

Annual Report

2022



**BLUE HORIZON TEXAS &
BLUE HORIZON ACTION FUND**

Prepared by
Claire Barnett & Stephanie Phillips
Co-Founders/Executive Directors

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INTRODUCTION

In our inaugural year, Blue Horizon Texas has grown into a successful, multi-entity enterprise with a growing reputation among Democratic and progressive groups across the state.

The Challenge

In the 2022 election cycle, more than half of Texas counties had NO Democratic candidates and Democrats did not contest over 50 state legislative and State Board of Education seats.

Where Democrats and progressives do run in red districts, they receive little structural support.

Our Goal

- Every county and every district in the state has Democratic candidates in coming election cycles.
- Every Democratic and progressive candidate has the support they need to run effective campaigns, no matter how red the district or how long the odds are.

Our Solution

We work to engage volunteers, candidates, and the state and county parties to provide individualized support and a statewide network addressing the multi-layered challenges progressives face in red & rural Texas. Our scope of work spans from civic engagement and education, through candidate education and community building, to direct campaign support.



**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
& EDUCATION**



**CANDIDATE PIPELINE
& RECRUITMENT**



**ONLINE CANDIDATE
COMMUNITY**



**VOLUNTEER
NETWORK**



**DIRECT CANDIDATE
SUPPORT**

**There is no Democratic
message when
Democrats don't run.**

OUR STORY SO FAR

Blue Horizon Texas was founded in November 2021 to support Democratic and progressive candidates running for state and local office in rural, exurban, and traditionally Republican districts in Texas.

Blue Horizon helps candidates establish strategic goals and build coalitions among candidates, volunteers, and affiliated groups to campaign more effectively. As a new generation of diverse candidates steps up to run, we must support them—wherever they run.

We are committed to building a functional support network, infrastructure, and training for the long-shot campaign, expanding the blue horizon in Texas, and getting us closer to electing leaders who better represent our communities.



OUR MISSION

Recruit, prepare, and support Democratic and progressive candidates running in rural, exurban, and traditionally Republican districts in Texas by improving the support infrastructure, knowledge base, and resources available for non-traditional candidates in underinvested races across the state.

OUR VISION

An ever bigger blue horizon in Texas with candidate support for every district across the state.

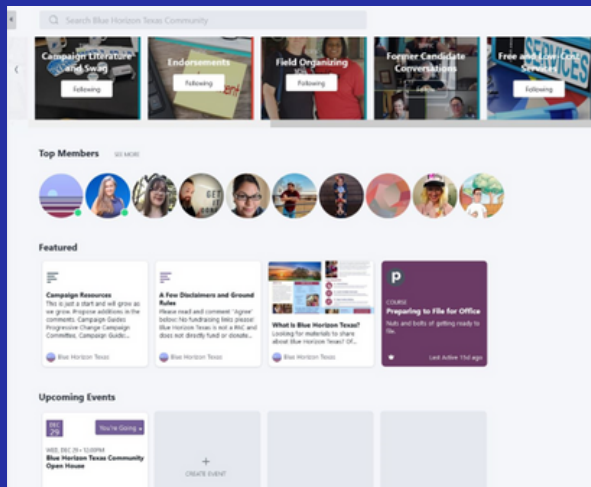
65
CANDIDATES SUPPORTED
RUNNING
FOR
**STATE & LOCAL
OFFICE**

OUR 2022 GOALS

1

Tell the Stories

Record, collect, and share interviews with current and former candidates to learn from their stories and lived experience of running for office in rural and red districts. Highlight strategic goals, successes, and lessons learned for current and prospective candidates and supporting groups.



2

Build & Grow Candidate Community

Build online community and discussion forum to foster collaboration among candidates and volunteers and provide a library of information and resources. Research, vet, and catalog existing resources and identify gaps for idea incubation.

3

Establish Candidate Pipeline

Recruit and prepare candidates for state, county, and local races, beginning with November non-partisan races. Plan for 2023 -2024 races.

