



The Democratic Volunteer Center: Backgrounder

Where every volunteer makes a difference. When every vote counts.

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What is the Democratic Volunteer Center?

The Democratic Volunteer Center (DVC) is Silicon Valley's premier grassroots campaign center and is once again focused on serving as one of the most productive engines for Democratic campaigns in California and special elections throughout the United States. The DVC serves as a conduit for current and future activists of the mid-Peninsula to make a difference on the national political stage.

Fostering unity among a wide variety of energized activists, the DVC is at once a magnet for volunteers, a physical space, and an umbrella for political activism.

The DVC provides a place for grassroots organizations and volunteers to participate in all aspects of campaign field work, including:

- Canvassing
- Phone banking/texting
- Voter registration
- Mailing letters and postcards
- Calling elected representatives
- Hosting events

The DVC serves as a big tent for a wide variety of people—party stalwarts, progressives, and newcomers to Democratic politics—who share the goal of electing Democratic candidates and passing a Democratic legislative agenda. Local affiliates of several national organizations utilize the resources of the DVC, including:

- Indivisible
- Swing Left
- Sister District
- Together We Will

Why the DVC Exists

The DVC was created in 2010 to unify Democrats across the political spectrum in northern Santa Clara and southern San Mateo counties. Initially a joint initiative of the Peninsula Democratic Coalition, Silicon Valley for Obama, and Organizing for America, the DVC was formed to provide a recurrent campaign infrastructure and maintain continuity independent of individual campaigns in order to harness the extraordinary resources available in the mid-Peninsula.



In both 2012 and 2016, the DVC was one of the most productive Democratic campaign centers in the state:

- In the four days leading up to the 2012 election, DVC volunteers made over 100,000 calls to battleground states such as Ohio, Florida, Virginia and Colorado, a number that according to the Obama campaign was the highest of any office in California. In that period, DVC activists set a record for the number of simultaneous calls to battleground states made from a single space (56).
- In 2016, the DVC expanded its prolific activity, making over 500,000 calls and hosted 1,000 volunteers in the five days leading up to the election.
- 2016 also marked a new high point for on-the-ground DVC activity. Volunteers visited over 3,200 households carrying materials for local and State candidates, while others traveled to both battleground states and to Central Valley Congressional districts.

As part of the Santa Clara Democratic Party PAC, the DVC has also served as a campaign center for local politicians in recent years. Anna Eshoo based her campaign office at the DVC in 2012, 2014 and 2016, Jerry Hill housed his successful run for State Senate at the DVC in 2012, and several candidates for local City Council and School Board races ran their campaigns out of the DVC in the last three election cycles.

The DVC's Strategy for 2018 and Beyond

The DVC has traditionally begun operation four months before November elections, but due to demand from volunteers and local leaders of national organizations as well as a heightened sense of urgency, the DVC has opened an office in February 2018. With an attitude that every vote counts more than ever, the DVC seeks to impact races not only in the fall but in special elections across the country held throughout the spring and summer.

Instead of working out of their own homes and using the most spartan communications infrastructure, activists can draw on the resources and space of the DVC to make an impact on the national and local political stages.

The DVC is funded primarily through individual, small donations.