



**DOWN HOME
NORTH CAROLINA**

THE HOLLER

APRIL 2023



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Down Home members from across the state spent a weekend together at our Campaign Boot Camp to build campaigning skills.

BUILDING SKILLS AND LEADERS

You know those magic moments? Like when Otis Redding first took the microphone at Stax Records or when Dolly Parton first performed with Porter Wagoner? Well, the Down Home Campaigns Boot Camp was certainly less musical than those, but magic like that was in the air when we met. It felt like the start of something big and long-lasting.

Our members came from across the state to learn about building campaigns in their local community. They learned how to make effective demands, create strong teams, leverage resources, and build local power.

“This was very necessary,” said Cabarrus member Sabrina Berry. Member Mae Mack agreed and said the boot camp “helped me understand how much needs to go into a proposal and how to plan it out.”

These campaigns are designed to build power, momentum, and membership so every campaign creates more capacity and more multiracial, working class organizing becomes possible over time.

As Granville member Jason Dunkin said, “I’m looking forward to seeing all the wins we receive by the end of summer!”



Cabarrus represent! Mark, Jasmine, Steve, Mae, and Sabrina.



Alamance County works it out: Tabitha, Tanya, Bryant, Amanda and Brian.



Granville strong: Reeves, Desmond, Russell, Jason, Alexis, William, and Myla



Ashe and Watauga talk High Country: Dolly, Nancy, Olive, Moriah, Dalton and Smith.



Johnston County talked about education: Aexis, Allen, Erica, and Liz



Members celebrated Medicaid Expansion with Gov. Roy Cooper. From left to right: Watauga's Dana Bango, Person's Kyle Warren-Love, Granville's Alma Hawkins, Gov. Roy Cooper, Alamance's Debbie Smith, and Co-Executive Director Todd Zimmer.

MEMBER VOICES: DANA CELEBRATES MEDICAID EXPANSION

Watauga County Down Home member Dana Bango was raised in a working class family. Her dad was an autoworker and UAW member. They always had good health care. But, decades later, when a cancer diagnosis hit her, Dana didn't have insurance. She was thrown into the brutality of a health care system that doesn't center care for everyone and punishes the working class.

Now, after years of advocacy, Dana can finally write a celebration of what Medicaid Expansion means for working people in NC.



Read Dana's full story on our blog with the QR code

"I've been waiting for this day for seven years."

-Watauga member
Dana Bango

Video: We did it! We got Medicaid Expansion passed!



Let's get it! It's been a long journey to Medicaid Expansion, and here's a video of highlights about how Down Home helped win it. This photo features Courtney from the Granville chapter, but the video features too many people to name!



Watch full video on our YouTube channel with the QR code

Skip the distractions. Focus on education.

Our members organizing for public schools have been busier than popcorn in a skillet.

We're building local teams and showing up at school board meetings across the state, all while fighting the extremists dumping on our kids and their future. These teams are the first line of defense. When Proud Boys show up at school board meetings, like they did in New Hanover and Robeson last month, they disrupt and get attention but they never represent real working families.

We're also watching HB187, North Carolina's version of an anti-CRT bill which would prohibit teachers from promoting concepts that suggest America is racist or that people are inherently racist or sexist. Down Homies have spent a long time learning about our state's REAL history, and we know that these culture warring politicians are just playing games. That said, we also know HB187 has passed the House already and is headed to the Senate- and we are building a response team on standby in case we are needed.

Care about public schools? Get involved!
Our next meeting is Wednesday, April 19.
Visit: mobilize.us/downhomenc to sign up!



We had 13 volunteers for a recent canvassing session in Alamance County. We knocked on 247 doors, and had 30 conversations. The phone banking team had 8 volunteers who made 436 calls with over 30 conversations. Canvassing is one important way that we base build! Without a strong base, we are fighting alone and we don't want that!



It was below freezing and windy, but this Ashe County crew is hardy! While canvassing, we met folks preparing to move out of the county because they can't afford to live here anymore. We learned about invasive and predatory landlord practices and met renters who've had multiple rent increases in just the last 12 months. Now our members are researching policy to determine strategy to right these wrongs!

BUILDING A NEW SOUTHERN STRATEGY WITH DEEP CANVASSING

If you are from around here, then you know about the old Southern Strategy in politics. Beginning in the 1960s and 70s, certain Republicans promoted racial resentment in an attempt to divide working people on issues from busing, welfare, and civil rights. But the South isn't always what you think it is. It's more complicated, surprising, and optimistic than this old playbook.