4

Launch Sister Organizations

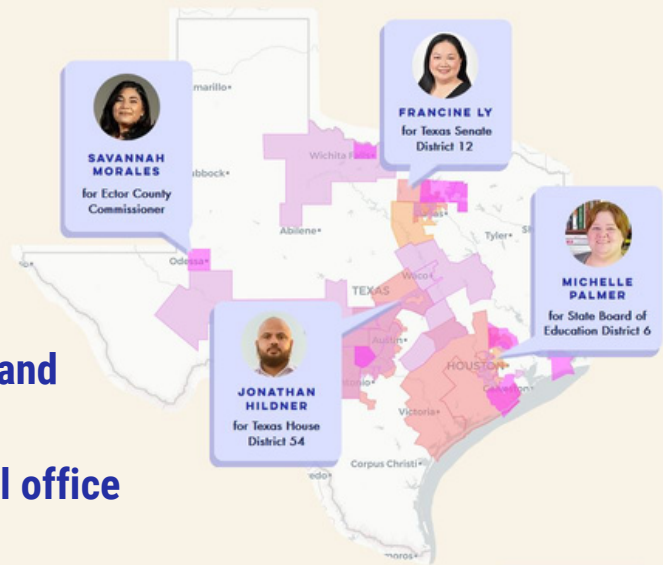
Establish a complementary 501c(4) for civic engagement and candidate recruitment and create a PAC to provide direct candidate support.

BLUE HORIZON STRATEGY

At Blue Horizon, we recruit, prepare, and support Democratic and progressive candidates running for state and local office in red and rural districts.

Growing a blue Texas requires a strategic plan with a commitment to making the long-term investments in community organizing and infrastructure building to elect Democrats and progressives statewide and in local communities.

After launching the original 527 non-profit organization in 2021, it became clear additional legal entities were necessary to accomplish our strategic goals. In May 2022, we launched two new organizations in the Blue Horizon family---a 501c(4) non-profit, Blue Horizon Action Fund, and a Texas General Purpose PAC, Blue Horizon Texas PAC. Blue Horizon's three sister organizations allow us to engage community leaders and prepare the candidates of tomorrow while also directly supporting the candidates of today.



PARTNERS

- Rural Democracy Initiative
- Run for Something
- Climate Cabinet Action
- Rideshare2Vote
- Bluebonnet Data
- Texas Blue Action
- Mothers Against Greg Abbott



Candidate Pipeline & Training

Blue Horizon Action Fund is a 501c(4) nonprofit with a focus on Civic Education and Engagement. The mission of Blue Horizon Action Fund is to inspire, engage, and prepare local leaders ready to make the next step to run for office in red and rural areas of Texas.



Online Community & Volunteer Network

Blue Horizon Texas is a 527 non-profit that provides an online community for Democratic and progressive candidates, volunteers, county party chairs, and other coalition members to connect and access relevant and vetted campaign resources.



Direct Campaign Support

Blue Horizon Texas PAC is a Texas General Purpose Political Action Committee (GPAC) that provides endorsements and direct support of Blue Horizon candidates, with a focus on campaign strategy, data and field, and GOTV programs.

RECRUIT

PREPARE

SUPPORT

Blue Horizon Texas is investing in the long-term work to realize sustainable, transformative change.

-Julie Oliver, former US Congressional Candidate &
Co-Founder/Executive Director of Ground Game Texas

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2022, Blue Horizon Texas supported 65 candidate community members and endorsed 32. We deployed webinars, campaign reference guides and tip sheets, and a library of campaign resources available to all candidate community members. Additionally, we provided endorsed candidates assistance with campaign strategy, social media and digital promotion/fundraising, and voter outreach/GOTV programs.

I don't think I would have made it even this far without the support of Blue Horizon Texas. They've had my back, and they're doing the work to flip rural "red" districts deep in the heart of Texas. If you want to run for office in Texas, you won't be alone.

-Josh Tutt, Senate District 18 candidate



15 Former Candidate Conversations and Campaign Nuts & Bolts Webinars delivered with 175 total participants, and 4 podcast episodes with 73 podcast plays



129 Blue Horizon Community Members encompassing candidates, volunteers, and Board members



48 sign-ups to our Volunteer Network to provide support to Blue Horizon or individual candidates



