

**RISE**

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# Media Kit 2024



UNLEASHING THE YOUTH WAVE.

[RISEFREE.ORG](https://RISEFREE.ORG)



# UNLEASHING THE *YOUTH WAVE*



## WHO WE ARE

### RISE is unleashing the *youth wave*:

**We are the next generation of civic leaders who will reshape the future of our country.**

RISE, founded in 2017, is a college student and youth-led nonprofit fighting to build students' political power and make higher education more accessible and affordable for all. We do this by building campaigns to advance equitable policies and mobilizing young people to become lifelong voters. Our track record of major wins includes: launching or scaling free college for thousands of students in California, Georgia, New Mexico, and Wisconsin, and contacting a combined 1 million youth voters since 2018.

## WHAT WE DO



### Activate & Engage

We know what gets young people to the polls, because we are them. We activate our generation around the issues we are most eager to impact including making college education more accessible and affordable.

### Invest & Mobilize

We aren't just a bunch of kids who post on social media. RISE is comprised of thousands of youth activists across the country, united by a shared curriculum and programming. We invest in the next generation of civic leaders by training our peers to strategize, organize and mobilize toward real results. We set goals - and get \*ish done, but we can't do it alone.

College affordability isn't a Gen Z issue, it's an everybody issue. If politicians want our vote, they have to earn it.

## WHY WE DO IT

## College Affordability: A Reason to Vote

**We build student's political power by training them to advocate for college affordability and vote elected officials into office that support this vision. Here's why it matters to us, and why it is RISE's core platform for getting students out to vote.**



At RISE, democracy and college affordability go hand in hand. We get young people to RISE to the occasion of becoming active participants in the public policy arena. We do this by teaching them how to exercise their political power in order to co-create the change they want to see as it relates to their education. We believe our generation has more political bargaining power than society gives us credit for. If candidates want to get young people tapped into voting, then they must tap into the issues we want to vote for. We believe alleviating the college affordability crisis is one way to begin to dismantle systemic inequity. Making higher education more accessible has the potential to improve nearly every issue in our country.

### 5 Reasons Why College Affordability Is an 'Everybody Issue'

- **It's An Economic Issue:** The college affordability crisis and the burden of student loan debt can limit economic growth as individuals may have less disposable income to spend on goods and services. This, in turn, can impact consumer spending and overall economic activity.
- **It's an Equity Issue:** The college affordability crisis disproportionately affects low-income and minority students, exacerbating existing social and economic inequalities. The cost of college and the burden of debt can hinder access to higher education for those who cannot afford it, perpetuating the cycle of poverty.
- **It's A Housing Market Issue:** High levels of student debt can reduce demand for homeownership among younger generations, impacting the housing market and potentially affecting property values.
- **It's A Government Spending & National Debt Issue:** The burden of the cost of college can increase demands for government assistance and forgiveness programs, potentially putting pressure on public finances and budget allocations.
- **It's A Retirement Savings & Social Security Issue:** The cost of college and outstanding student loan payments can hamper individuals' ability to save for retirement, potentially leading to a higher percentage of older adults who are financially insecure in their later years.

## HOW WE DO IT

# Unleashing the Youth Wave

## Getting 1 Million Youth to the Polls

Breaking youth voting records is a crucial part of building an enduring democracy and fighting extremist efforts to erode it. That's why, as the nation's foremost youth-led nonprofit focused on college affordability and student civic participation, we are launching a new effort called "Unleashing the Youth Wave" to achieve historic youth voter turnout in 2024.

Across the country, legislators have passed anti-student voting rights bills in an effort to silence the student vote. RISE sees this as the clearest sign that investing in youth vote is not just an opportunity, but a necessity.



**This 2024 program builds on RISE's work of contacting 1 million young voters since 2018 and collecting over 150,000 youth plans to vote through relational organizing over the past two election cycles.**

### 1 TRAIN 5,000 YOUTH ORGANIZERS THROUGH RISE UNIVERSITY:

To reach **1 million youth voter contacts** and make over **250,000 unique plans to vote**, RISE plans to leverage 5,000 student organizers. We will coordinate with other civic engagement partners in our focus states to target youth on and off campus as well as the personal networks of the 5,000 young people we plan to train via RISE University to power this program.