Down Home's Deep Canvass Team is redefining the Southern Strategy and making it our own. We believe that the fear and division of the past have no place in the present.

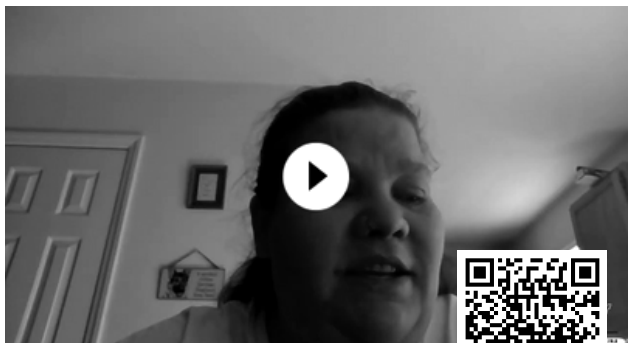
Our Southern Strategy is one of hope and inclusion.

On April 26, we will debut our New Southern Strategy Deep Canvass Academy. Our strategy will unify and bring people together across differences. We will connect people to their personal experiences and build statewide multi-racial relationships.

The Academy's goal is to engage, educate, train, support, and develop leaders across North Carolina so we can win on the issues that matter most right here at home: A new South, the one we have always wanted. If this is something you are interested in getting involved with, reach out to your local organizer.



Why, yes, that is a baby goat in the Ashe County meeting!



Scan for video

Video: What's a county commissioner do?

As we build local power, it's so important to know how power works on the local level.

Our Ashe County member Tanya Robinson guides you through their responsibilities and why they're so important to creating change.

Sign up and find more events at Down Home's Mobilize page:
mobilize.us/DownHomeNC

Alamance Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, April 4

**Ashe Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, April 11**

Cabarrus Budget Campaign Committee
Meeting
Monday, April 3

Cabarrus Chapter Meeting
Thursday, April 6

Granville Chapter Meeting
Wednesday, April 5

Johnston Chapter Meeting
Thursday, April 13

**Commissioner Meeting - Public
Comment Organizing
Tuesday, April 4**

Watauga Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, April 18

Public Schools Strong Training
Wednesday, April 19

HEAL Together NC Statewide Call
Thursday, April 27

Public Comment 101 (virtual)
Thursday, April 20

Using Communications to Build Power
(virtual)
Tuesday, April 11
Thursday, April 20

Our members across the state are building up their co-governance muscles! This means having constructive conversations with elected officials, whether they're Republican or Democrat or somewhere in-between- basically, if we helped elect 'em, they need to represent us!

We expect our elected officials to be accountable to our working class needs. Last month, our members met with several elected officials to discuss their voting record and whether or not they are holding up the values for which our members endorsed them.

Co-governance isn't just about meeting with elected officials- it's also about holding government accountable to our needs. Up in Watauga County, our members are organizing to change the way their county commission does business. Watauga member Sarah Davis put her County Commission on blast for having public comments only after they already voted. Working people are watching, and a change is going to come one way or another.



NC Representative Diamond Staton-Williams celebrates the passing of Medicaid Expansion and thanks Down Home for all the work we did for it. Our Cabarrus members endorsed her last year, knocking doors and turning out the vote. It was Staton-Williams' victory that prevented a Republican supermajority and preserved Cooper's veto.

The Holler is the monthly newsletter for Down Home. We showcase the work y'all are doing across NC.

But we also want to give the mic to our members and share what you care about and want to see.

Interested in sharing your **writing**? We are always looking to highlight rural voices that defy stereotypes in our Reclaiming Rural blog.

Are you taking **photographs** that Down Homies should see? Just want to share a **music playlist** to get other organizers pumped? Have a **social media** idea to put your campaign over the top?

Contact us in the Comms department!

Gwen Frisbie-Fulton
gwen@downhomenc.org
(336) 253-4649

Harry Turfle
harry@downhomenc.org
(347) 572-5788




Do you like posting on social media? Want to spread the word on your organizing, or what's happening in your county? Let us know!

Follow Down Home on our social media accounts.

We're real humans (Gwen and Harry!) and we'll actually answer any messages you send.

We are always looking to share your photos and videos and celebrate how you're building local power where you are.

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