11 candidate coaching and campaign strategy sessions with 15 candidates

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2022 ELECTION

4

Target Regions for GOTV

32

Endorsed Candidates for state, county & local office

10,044

Followers on Social Media & Email

65

Candidate Community Members

47,575

Voters Contacted

3

Electoral Wins

FINANCIAL REPORT

498

Unique Donors

\$132,264

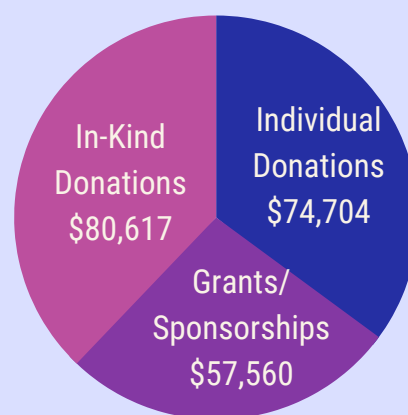
Dollars Raised

\$518

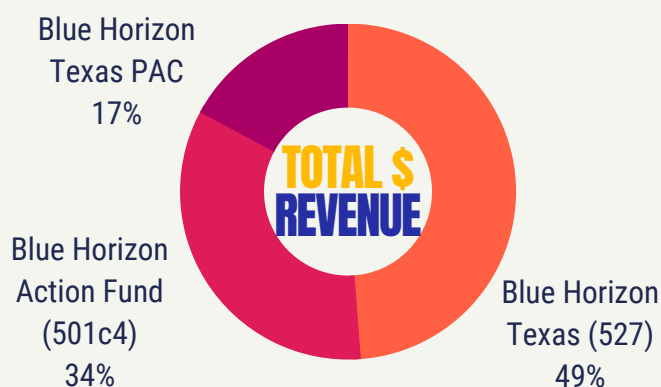
Monthly Recurring
Donations

27

Major Donors
>\$500



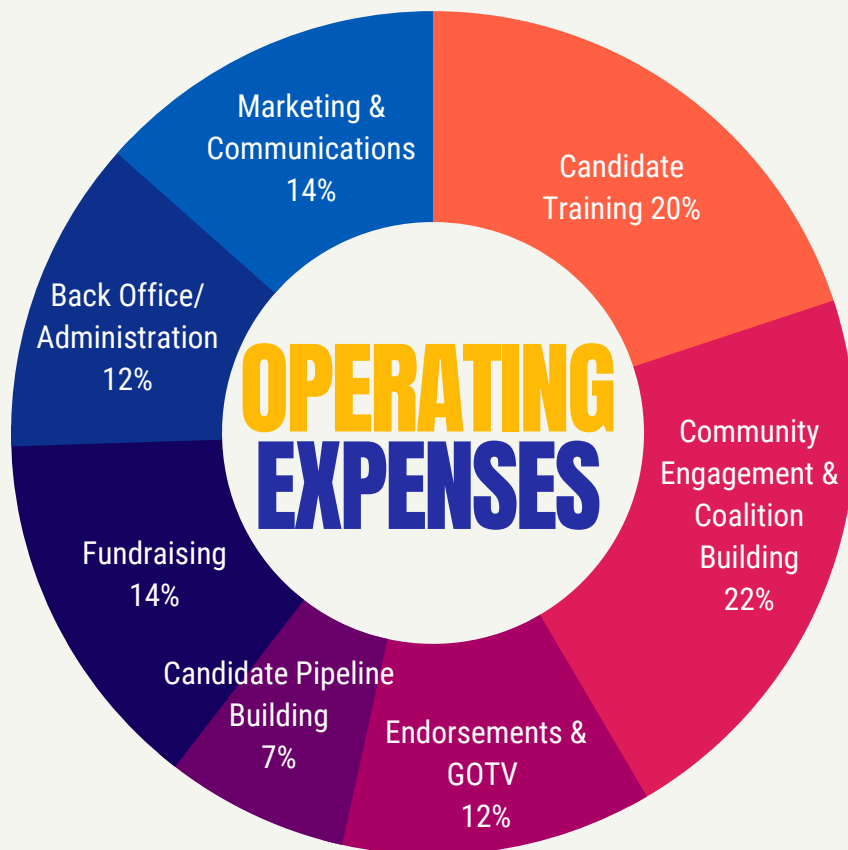
	Blue Horizon Texas (527)	Blue Horizon Action Fund (501c4)	Blue Horizon Texas PAC
Total \$ Revenue	\$64,517	\$45,050	\$22,697
Grants or Sponsorships	Mothers Against Greg Abbott: \$5,060	Rural Democracy Initiative: \$45,000	Run For Something: \$7,500
In-Kind Donations	\$55,000	\$13,000	\$12,617



\$212,881

Total Monetary + In-Kind Donations

FINANCIAL REPORT CONTINUED



\$183,275

Total 2022 Operating Expenses
(includes in-kind time)



*Other expenses including technology platforms and subscriptions, outside vendors, travel costs, printing, postage, and equipment.

THE 2022 BLUE HORIZON TEAM

5

Team Members
(temporary & ongoing)

2

Ongoing Bluebonnet
Data Fellows



Stephanie Phillips
Co-Executive Director



Claire Barnett
Co-Executive Director*



Tonya Lyles
Director of Programs

Temporary team members included a **summer intern** and a **Volunteer Coordinator** through the election (both paid). **Bluebonnet Data teams**, with at least two volunteer fellows since May 2022, are working on data research, analysis & visualization.