### 2 UNLEASH THE YOUTH WAVE TO HAVE 1 MILLION TOUCHPOINTS:

RISE student organizers will have conversations with 1 million youth voter contacts to help reach **historic youth voter turnout** and register **50,000 new voters** in RISE's focus states: Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Nevada, North Carolina, and Wisconsin.

The core Rise audience is college students and youth 18-29 with an emphasis on organizing young voters of color and multiracial organizing. Rise will continue to reach young voters where they are at: community colleges, large open enrollment public universities, Historically Black Colleges, and other Minority Serving Institutions, and non-college enrolled youth in the community.

### 3 BUILD CAPACITY OF THE YOUTH ORGANIZING SECTOR:

To build the capacity of the youth organizing sector as a whole, RISE will provide **training, technology, and funding** via microgrants to youth and youth-led grassroots groups to increase their impact.

## HOW WE DO IT

# RISE UNIVERSITY

## Training the Next Generation of Civic Leaders

We've known this for a while now. Young people are eager to be on the front lines of the battles for our rights, but all too often, are left on the sidelines. But it doesn't have to be that way. Enter: RISE University.

Our RISE University program is hosted together with community partners and dedicated to training new young leaders as advocates for themselves, their peers, and their communities. We partner with college campuses to offer this free training.

With expert training and support, we're making sure that this upcoming election, there's a powerful core of people prepared to fight for their rights and the policies that will improve their lives.

>> [Watch the Video to Learn More](#)

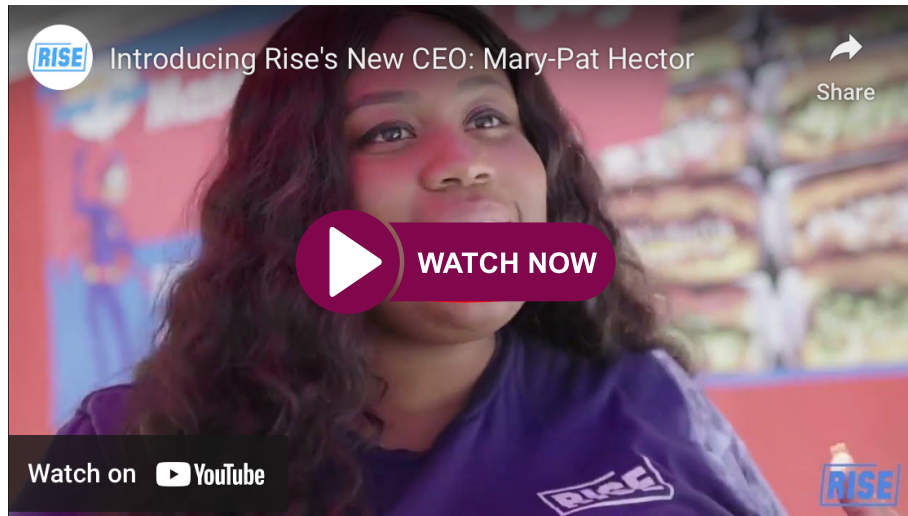
Students who graduate from RISE University come away with the knowledge and skills to launch them into a life-long commitment to civic engagement in their communities and beyond. Topics covered in RISE University include:

- **Becoming a Change Agent:** Explore the different ways that you can be change agents in your communities and identify the issues that move you.
- **Civic Engagement:** Discuss the importance of civic engagement and how you can get involved in your communities.
- **Debate and Dialogue:** Explore the importance of debate and dialogue in a democracy and how to have productive conversations about difficult topics.
- **Advocacy & Accountability:** Discuss how young people can advocate for their values and hold their elected officials accountable.

By November 2024, RISE will train 5,000 students across critical focus states Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. This pipeline of civically engaged young people will not only unleash the youth wave in 2024, but continue to build a movement of the next generation's changemakers.



## Introducing RISE's Gen-Z CEO, Mary-Pat Hector



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