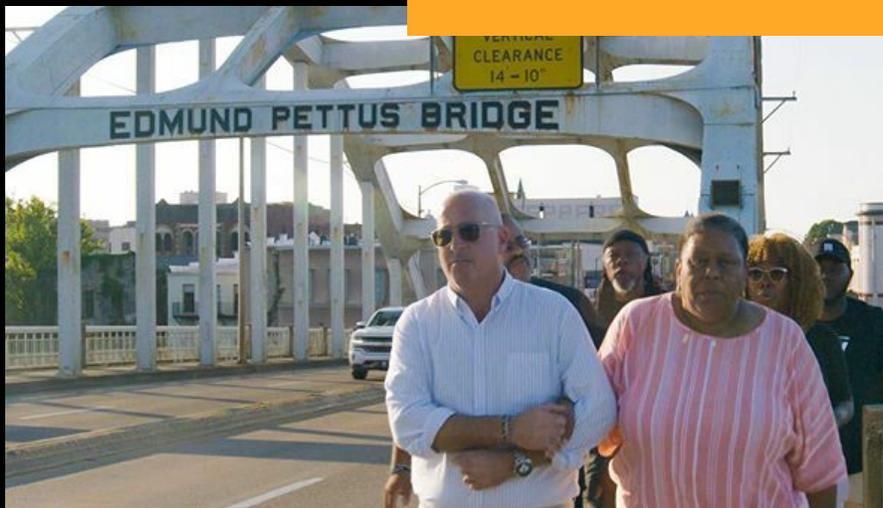
We ended our bus tour with encouraging people to vote in the South Carolina Primary.



Black Voters Matter Co-Founders, LaTosha Brown and Cliff Albright made an appearance on What's Eating America with Andrew Zimmern to discuss voter suppression on an episode of "A Seat at the Table."



WHAT'S EATING AMERICA



ELECTION UPDATES



Due to the coronavirus pandemic, many state elections such as Georgia and Louisiana have been postponed. In the meantime, we do expect more states to follow, but absentee ballots are still available. Be sure to follow Black Voters Matter on all social media platforms for more updates and continue to wash your hands, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Cover your cough with the bend of your elbow or tissue. Avoid crowded places. Stay inside if you're not feeling well. Seek medical attention if symptoms get worse. Follow World Health Organization for updates.

5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO ENSURE POWER DURING COVID-19

1. Find out the new date for your state primary.- Many state primaries have been postponed because of COVID-19, so you need to keep abreast of upcoming new primary dates. You can find out the date of your individual state primary [here](#).
2. Learn your [state's procedures for absentee ballots](#) and mail in voting. While we all hope that this current health crisis will subside in a few weeks, it's best to be prepared to exercise your right to vote in case these circumstances are prolonged during this election season.
3. Respond to the 2020 Census now!- Since we are all homebound, we can complete the 2020 census [online](#), by phone, or by mail. It is now more imperative than ever to make sure that every citizen is counted, as the resources allocated by the Census count can be distributed to the lower income communities that will be disproportionately affected by COVID-19.
4. Call local and state elected officials to demand policies to support workers and vulnerable communities.
5. Raise awareness and/or get involved in local mutual aid efforts. Stay healthy and take the necessary precautions to keep yourself and others safe!

WELCOME OUR NEW TEAM MEMBER



Introducing our National Field Director Tami. Tami Sawyer is an educator, advocate, organizer, leader, listener, and elected official who currently serves as a Shelby County (TN) Commissioner. Her passion is people: ensuring they're represented, heard, valued, and included. In each of her roles, she's built coalitions across communities to challenge systems, propose solutions, and strengthen the bonds between neighbors.

In 2017, Tami founded #takeemdown901, the movement that removed Confederate statues in Memphis, TN. This and other justice work has won her many awards including Ebony Power 100, as well as exposure on major news outlets such as CNN and BBC. Tami is a graduate of University of Memphis and a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc.

**BLACK
VOTERS
MATTER**

STAY SAFE

Black Voters Matter will continue to do work in many states such as Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Tennessee by spreading love and building power in our communities. We hope we continue to have your support! BVM wishes you wellness, continue to stay informed and stay safe. Lead with love and power.