*Currently unpaid. Time & services donated in-kind.

2023-2024 OUTLOOK

1 Expand Library of Campaign Resources & Improve Blue Horizon Online Community

In 2023, Blue Horizon will continue to build out, refine, and map information, training, and other campaign resources and will improve the Blue Horizon Community candidate peer support and volunteer networks. We will also continue our storytelling projects through webinars, podcasts, and other mediums.

2 Recruit & Support 2023 Municipal & School Board Candidates

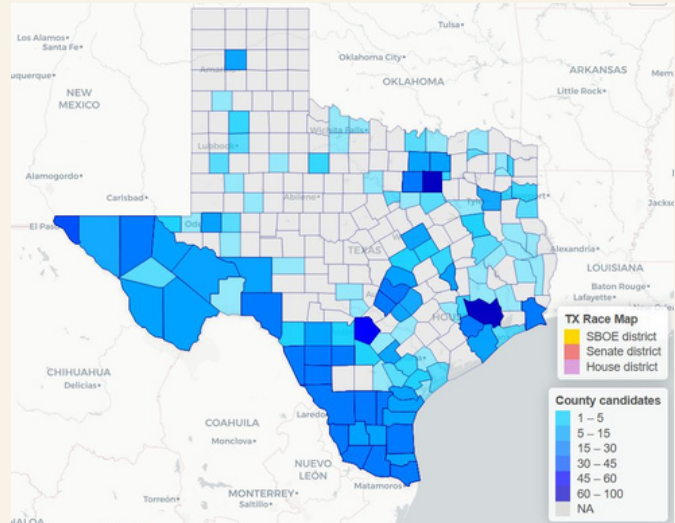
Blue Horizon will support progressive candidates in local municipal and school board races in May and November 2023 elections, with information, training, endorsements, and GOTV programs.

In 2022, Blue Horizon's electoral wins were in down-ballot, hyper local races: one in a school board race and another for a county drainage district seat. It is exactly this kind of local race where we see the biggest opportunities for short-term wins, as well as essential work to build sustainable progressive power in Texas over the long-term.

4 Attain Sustainability through Grant Seeking, Major Funding & Expansion of Grassroots Donors

The Blue Horizon enterprise of varied legal entities allows for flexibility in funding sources. Using a multi-tiered approach, Blue Horizon will attain financial sustainability through grant seeking, major funding, and an expanded grassroots fundraising base, allowing to bring staff on as regular employees, sustain and expand programs, and scale to a larger operating footprint.

In 2022, more than half of Texas counties had no Democrats on the ballot for county office.



Many counties were gray [because no Dem candidates are running at the county-level], but mine was light blue. **Because of me. One person can make a difference.**

-April Prim, Montgomery County Justice of the Peace candidate

3 Expand Candidate Pipeline of Talented, Prepared Community Leaders Ready to Run in 2024 & Beyond

In 2022, there were no Democrats on the ballot in more than half of Texas counties and dozens of state legislative races. Blue Horizon is building a candidate pipeline so in the future, every county has local progressive & Democratic candidates standing up for their communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful for the contributions of all those who worked tirelessly to support Blue Horizon Texas and Blue Horizon candidates in our inaugural year. **Thank you to—**

All the **2022 Blue Horizon Candidates** for your hard work and sacrifice. Your run matters.

Our **Bluebonnet Data** fellows **Xiofang Mo, Yvonne Lian, Maggie Lalor & Carl Mason** who built our maps and are conducting essential district research.

Our 2022 team members **Aimee Cook & Tonya Lyles** for engaging our candidate & volunteer communities and **Yvonne Lian** for our website redesign.

Our **Boards of Directors & Advisory Board** members for their leadership, guidance, and support.

Our **colleagues from partner organizations**, particularly **Brandon Turner** from Run for Something, **Caroline Spears** from Climate Cabinet, **Sarah Kovich & Tracy Scott** from Rideshare2Vote, and **Stephanie Johnson** from Rural Democracy Initiative.

Our **contributors**, including **Marshall Strauss & Elaine Gerdine, Roland Pesch, Mary Ford, Mary Walker, Stephen Randall, Melinda Poss, Karen Collins, Margery Loeb, Jean Shulz, and Patrick Finucane.**



**Blue Horizon Texas &
Blue Horizon Action Fund**

PO Box 780162

San Antonio, TX 78278

210.660.8390

www.bluehorizontexas.org

info@bluehorizontexas.org

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR PROGRAMS